



Iota Sigma Pi

National Honor Society for Women in Chemistry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Julia Vaynberg, PhD
ispncprofessionalawards@gmail.com
440-364-0424

Iota Sigma Pi Gives 2024 Agnes Fay Morgan Award to Dr. Davita L. Watkins of The Ohio State University

Iota Sigma Pi, the National Organization for Women in Chemistry, has selected Dr. Davita L. Watkins, Associate Professor of Chemistry at The Ohio State University (Columbus, OH), to receive the 2024 Agnes Fay Morgan Research Award.

Dr. Watkins has earned her B.S. in Chemistry and Anthropology from Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN) and PhD in chemistry from The University of Memphis (Memphis, TN). She then continued with as a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Florida (Gainesville, FL) after which she started her independent research as an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Mississippi (2014-2022; University, MS) and then continued at The Ohio State University (2022-present; Columbus, OH) where she is currently a tenured Associate Professor of Chemistry with a partial appointment in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. She is invited to participate in the organization's Triennial Convention in 2026.



Dr. Watkins's research focuses on supramolecular chemistry, specifically in designing novel self-assembled polymeric materials with tunable properties. By synthesizing molecules with carefully engineered self-assembly capabilities, they can translate molecular-scale properties into macroscopic materials' behavior using a "bottom-up" approach. This interdisciplinary work integrates organic synthesis, polymer chemistry, and materials science and has broad implications. Applications range from supramolecular polymers designed for solar energy harvesting to nanocarriers for targeted therapeutic delivery. Through the principles of physical organic chemistry, the Watkins group is transforming materials research by creating customizable, scalable solutions for real-world challenges.

Her accomplishments are widely recognized. Dr. Watkins is a recipient of many prestigious awards and honors, including the 2018 Young Investigator by the Polymeric Materials: Science and Engineering (PMSE) Division branch of the American Chemical Society (ACS), the Emerging Investigator Award by the Royal Society of Chemistry Journal of Materials Chemistry C. She has been named a Trailblazer by Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN), an International Union of

Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) Young Observer (2021), and a Rising Star by ACS Women Chemists Committee (WCC, 2022). She is currently an Associate Editor for ACS Omega and serves on editorial advisory boards of several publications like ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces and the Journal of Physical Organic Chemistry.

Dr. Watkins is also a strong advocate for marginalized populations and devotes a lot of her time to initiatives helping to increase minorities' and women's access to higher education and STEM. She is known for her leadership in organizations such as the National Organization for Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers. She established programs for young women living in rural Mississippi, helping ease their exposure to science education, and actively participated in numerous efforts that benefitted various minority groups. She aims to be a supportive and enthusiastic mentor for her students and is a great role model for women in STEM.

IOTA SIGMA PI is the 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

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