

CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2025 Fred C. Davison Distinguished Scientist Award Winner Announced

Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) is pleased to announce that the winner of the 2025 Fred C. Davison Distinguished Scientist Award is Dr. Olin E. (Gene) Rhodes, Jr. This prestigious award will be presented on November 21, 2025, at the 34th Annual Teller Lecture and Banquet in Aiken, SC.

Dr. Rhodes has served as the Director of the University of Georgia's Savannah River Ecology Lab (SREL) since 2012 and as Director of the University of Georgia Research Institute since 2021. He is also a Professor at the Odum School of Ecology at the University of Georgia and an Adjunct Professor at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.

Dr. Rhodes' leadership at SREL has seen dramatic increases in publications, the graduate student population, total faculty and staff, public education and outreach, and competitive non-DOE funding. He renovated 80% of SREL's facilities using external funding and leveraged \$3 in external funding for every \$1 invested by the University of Georgia.

Dr. Rhodes' technical accomplishments are similarly vast and foundational to advancements in radiation protection and the impact of radionuclides and heavy metals on ecosystem functions. These include research on glycoprotein processing in fish, the epigenetic effects of environmental interactions, the changes in gut microbiota and resistome in wild cotton-mice exposed to contaminants, the co-occurrence of resistance genes in bacteria from contaminated soils, and the risk of contaminant relocation by avian species.

Dr. Rhodes received his B.S. in Biology from the Furman University in 1983, his M.S. in Wildlife Biology from Clemson University in 1986, and his Ph.D. in Wildlife Science from Texas Tech University in 1991. He has to his credit 258 publications as author or co-author. In addition, he has mentored and advised numerous M.S., Ph.D., and post-doctorate students. He is a Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and an Elected Member of the Sigma Xi Scientific Research Honor Society.

Michael Mikolanis, Manager of the NNSA Savannah River Field Office, praised Dr. Rhodes for his "exceptional scientific leadership and environmental stewardship at the Savannah River Site, his transformational directorship of the SREL, and his profound impact as a mentor."

Professor James Marshall Shepherd at the University of Georgia wrote that "Dr. Rhodes is a pace-setting scholar, and his work on radiation exposure and protection is critical to the mission of DOE, UGA, and the nation." He further noted that Dr. Rhodes "exhibits a keen ability as an end-to-end scientist moving

science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) scholarship beyond the journals, scientific conferences, and ivory tower.”

The Distinguished Scientist Award is presented annually to recognize regional scientists and engineers who have made exceptional lifetime scientific achievements. The award is in honor of Dr. Fred C. Davison who was Chairman of CNTA's Board of Directors from 1994 until his death in 2004.

Davison was President of the University of Georgia for 19 years where he encouraged math and science education and managed the doubling of graduate enrollment. Davison was also President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Science Center Foundation, President of the Georgia-Carolina Boy Scouts Council, an elder at Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, and an active Rotarian.

CNTA is an Aiken-based charitable educational organization dedicated to providing factual information about nuclear topics and educating the public on nuclear issues. For further information, call CNTA at 803-649-3456 or e-mail at cnta@bellsouth.net.

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