



**Southeastern Universities
Research Association** ®

Press Release

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www.sura.org

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Senator Alexander Honored with “Friend of Science” Award

Washington, DC – The Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) today announced that Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee is the recipient of its newly established Distinguished Friend of Science Award. The award is to honor an “individual whose extraordinary efforts within the SURA region fulfill the SURA mission of strengthening the scientific and technical capabilities of the Southeast and nation.”

“The leadership demonstrated by Senator Alexander – not only within the past year, but throughout his distinguished career – exemplifies the kind of initiative we need in the public policy arena to advance our nation’s educational opportunities and scientific agenda,” said William R. Harvey, President of Hampton University and Chair of the SURA Council of Presidents and Executive Committee.

“I appreciate this Friend of Science Award from the Southeastern Universities Research Association, and I will continue doing all I can to help America keep its edge in science and technology in an increasingly competitive global economy,” Senator Alexander said. “The challenge our nation faces today is really about brainpower and jobs. If we don’t invest in basic scientific research and improve math and science education, we’ll wake up 20 years from now and wonder how countries like China and India passed us by.”

The SURA Distinguished Friend of Science Award was established earlier this year to commemorate the organization’s 25th Anniversary. It will be presented to Senator Alexander in conjunction with the Fall meeting of the SURA Board of Trustees on November 9 in Washington, DC. SURA’s Development and Relations Committees manage the solicitation, screening and selection of the recipient for this award, as well as a “Distinguished Scientist Award”, to be presented next year at the Spring Board of Trustees meeting. Each of SURA’s 62 member institutions were eligible to make one nomination for the award.

“Senator Alexander has been instrumental in winning Congressional and executive attention to the issue of the United States’ status in the global scientific market,” wrote University of Maryland President C.D. Mote, Jr. in his letter nominating the Senator. “He is directly responsible for the *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* Report, produced by the National Academies Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy,” which had national impact and influenced the American Competitiveness Initiative pursued by the Administration to rapidly escalate the nation’s investment in basic research funding and focus on competitiveness.

In addition to his requesting the National Academies study that resulted in the *Gathering Storm* report, Senator Alexander also sponsored the key legislation, the “Protecting America’s Competitive Edge (PACE) Act,” to codify its recommendations. Further, he has led bipartisan efforts in recent years to restore budget cuts to the Department of Energy’s Office of Science. The most recent effort, supported by 68 Senators, called on appropriators to “reaffirm the centrality and importance of our basic research investments [and] insure that America remains at the forefront of scientific capability, thereby enhancing our ability to shape and improve our nation’s and the world’s future.”

“As a former governor and university president, Senator Alexander has distinguished himself as a key leader in articulating the requirements for success in the knowledge economy. He not only sees the nexus between investing in research and education and improved competitiveness, but he also has made it a personal commitment,” said Jerry P. Draayer, SURA President & CEO.

Senator Alexander has been U.S. Education Secretary under President George H.W. Bush and president of the University of Tennessee, a SURA member institution, as well as the Goodman professor at Harvard’s School of Government. He was chairman of the National Governor’s Association and started Tennessee’s Governor’s Schools for outstanding students.

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The Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) is a consortium of over 60 leading research institutions in the southern United States and the District of Columbia established in 1980 as a non-stock, nonprofit corporation. SURA serves as an entity through which colleges, universities, and other organizations may cooperate with one another, and with government and industry in acquiring, developing, and using laboratories and other research facilities and in furthering knowledge and the application of that knowledge in the physical, biological, and other natural sciences and engineering. For more information, visit www.sura.org.



President William R. Harvey of Hampton University, SURA Executive Committee Chair, presents the SURA Distinguished Friend of Science Award to U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee at the SURA Board of Trustees meeting in Washington in November.