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### **Iota Sigma Pi 2020 Award for Professional Excellence Goes to Prof. Debbie C. Crans of Colorado State University**

Iota Sigma Pi, the national organization for women in chemistry, has selected **Prof. Debbie C. Crans** to receive the **Violet Diller Award for Professional Excellence**. This award honors outstanding contributions to chemistry and allied fields by a woman. Nominees are judged on the significance of their accomplishments in academic, governmental, industrial chemistry, education, administration, or a combination of these areas. She has been invited to participate in the organization's Triennial Convention in 2020.



Dr. Crans has been teaching at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO since 1987 and is currently Professor of Chemistry and Cell and Molecular Biology. She was named Professor Laureate of the College of Natural Sciences in 2015-2017. She and her research group are involved in problems related to the mode of action of drugs for diseases such as tuberculosis, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer. They have interests in a range of different drugs including organic drugs, and transition metal based drugs.

Her nominators have stated that a recent result may be her most important to date, namely the observation that vanadium compounds have enhancing effects on oncolytic viruses and can be used to treat cancer. This work represents an important application and shows Crans' ability to bring fundamental inorganic chemistry into other disciplines thus expanding the field of inorganic chemistry.

Dr. Crans' career is unique in combining three scientific disciplines. She is a leader in the area of vanadium chemistry (organic vanadium compounds) and biochemistry, in addition to promoting inorganic chemistry by providing advocacy and a high level of service to the broader inorganic chemistry community. Her research contributions have been recognized by many awards.

She has been a positive force for chemistry as a member of NIH study sections and NSF panels. She founded "The Vanadium Symposium", an international interdisciplinary symposium that gathers researchers from all over the world dedicated to vanadium related research topics. In 2018 she was honored with the first Vanadis Award, presented to a researcher who has displayed innovative research and impacted Vanadium Science.

In addition to her own field of research, Debbie has been a great promoter of chemistry for the broader scientific community and has organized symposia for the Women Chemists Committee and Regional ACS meetings. In her role as chair of the Colorado Local Section ACS of the American Chemical Society (COACS), she organized the “Young Talent in Colorado and Beyond” symposium, in summer 2016 involving more than 100 young untenured scientists from the neighboring states. She is a tireless advocate for young scientists and women, constantly championing deserving individuals for awards.

Dr. Crans earned her BS degree at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and went on to receive a PhD in Organic Chemistry from Harvard University. She conducted postdoctoral research in mechanistic enzymology at the University of California-Los Angeles before joining the faculty at Colorado State.

**IOTA SIGMA PI** is a national honor society for women in chemistry. Its major objectives are to promote interest in chemistry among women students, to foster mutual advancement in academic, business, and social life; and to stimulate personal accomplishment in chemical fields. IOTA SIGMA PI serves to promote the advancement of women in chemistry by granting recognition to women who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement and high professional competence by election into IOTA SIGMA PI. [www.iotasigmapi.info](http://www.iotasigmapi.info)