

MARY ANNE WHITE NAMED OFFICER OF THE ORDER OF CANADA

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Dr. Mary Anne White

On November 17, 2016, one of Nova Scotia's best known and most prolific scientists, Dalhousie Chemistry Professor Emerita, Mary Anne White, was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada. The award citation captures the essence of Dr. White's career – her lifelong dedication to science as expressed through her research program and her public outreach:

“Mary Anne White has made critical advances to materials chemistry and to science outreach in Canada. A professor of chemistry at Dalhousie University for over three decades, she is Canada's leading expert on how various materials physically react to heat. Notably, she contributed to the understanding of materials that change colour based on their temperature, a breakthrough that is now used in commercial products. Passionate about fostering a love of science in the next generation, she has played a leadership role in coordinating National Chemistry Week and in the creation of a science discovery centre in Halifax.”¹

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¹ *Order of Canada Investiture Ceremony*. gg.ca/document.aspx?id=16628&lan=eng, accessed 22/01/2017.

This latest honour caps off a stellar career, which began in her student days at the University of Western Ontario and McMaster University and continues today in her role as Professor Emerita at Dalhousie University. Following her doctoral studies, Dr. White spent two years as an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellow at Oxford University, U.K., before receiving a prestigious NSERC University Research Fellowship as she began her academic career at the University of Waterloo in 1981. Two years later, she moved to Dalhousie University where she has built a research program that has brought together chemists and physicists interested in how the properties of materials change with temperature.

In over three decades at Dalhousie University, Professor White published over 180 papers and a textbook, “*Physical Properties of Materials*”, now in its second edition. At the same time, she has been a leader in science outreach, fostering public appreciation for science and promoting science literacy. She has been a strong role model to aspiring young scientists, in particular to young women. The driving force behind the creation of numerous resources for elementary school aged students, coordinator of National Chemistry Week, and leader in the creation of Halifax’s Discovery Centre, Dr. White is often heard on CBC radio, including as a frequent contributor to “Quirks and Quarks.”

Professor White has received numerous awards from Dalhousie for both her teaching and research. Since 1996, she has held Research Professorships including a Killam Research Professorship, University Research Professorship, and in 2015 was named the Harry Shirreff Professor of Chemical Research. She has twice received Honorary Degrees, from McMaster University in 2008 and from University of Western Ontario in 2011. She has been elected Fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada (CIC; 1995), the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC; 2002), and the Royal Society of Canada (RSC; 2013). Her numerous national awards for her contributions to teaching and research include the Canadian Society for Chemistry Noranda Award for Research in Physical/Theoretical Chemistry (1996) and the CIC Union Carbide Chemical Education Award (2002) – one of only a handful of women to receive either award. Other prestigious awards include the Royal Society of Canada McNeil Medal for Public Awareness of Science and the American Chemical Society (ACS) Award for the Incorporation of Sustainability into Chemical Education. A full summary of awards and distinctions

is listed on the Dalhousie website, Thermal Properties of Materials – mawhite.chem.dal.ca/Biography.htm

In 2016, after being a long-time member of the NSIS, Professor White was made an Honorary Member in recognition of her conspicuous service to the advancement of science in Nova Scotia, Canada, and indeed the world. Although “retired”, she continues her work unabated, a true role model for women in science.

