

### **Chemistry Professor Manish Mehta Wins Teacher-Scholar Award**

Nov 11, 2009

OBERLIN, OHIO -- The Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation has awarded Associate Professor of Chemistry Manish Mehta the Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award for his outstanding leadership in conducting original scholarly research with undergraduates.

The award—one of the chemistry community’s highest honors—provides Mehta with an unrestricted research grant of \$60,000, which will support the expansion of student research opportunities over the summer, as well as travel to conferences and the purchase of new lab equipment.

“Research support at undergraduate institutions is very important,” said Dr. Mark J. Cardillo, executive director of The Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation. “Nearly half the chemists who earn a doctorate degree receive their bachelor’s degree from an undergraduate institution. And research is a fundamental part of chemistry education.”

The Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award acknowledges Mehta’s educational efforts and scholarly research achievements with undergraduates in the realm of biophysics. In his lab, Mehta and his students use a combination of nuclear magnetic resonance, x-ray diffraction, and high-level computational simulations to investigate how the solvent environment influences the three-dimensional structure of small proteins, called peptides. In addition, the award recognizes Mehta’s skills as a mentor—skills that have, in the last five years, helped send five lab alumni to top graduate programs in biophysics at Yale, Columbia, Harvard, and MIT.

“We are delighted that Manish has received recognition for his accomplishments as a scientist and as an educator,” said Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry Matthew Elrod. “Collaborative faculty-student research experiences have long been identified as one of the strengths of Oberlin’s science program, and it is gratifying that a prestigious national award has identified Manish as a particularly effective mentor of future scientists.”

Mehta is one of seven college professors across the country to win the 2009 award, and the third current Oberlin professor to receive the honor; both Elrod and Professor of Chemistry and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Sean Decatur won the award in 2003.

“Winning nominations for the Henry Dreyfus Award are all situated in their local context,” said Mehta. “Thus, equally importantly, the award recognizes the strength of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Oberlin. Student-faculty undergraduate research has been part of the departmental culture for many years. My colleagues and I are committed to providing our students rigorous experiences in research and a strong curricular preparation for advanced study.”

The Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation is a leading non-profit organization devoted to the advancement of the chemical sciences. It was established in 1946 by chemist, inventor, and businessman Camille Dreyfus, who directed that the foundation’s purpose be “to advance the science of chemistry,

chemical engineering and related sciences as a means of improving human relations and circumstances around the world.”

For more information about Mehta’s honor, visit the [Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Awards section of the foundation’s website](#).



---

Oberlin College  
247 West Lorain Street, Suite C  
Oberlin, Ohio 44074  
(440) 775-8474  
www.oberlin.edu  
PRESS RELEASE