

## **FACULTY RESEARCH LECTURER COMMITTEE**

### **NOMINATION FOR THE FACULTY RESEARCH LECTURER FOR THE YEAR 2015-2016**

#### **PROFESSOR XUEMEI CHEN, DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY AND PLANT SCIENCES, INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE PLANT SCIENCES, INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE GENOME BIOLOGY.**

From its inception well over half a century ago, the Faculty Research Lecturer Award has been the highest honor that the Academic Senate bestows. The Committee listed below, composed of five previous Faculty Research Lecturers, is delighted to nominate, Xuemei Chen, Professor of Botany and Plant Sciences for this honor for the year 2015-2016.

Ten exceptional faculty members across all the three Colleges at the University were placed for the nomination. The committee is extremely impressed by the very high academic, research and professional activities across the different disciplines represented. The committee selected Professor Xuemei Chen for her demonstrated brilliance as a geneticist and developmental biologist. Professor Chen has been nationally and internationally recognized for her scientific accomplishments. She has been elected (2013) as a member of the National Academy of Sciences. She has been given a Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation Investigator Award (2012-2017), and the Charles Albert Shull Award (2006) from the American Society of Plant Biologists.

Professor Chen has outstanding research accomplishments in the field of small RNA biology. She has an extraordinarily productive research program that has made seminal discoveries of key biological mechanisms in plants and other organisms. A nominator writes that, "Without any doubt, the discovery of small RNA as critical regulatory molecules of biological processes is one of the most important and exciting breakthroughs in the life sciences of the past 15 years."

Another nominator writes that, "Dr. Chen is exceptional in her brilliance as both a geneticist and developmental biologist. Her discovery of microRNAs in the control of plant flower development is a classic tour de force of genetic expertise, guided by a sophisticated sense of underlying developmental mechanisms."

Yet another nominator writes, "Xuemei is a fantastic colleague: supportive, engaging, and of course a truly gifted and insightful scientist. She has tremendous leadership qualities, demonstrated at a national level through her service on a variety of boards, and her work has built a sterling reputation in the community of plant biologists."

In recognition of her enormous creativity and path-breaking accomplishments, the Senate Committee on Faculty Research Lecturer unanimously and enthusiastically nominates Professor Xuemei Chen as the Faculty Research Lecturer for 2015-2016.

#### **The Faculty Research Lecturer (2015-2016) Committee**

Chandra Varma (Department of Physics and Astronomy)-Chair

Norman Ellstrand, (Department of Botany and Plant Sciences)

John M. Fischer (Department of Philosophy)

Howard S. Friedman (Department of Psychology)

Alexander S. Raikhel (Department of Entomology)