



## ***Press Release***

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**For Immediate Release**  
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### **SURA Honors Georgia Tech Biologist As Distinguished Scientist**

**Washington, DC** – The Southeastern Universities Research Association today announced that Jeffrey Skolnick, Director of the Integrated Biosystems Institute at Georgia Institute of Technology, will receive its 2014 SURA Distinguished Scientist Award.

The annual honor goes to a research scientist whose extraordinary work fulfills the SURA mission to “advance collaborative research and education” in the Southeast and nation. The award and its \$10,000 honorarium will be presented to Dr. Skolnick on March 18, in conjunction with the SURA Board of Trustees meeting being held at the West Virginia University in Morgantown.

“SURA is proud to honor such a prolific and gifted researcher as Jeffrey Skolnick. His work in the field of protein structure and drug discovery epitomizes the importance of basic research in our society,” said Charles W. Steger, President of Virginia Tech and Chair of the SURA Council of Presidents. “As scientists like Professor Skolnick improve our knowledge of biological functions and reactions, we’ll eventually improve our quality of life and economic advancement.”

Skolnick is the author or co-author of over 350 journal articles in the fields of systems and computational biology and his cutting edge research on protein structure and function has provided remarkable insights into the relative roles of physics and evolution in dictating the properties of protein structure and function and holds the potential to dramatically accelerate and enhance the drug discovery process.

Over his career, Skolnick has made significant scientific contributions. He developed the first coarse grained model for protein structure prediction, the first successful multiscale modeling approach to structure prediction, the first effective medium model for a membrane that enabled the successful prediction of peptide orientation and conformation with respect to the membrane, Fuzzy Functional Forms that were the first low resolution approach to protein function prediction, and the highly accurate EFICAz approach to enzyme function inference. His more recent work has significant applications to both drug discovery and to improving our fundamental understanding of the possible origin of life.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Skolnick received his bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from Washington University in St. Louis, and his Masters and Ph.D. from Yale University. Among Skolnick’s other honors and awards are: Biophysical Society Fellow (2004), Stockton Kimball Award, University at Buffalo (2003), Joseph F. Foster Lecturer, Purdue University (2001), American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow (2001), and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Fellow (1983.)

The SURA Distinguished Scientist Award was established in 2007, commemorating the organization’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. SURA’s Development & Relations Committee manages the solicitation, screening and selection of the recipient from a SURA member institution. The president and trustee of each of SURA’s 62 member research universities is eligible to make one nomination for the Distinguished Scientist Award.

The award and honorarium will be presented to Dr. Skolnick at a reception and dinner in Morgantown on March 18.

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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](http://www.sura.org).*