



## ***Press Release***

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### **University of Florida Microbiologist Named SURA Distinguished Scientist**

**Hampton, VA** – The Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) today announced that Lonnie Ingram, Distinguished Professor and Director of the Florida Center for Renewable Chemicals and Fuels at the University of Florida, received its 2008 Distinguished Scientist Award. The award honors a research scientist whose extraordinary work fulfills the SURA mission of “fostering excellence in scientific research.” The award and its \$20,000 honorarium were presented to Ingram today in conjunction with the SURA Board of Trustees meeting held at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia.

“Dr. Ingram brings distinction to his institution and his state, and SURA honors him for the regional and national contribution he makes as a model researcher and leader in bioenergy,” said P. Geoffrey Feiss, Provost at the College of William & Mary and Chair of the SURA Board of Trustees. “He clearly is a dedicated teacher, a talented entrepreneur and a disciplined researcher in the field of microbiology and renewable energy.”

Ingram came to the University of Florida in 1972 as an assistant professor in microbiology and cell science. He rose to full professor in 1982 and was named a Distinguished Professor in Research in 2001. As an early pioneer in metabolic engineering, his work has led to the construction of bacterial strains that produce ethanol and several industrially important chemicals. Research from his laboratory resulted in the formation of two biotechnology companies: Celunol (now Verenium) and BioEnergy International. A prolific writer and researcher, Ingram has authored 186 refereed publications and 18 book chapters, as well as the filing of 15 U.S. patents. As a frequent advisor to federal and state governments, Ingram has provided personal briefings to the President of the United States and Governor of Florida in the past two years. He was recently appointed by Governor Charlie Crist to serve on the Climate Change and Renewable Energy Action Team in Florida.

“Automotive fuel from renewable plant biomass offers the potential to reduce our dependence on imported petroleum, create employment, and improve the environment,” said Dr. Ingram. “Making this a reality is a challenging goal that will require the combined efforts of dedicated scientists, engineers and the business community.”

In addition to receiving a number of awards from the university and academic societies, Ingram was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2001 after being elected as a Fellow with the American Academy of Microbiology in 1998. As an international speaker and convener, his reputation spans from Brazil, Denmark, Korea, England, Japan, Germany, Canada, Ireland, Finland and The Netherlands.

Dr. Winfred Phillips, University of Florida Vice President for Research, wrote in his nomination of Ingram, "His outstanding record of achievement in academia has always been anchored in his belief that the best academic science can lead to solutions for our society's problems." He added, "Very few scientists reach his level of achievement in their careers both with regard to milestones such as a high number of publications, but also with regard to real-world applications of the knowledge gained in his lab."

The SURA Distinguished Service Awards were established in 2006 to commemorate the organization's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. SURA's Development and Relations Committees manage the solicitation, screening and selection of the recipient for this award from a SURA member institution. Dr. David Lee, Vice President for Research at the University of Georgia, is the chair of the selection committee for SURA.

Each of SURA's 63 member institutions are eligible to make one nomination for the Distinguished Scientist Award. Last year's selection was Dr. Susan Wessler of the University of Georgia, a professor of plant biology. Additionally, the committee selects the SURA Distinguished Friend of Science Award presented in conjunction with the Fall Board of Trustees meeting whose honorees include U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee (2006) and U.S. Senator John Warner of Virginia (2007).

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*The Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) is a consortium of over 60 leading research institutions in the southern United States and the District of Columbia established in 1980 as a non-stock, nonprofit corporation. SURA serves as an entity through which colleges, universities, and other organizations may cooperate with one another, and with government and industry in acquiring, developing, and using laboratories and other research facilities and in furthering knowledge and the application of that knowledge in the physical, biological, and other natural sciences and engineering. For more information, visit [www.sura.org](http://www.sura.org).*