

LEAVING A LEGACY AT AAAS

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INAUGURAL MARTIN AND ROSE WACHTEL CANCER RESEARCH AWARD

This past July, AAAS presented the inaugural Martin and Rose Wachtel Cancer Research Award to Scott Tomlins, whose work has redefined the types of mutations present in common cancers, elucidated the molecular landscape of prostate cancer, and is enabling precision medicine in the early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of prostate cancer.

The award is made possible through the generosity of Martin and Rose Wachtel, whose bequest of more than \$1 million established an endowment at AAAS to recognize an early-career investigator who has performed outstanding work in the field of cancer research. The award winner is invited to deliver a public lecture on his or her research and receives a cash award of \$25,000. Their prize-winning essay is published as a Perspective in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

Honoring Tomlins, an assistant professor of pathology and urology at the University of Michigan Medical School, as the first winner of the Wachtel award was a united decision by the selection committee. As noted by Katrina Kelner, a member of the selection committee and editor of *Science Translational Medicine*, “His discovery of a frequent gene fusion in prostate cancer altered the way the field thought about the genetic causes of the common solid tumors—not only prostate but also lung, breast and colon cancer.” Tomlin’s essay describing his research was published in the journal’s 10 July 2013 issue.

The prize is named for donor Martin Wachtel, a successful businessman who, in 1939, established Albino Farms, a 15-acre farm in New Jersey devoted exclusively to the raising of albino mice and rats for medical research. A modest man, he once described his venture as a “spoke in the wheel of scientific progress.” In 1945, the farm was assigned wholly to meeting the needs of federal agencies and provided more than 100,000 mice that year to test the encephalitis vaccine. In later years, Albino Farms provided animals to private laboratories, colleges, and universities, as well as government agencies for use in the study of toxicology, hormones, radiology, and nutrition. Having no children, Wachtel and his wife sought to utilize their accumulated wealth to support and recognize those in the medical community whose work has the greatest impact.

Scott Tomlins, an assistant professor at the University of Michigan Medical School, won the Martin and Rose Wachtel Award, a \$25,000 cancer research prize, for his discovery that two particular genes are fused together in almost half of all prostate cancers, which led to the development of a urine test that detects the cancer.



BEQUEST ESTABLISHES AWARDS FOR WOMEN IN THE CHEMICAL SCIENCES

As a chemist and AAAS member since 1965, the late Marion Tuttle Milligan Mason wanted to support the advancement of women in the chemical sciences. A \$2.2 million bequest has established the Marion Milligan Mason Fund to support research by early-career professional women over the next 20 years.

“I am creating this fund in honor of the memory of all the men and women of the Tuttle and Milligan families who believed in higher education for women and encouraged them in their pursuit of professional and business careers,” Mason wrote in her will.

The \$50,000 AAAS Marion Milligan Mason Awards for Women in the Chemical Sciences will be given every two years to early-career, professional women to advance their research. The goal is to kick-start the career of promising future investigators. “She was concerned that young women did not have the same opportunities that men had in the sciences and that by funding such research, their careers could be advanced,” said Charles Milligan, Mason’s nephew and the executor of her estate.

Mason was born in Cincinnati in 1927 and grew up in Westfield, New Jersey. She studied at Vassar College, an alma mater she shared with her mother and three of her aunts. “It was always a great source of pride to Marion that Martin Tuttle [Marion’s maternal grandfather] had managed to send his daughters to Vassar at a time when college education of women was by no means the norm,” said her brother Barton Milligan, a AAAS Fellow.

After her graduation in 1949, Mason worked in Bound Brook, New Jersey, as a chemist at the American Cyanamid Company. When she learned that, compared to her colleagues who had recently earned doctoral degrees in chemistry, she was performing similar work for considerably less compensation, she felt motivated to continue her education. In 1970 Mason earned her Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry from Rutgers University.

As those in the Baby Boom generation reach retirement age over the next 20 years,

there will be a major turnover of leadership positions in the chemical sciences, giving women in the field unique and unprecedented opportunities. These much-needed awards will identify and prepare a new generation of women in the chemical sciences to fill those roles.

The first AAAS Marion Milligan Mason Awards for Women in the Chemical Sciences will be awarded in 2015.

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By making AAAS a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement plan, or life insurance policy, you can create a legacy to advance science in the service of society for years to come. To discuss your planned giving options, contact Director of Development, Juli Staiano, at 202-326-6636 or jstaiano@aaas.org.