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CONTACT: Jim Manley
jmanley@gga.com / 202-255-3736

Members of Congress Who Have Made Funding for Basic Scientific and Medical Research a Top Priority Celebrated at Science Coalition Breakfast of Champions

Washington, D.C., Oct. 7, 2015 – University leaders from across the country, joined by representatives from scientific societies, research organizations and higher-education associations, today gathered to applaud some 30 members of Congress who are Science Coalition [Champions of Science](#). These are legislators who have demonstrated a continuing commitment to funding the basic research that keeps the United States at the forefront of scientific and medical discovery and that fuels the nation’s innovation pipeline.

The breakfast, held in the Kennedy Caucus Room on Capitol Hill, was attended by more than 160 people. Allan Jones, CEO of the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle, provided keynote remarks. Bernadette Gray-Little, chancellor of the University of Kansas, Daniel J. Bernardo, interim president of Washington State University, and Nancy M. Targett, acting president of the University of Delaware recognized the Champions of Science and spoke about the importance of their leadership.

“When the federal government invests in basic research, great things happen,” said Gray-Little. “Discoveries are made with profound implications for health, safety and quality of life. Jobs are created. The next generation of scientists, engineers, doctors, teachers and entrepreneurs is trained. And, the economy grows. This virtuous cycle only works, though, when we have members of Congress who not only understand the value of investing in science, but who are committed to making the funding of research a top concern for themselves and their colleagues.”

The Science Coalition is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization of more than [60](#) U.S. public and private research universities, including KU, WSU and UD. It is dedicated to sustaining the federal government’s investment in basic scientific research as a means to stimulate the economy, spur innovation and drive America’s global competitiveness. More than half of U.S. economic growth since World War II can be traced to science-driven technological innovation.

“It’s easy to look back and see all of the things that federal investment in basic research has brought us. From smart phones to genomic medicine, federally funded research conducted at universities and national labs across the country has served as an essential catalyst,” said Bernardo. “It’s much harder to look forward and know how the investments we make in

scientific research today will change our future. Champions of Science have the foresight and fortitude to make research funding a priority – even in times of fiscal restraint – because they know it’s an investment in the future.”

The Science Coalition’s Champion of Science Award is given out each year to a small number of members of Congress whose actions and votes consistently reflect their belief that basic scientific research, conducted at universities and national labs across the country, is essential to the nation’s ability to address pressing issues in health, security, energy and the environment, and additionally, that a strong federally supported basic research enterprise drives innovation that fuels the U.S. economy. About 80 members of Congress have received the award since 1999.

The biennial Breakfast of Champions event is held to celebrate sitting members of Congress who have received the award and to recognize the most recent class of champions – those who received their award in the past two years – with commemorative Breakfast of Champions Wheaties® boxes.

Those receiving commemorative boxes at today’s breakfast were: Sen. Chris Coons ▪ Rep. Jim Cooper ▪ Rep. John Culberson ▪ Rep. Charlie Dent ▪ Sen. Dick Durbin ▪ Rep. Sam Farr ▪ Rep. Dan Lipinski ▪ Rep. Nita Lowey ▪ Sen. Jerry Moran ▪ Sen. Patty Murray ▪ Sen. Bill Nelson ▪ Sen. Richard Shelby.

The other members of Congress recognized at today’s event included: Sen. Lamar Alexander ▪ Rep. Ken Calvert ▪ Rep. Rosa DeLauro ▪ Rep. John Duncan ▪ Rep. Anna Eshoo ▪ Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen ▪ Rep. Mike Honda ▪ Rep. Steny Hoyer ▪ Rep. Randy Hultgren ▪ Rep. Ron Kind ▪ Sen. Ed Markey ▪ Sen. Barbara Mikulski ▪ Rep. Nancy Pelosi ▪ Rep. David Price ▪ Sen. Pat Roberts ▪ Sen. Chuck Schumer ▪ Rep. James Sensenbrenner ▪ Rep. Louise Slaughter ▪ Rep. Pete Visclosky ▪ Sen. Ron Wyden.

“We all know that the recent history of research funding is not good. While other nations have been investing aggressively in research and education, U.S. investments have been stagnant. While other countries work to create an innovation dividend, we risk creating an American innovation deficit,” said Targett. This is where the leadership of our Champions of Science matters most; helping to convince your colleagues of what you know to be true: that investment in scientific research matters – not just to our health and productivity – but also to this nation’s long-term economic wellbeing.”

Learn more about The Science Coalition and its initiatives at www.sciencecoalition.org and www.science2034.org. Follow The Science Coalition on Twitter @SciCoalition #ScienceMatters.