

News Release

For Immediate Release

Patrick Gruber to Receive AATCC Millson Award

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C., USA, March 21, 2019—AATCC has named **Patrick R. Gruber** as the recipient of the Henry E. Millson Award for Invention for developing a green chemistry-based continuous process for producing polylactic acid fibers known as PLA. The Millson Award recognizes inventions that are outstanding contributions to textile technology.

Gruber is CEO and board member at Gevo Inc., specializing in converting carbohydrates into low carbon chemicals and fuels, lessening reliance on petrochemical sources.

Gruber began his career at Cargill Inc. in 1988 as technology manager in search of new business opportunities involving renewable resource-based products as raw materials. He served as Technical Director of Cargill's BioScience division from 1998 to 1999. In 1997, Gruber co-founded NatureWorks, LLC (formerly Cargill Dow, LLC), and served as Vice President of Technology and Operations and Chief Technology Officer until 2005.

Chemical giants had spent decades trying to find a renewable and environmentally safe raw material to make into plastic. Until Gruber's discovery in 1989, no one had discovered out how to make PLA from plant starches with the right properties and inexpensively enough for large scale production.

A new fermentation and distillation process enabled cheaper purification, better optical composition control, and significant yield increases over existing practice. The patented process enabled a single plant, using a flexible manufacturing system, to produce different PLA grades for multiple markets at low cost while adhering to environmentally sound practices.

Gruber has received numerous awards including: The George Washington Carver Award from BIO, The Presidential Green Chemistry Award, The *Discover* Award for Environmental Innovation from Discover Magazine, The Lee W. Rivers Innovation Award from CDMA, an Outstanding Achievement Award from the University of Minnesota in 2011, and numerous others. Gruber is the editor the two volume book "Biorefineries—Industrial Processes and Products," eight papers and book chapters, and holds more than 60 US patents, with a number of others pending.

Gruber received a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Minnesota. He also earned an M.S. in business administration from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota.

The Millson Award

AATCC named the Millson Award for Invention for Henry E. Millson, a noted inventor who was head of dyes research for American Cyanamid. Millson, the 1958 recipient of AATCC's Olney Medal for outstanding achievement in textile chemistry, endowed the award in 1979 with the

stipulation that he never be considered a candidate. After agreeing to that condition, the Association promptly named the award in his honor.

Award Presentation

The Millson Award will be presented at AATCC's International Conference in Fort Worth, TX, USA, at the Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown Hotel, during the Award Luncheon on April 11, 2019 at noon.

For a complete list of previous award recipients, visit www.aatcc.org/abt/awards/millson/millson-award-recipients

About AATCC: AATCC is the world's leading not-for-profit association serving textile professionals since 1921. AATCC, headquartered in Research Triangle Park, N.C., USA, provides test method development, quality control materials, and professional networking for members in about 50 countries throughout the world.

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Media Contact:

Debra Hibbard | Executive Assistant

AATCC

1 Davis Drive | PO Box 12215 | Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2115 | USA

Office: +1.919.549.3524 | Fax: +1.919.549.8933 | Headquarters: +1.919.549.8141

Email: hibbardd@aatcc.org | www.aatcc.org/

For a photo of Millson Award winner, Patrick Gruber please visit: <https://www.aatcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pat.jpg>

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