



Press Release

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SURA To Honor Task Force for American Innovation

Washington, DC – The Southeastern Universities Research Association today announced that the Task Force for American Innovation would receive SURA’s 2012 Distinguished Friend of Science Award during its Board meeting on November 1. The coalition is being honored for its extraordinary efforts to “fulfill the SURA mission of strengthening the scientific and technical capabilities of the Southeast and nation.”

The award, which comes with a \$10,000 honorarium, honors the Task Force’s advocacy for science, technology and innovation. As the first organizational recipient of this award, which was established in 2006, the TFAI was an enthusiastic choice for recognition by SURA’s Executive Committee, chaired by Virginia Tech President Charles W. Steger.

“The Task Force has led a tireless campaign to promote the innovation agenda on Capitol Hill and with the White House, said Charles W. Steger, President of Virginia Tech and Chair of the SURA Council of Presidents and Executive Committee. “Their efforts have demonstrated the strength and non-partisan nature of advocating for research and science as a means to economic competitiveness.”

An alliance of more than 60 of America’s most innovative companies and leading scientific societies and business and research university associations, the Task Force on American Innovation was formed in 2004 to support federal funding of scientific research in the physical sciences.

Based in Washington, DC, TFAI holds weekly meetings and works with the Administration and Congress to support science budgets which fund critical research at universities and national laboratories and build the skills of our scientific workforce. SURA operates one such lab, the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility, for the U.S. Department of Energy through Jefferson Science Associates – a SURA/Computer Sciences Corporation joint venture.

SURA began working with the organization in 2004 with its “Don’t Flat Line our Future” campaign. The task force held nearly 120 meeting that first year with Congressional leaders to advocate the innovation and R&D agenda. In February 2005, it released the *Benchmarks of Our Innovation Future* study, and continued working with Congress and the White House – influencing the Bush administration to include the American Competitiveness Initiative in the FY07 budget. That effort helped lead to the *America Competes* legislation which was aimed at doubling funding of basic research in physical sciences at key agencies over ten years. More recent efforts included supporting the research funding in the Economic Recovery and

Reinvestment Act (2009) and the America Competes reauthorization (2010) – efforts that brought together a coalition of major research universities and corporations such as Intel, Lockheed Martin, Texas Instruments, IBM, and Google.

The SURA Distinguished Friend of Science Award was established in 2006 to commemorate the organization's 25th Anniversary. SURA's Executive Committee manages the solicitation, screening and selection of the recipient for this award. Past honorees included U.S. Senators Lamar Alexander and John Warner; Norman Augustine, former CEO of Lockheed Martin and advocate for American leadership in research and innovation; Chuck Robb, former governor and U.S. Senator from Virginia; and Neal Lane, former NSF Director and White House science advisor. Each of SURA's 62 member institutions is eligible to nominate candidates for the award.

Leaders of the organization will be presented the honorarium at a reception held in conjunction with the SURA Board of Trustees Fall Meeting in Washington, DC.

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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.