



Yihong Li

AATCC Future Leaders Award

The **AATCC Future Leaders Award** recognizes promising young professionals in the fields of textiles, apparel, and related material sciences, provides acknowledgement and recognition to enhance their careers, engages these young professionals in the work of the Association, and brings their insights and needs to the forefront. These young professionals are the future of our industry and the future leaders of AATCC.

Award recipients are determined by the AATCC Interest Groups; each interest group may choose up to a maximum of two individuals to receive this award.

AATCC is proud to introduce you to this year's recipients of the AATCC Future Leaders Award:

Chemical Applications Interest Group

Yihong Li is a senior technical manager at Microban International and has been with Microban since 2019. Prior to this, she was an Application Engineer at Electrolux, where she led a team that launched a new washing machine with first-in-industry PODs dispensing. As a Test Engineering Technician III at Scott Safety (3M), she was part of a team that launched a new portable gas detection device.

Li received a BS in Environmental Engineering and an MS in Applied Chemistry from 2001 through 2008 at Beihang University (Beijing, China). She received a PhD in Mechanical Engineering in 2012 from West



Jenna Eason

Virginia University, and is currently attending Harvard Extension School, working towards a master's degree in Management. While working on her PhD, she was a Research Assistant with the West Virginia University/National Energy Technology Laboratory. Based on her PhD research results, she was awarded one of seven Department of Energy funded projects. Li has filed seven patents and published nine refereed journal articles.

She joined AATCC in 2017 and is a member of the AATCC Antimicrobial Activity Test Methods Committee and the AATCC Home Laundering Technology Test Methods Committee.

Concept 2 Consumer Interest Group

Jenna Eason is a senior applications development scientist with Eastman Chemical. She has been with Eastman Chemical since 2016. Prior to this, she worked with Sage Automotive Interiors as a segment leader and designer, Polartec LLC as a new product development process engineer, and Vescom B.V. as a product designer. From 2007 through 2010, Eason was a technical textile design and research assistant with North Carolina State University (NCSU).

As an undergraduate at NCSU, Eason was an Anni Albers Scholar, who double majored, graduating in 2007 with a BS in Textile Technology and a BA in Art and Design. She continued with NCSU, receiving an MS in Textiles Technology and Management in 2009.

Eason joined AATCC in 2020 and currently serves as an AATCC student mentor.



Sarah Plautz

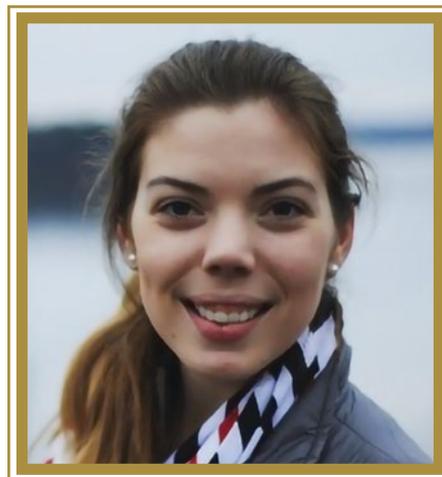
Materials Interest Group

Sarah Plautz has worked at W.L. Gore & Associates for nine years, where she experienced close collaboration with manufacturing, textile testing, textile development, and college recruiting. She graduated from NCSU in 2011 with a BS in Textile Technology, Medical Textiles concentration.

Currently, she is the Vice Chair of the AATCC Delaware Valley Section and has been active in this section since 2017. As the acting Delaware Valley Section chair, Plautz adapted to the virtual setting by creating multiple online events to continue to bring the section together. This includes block printing demonstrations and a virtual lab tour series that has been attended by over 70 AATCC members. She is a strong advocate for rising professionals in the textile industry and hopes to get more rising professionals interested in textiles through the Rising Professionals Interest Group. Plautz joined AATCC in 2018 and is a member of the AATCC Membership Committee.

Rising Professionals Interest Group

Malinda Scheff is a material supplier quality manager at Patagonia, where she manages a team responsible for ensuring all Patagonia materials are tested according to standards from development through production. Scheff has worked with Patagonia since 2017 as a materials performance engineer and a testing and standards engineer prior to her current position. Before Patagonia, Scheff was a technical associate at AATCC. Scheff received a BS in Polymer and Color Chemistry and a minor in Biological Sciences at NCSU.



Malinda Scheff

Scheff has been a member of AATCC since 2016 and is active in the following research committees: Stain Resistance Test Methods, Home Laundering Technology, Evaluation of Materials & Products for End Use Performance, Water Resistance Test Methods, Thermal Regulation Test Methods, Global Sustainability Test Methods, and the Rising Professionals (RISE) Interest Group.

The Future Leaders Award

Nominees for the AATCC Future Leaders Award must be AATCC members who are 39 years old or younger and actively engaged in the greater textile or related industries. They must display leadership skills and have a history of service to AATCC or the greater textile and related industries. A key quality of successful candidates is a desire to become more involved with the objectives of AATCC: to increase expertise, encourage research, and establish channels for the interchange of professional knowledge. Nominees must agree to join the Rising Professionals Interest Group and must participate, as their professional commitments allow, in the work of the Interest Group.

The award includes a framed certificate signed by the AATCC president and the Interest Group (IG) chairs and a special pin. The award was presented on October 6, 2022, at the Awards Luncheon during AATCC's Textile Discovery Summit, in Charlotte, NC, USA.

For more information about the AATCC Future Leaders Award, visit www.aatcc.org/leaders