



SURA Presents Distinguished Scientist Awards to Dr. Mark Atkinson & Dr. Maura McLaughlin

For immediate release
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Washington, D.C. — The Southeastern Universities Research Association honored Dr. Mark Atkinson of the University of Florida and Dr. Maura McLaughlin of West Virginia University with SURA Distinguished Scientist Awards. The awards were presented by Dr. James Weyhenmeyer, Vice President for Research at Auburn University and a member of SURA's Executive Board, during a reception at SURA's headquarters in Washington, D.C. in the presence of members of the Board of Trustees, representatives from Capitol Hill, and SURA's team.

"It was a great honor to have these two world-class scientists with us at SURA," said Dr. Sean J. Hearne, President and CEO of the Southeastern Universities Research Association. "Their tireless dedication to scientific excellence is an inspiration to us all and we are pleased to recognize their significant contributions as the most recent recipients of the SURA Distinguished Scientist Awards."

With thirty-eight years of investigation in the field of type 1 diabetes research, Dr. Mark Atkinson is the American Diabetes Association Eminent Scholar for Diabetes Research and Director of the University of Florida Diabetes Institute. He is the author of nearly six-hundred publications and founder of the world's largest type 1 diabetes research program, which supports some three-hundred-twenty projects across twenty-two countries. Dr. Atkinson was awarded the SURA Distinguished Scientist Award "for sustained leadership and significant research contributions that have improved the lives of patients living with type 1 diabetes, as well as to identify a way to prevent the disease in those at increased risk."



Dr. Mark Atkinson, Dr. Sean Hearne, & Dr. Maura McLaughlin

The Eberly Distinguished Professor of Physics and Astronomy at West Virginia University, Director of the Center for Gravitational Waves and Cosmology, and Co-Director of the NANOGrav Physics Frontiers Center, Dr. Maura McLaughlin conducts advanced research studying neutron stars and their environments through radio, X-ray, and gamma-ray observations. She was recently named a fellow at the American Physical Society (APS) and is one of the leaders of the Pulsar Search Collaboratory, where she involves high-school students throughout the U.S. in research. Dr.

McLaughlin was awarded the SURA Distinguished Scientist Award “for leadership of the international scientific community in the use of pulsars as detectors for gravitational waves as well as her dedication to educating the next generation of astronomers and astrophysicists.”

The Distinguished Scientist Award is given to scientists who are conducting exceptional research in disciplines related to SURA’s programs. Nominations are peer-reviewed by a committee and voted upon by members of SURA’s Board of Trustees.



Left to right: Dr. James Weyhenmeyer, Auburn University; Dr. David Norton & Dr. Mark Atkinson, the University of Florida; Dr. Maura McLaughlin & Dr. Fred King, West Virginia University

The [Southeastern Universities Research Association \(SURA\)](#) is a consortium of sixty member universities whose main purpose is to foster collaboration that enhances members’ capabilities of undertaking significant, transformative scientific research projects that no single institution or small consortium can handle independently.

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