



**ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH  
PARKS**

*Creating Communities of Innovation*

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### AURP 2015 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

*University of Maryland Research Park Wins  
2015 Outstanding Research Park Award*



AURP President Charles D'Agostino, Executive Director of the Louisiana State University Innovation Park with Brian Darmody, Associate Vice President for Campus and Foundation Relations at the University of Maryland College Park.

**Buffalo October 1, 2015** – University of Maryland Research Park today takes home top honors as the Association of University Research Parks' 2015 Outstanding Research Park, at the AURP Annual Awards of Excellence, hosted by Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. This award program recognizes the achievements of outstanding university research parks and those who direct them, and encourages the development of best practices.

The UM Research Park is a public-private partnership between [Corporate Office Properties Trust](#) and the [University of Maryland](#) (UMD). UMD works with all Research Park companies to provide synergistic and collaborative opportunities. The Research Park offers locations from incubator space for start up companies to build-to-suit options for larger technology clients.

“Not only is our research park the largest in the state, but it stimulates major partnerships among private, federal, and academic scientists,” said University of Maryland President Wallace D. Loh. “It helps make Greater College Park a major international hub of climate, food and language research, and the park will only grow in importance as our new startup innovation district develops next to it,” he added.

“The national recognition for the UMD Research Park by AURP is testament to the hard work of many people over many years at the University of Maryland,” said Brian Darmody, Associate Vice President for Corporate and Foundation Relations at the University of Maryland, who is also a past president of AURP. “I am pleased our park is being recognized not just for what it is, but what it portends for the future of university research parks as places to live, learn and earn.”

The UMD Research Park environment provides employment for over 3,000 people in a variety of fields, and uniquely links government, university and private sector entities focusing on language science, environmental science, and food safety.

#### **Others recognized at the 2015 AURP Awards of Excellence include:**

##### **Emerging Research Park Award: McMaster University Innovation Park**

The Emerging Research Park Award recognizes a developing park that excels in moving technology from the laboratory to economically viable business activities and is awarded this year to McMaster University Innovation Park in Hamilton, Ontario. The McMaster Innovation Park has grown from an initial 37 acres of brownfield land into a community featuring three contemporary, sustainable buildings totaling approximately 450,000 square feet of office and high-tech, custom laboratory space. More than sixty tenants operate in this environment that enables them to create, connect and commercialize.

##### **Career Achievement Award: Greg Hyer, University of Wisconsin Madison Research Park**

The AURP Career Achievement Award recognizes an individual who has made research parks a central focus of their career, who has achieved success with a park over a substantial period of time and who has advanced understanding of university research parks. Greg Hyer, Associate Director of the University of Wisconsin Madison Research Park, takes home top Career Achievement honors this year. Hyer has served as Associate Director of University Research Park nearly since its inception. More than any other single individual, he has steered the course of the park over more than 25 years into a widely recognized success. He has managed the development, financing, and leasing of over 740,000 square feet of technology commercialization space. Hyer has developed everything from office space to BSL-3 research labs, including the MGE Innovation Center. He also has led the development for the new 380-acre park that will allow University Research Park to grow and expand into the future.

### **Leadership Award: Dr. Jaime Parada-Avila, PITT Monterey**

The AURP Leadership Award is given in recognition of a leader who has made an outstanding contribution to the success and total community impact of a university research and technology park. Dr. Jaime Parada-Avila, representing the Parque de Investigación e Innovación Tecnológica in Monterey, Mexico, has demonstrated great leadership encouraging Mexico's investment in science and technology. He has worked to bring university applied research closer to meeting industry needs, and spearheaded the startup of Mexico's first technology and engineering center for Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology System (CONACYT). As a result of his leadership, Mexico issued new programs supporting science and technology, one highlight of which is a new student scholarship program. He is currently serving as the President-Elect of the Mexican Academy of Engineering.

### **Innovation Awards: SMARTERSHADE and Pindrop Security**

The AURP Innovation Award recognizes university research park companies that have produced substantial and meaningful products or services. In 2015, two companies are being honored. SMARTERSHADE, recently acquired by VGSmartGlass, is an early stage company housed at the University Tech Park at Illinois Institute of Technology that has developed a film-based shading system that can be integrated into a window. A user can make any window go from clear to completely dark with various shades in between. This results in heat reduction, view preservation, and the ability to maintain privacy. Also honored is Pindrop Security, nominated by Tech Square at Georgia Tech. Pindrop Security's Fraud Detection System (FDS) protects call centers by an innovative fraud detection technology which verifies legitimate callers. This technology can reduce the call center operational cost by over fifty percent.

### **Vision Award: Senator Christopher Coons**

The AURP Vision Award recognizes an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to the AURP community and is awarded to Senator Christopher Coons (D-Delaware). Senator Coons is an expert on U.S. Patent Policy. He has studied the issues with current and proposed patent policy in great detail, and has realized that pending U.S. patent reform needs to be reflective of the needs of small and emerging companies, not just large technology companies. For many years, U.S. innovators have suffered from an inefficient patent and trademark office, severe backlogs, and poor quality patents. Senator Coons supports the America Invents Act, which transitions the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to a modern, fee-funded patent office. He is also engaged in regular oversight to make sure that USPTO brings its backlog down while increasing the quality of the patents that it issues. Senator Coons has also supported strong IP protections as a part of any new free trade agreement.

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### **About AURP**

The Association of University Research Parks is a professional association of university related research and science parks. AURP's mission is to foster innovation, commercialization and economic growth through university, industry and government partnerships. For more information, visit AURP's web site at [www.aurp.net](http://www.aurp.net) or contact Eileen Walker at [eileenwalker@aurp.net](mailto:eileenwalker@aurp.net).