



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CO-LABS Media Contact:

Dan Powers

CO-LABS Executive Director

720-389-0455

dan@co-labs.org

CO-LABS Announces Winners of 2019 Governor's Awards for High-Impact Research

Eleventh Annual Event Honors Colorado's Top Scientists and Engineers for Projects Having a Significant Impact on Society

DENVER, CO – October 23, 2019: CO-LABS has announced the four winners of the 2018 Governor's Award for High-Impact Research. Now in its 11th year, the event gathers scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs, business leaders and government officials to celebrate the exceptional and groundbreaking work of scientists and engineers from Colorado's federally-funded research labs and institutions.

The winners will be formally recognized and celebrated on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 from 5:00pm-9:00pm at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard in Denver, Colorado. Winners information and registration details are available at www2019GovAwards.com.

There are three winners this year, which include brilliant, complex and impactful partnerships and research:

- A technology based on Nobel Prize-winning research on lasers from JILA at the University of Colorado-Boulder that has been ruggedized and commercialized here in Colorado for use in the field and can detect methane a quarter of a human breath from over a mile away;
- A data sleuthing effort that revealed violations of Montreal Protocol emissions standards that has resulted in China recognizing and taking steps to address this flaw; and
- A multi-agency, public-private collaboration to estimate probable maximum precipitation and frequency of extreme events above dams in Colorado and New Mexico, to enhance safety and community resilience efforts and inform the Colorado and New Mexico State Engineers' priorities and urgent projects.

While each project has a distinct winning team, collectively the awardees include scientists, researchers and professional technologists from over 20 entities, including The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Earth System Research Laboratory (several Divisions), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (several Divisions), the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, the Renewable And Sustainable Energy Institute, LongPath Technologies, Inc., the University of Colorado Boulder, United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the United States Geological Survey, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Applied Weather Associates, MetStat, Inc., Acclivity Associates and the Colorado Division of Water Resources.

Full details of the winning teams and their projects can be seen at www.2019GovAwards.com.

“By working to create collaborations a) among experts in different fields, and b) between researchers and industry, the team produced extraordinary results that has resulted in the spinout company LongPath Technologies,” says Terri Fiez Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation at the University of Colorado – Boulder. “These creative partnerships helped the team do the unthinkable: leverage Nobel-Prize winning technology into something that the oil and gas industry could use daily to improve its environmental footprint, save lives and save money.” Dr. Marla Dowell, Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Boulder labs says “This pathfinding achievement is a success story that could only have occurred in Colorado because of the nexus of extraordinary government and academic research and entrepreneurship.”

“Colorado has one of the highest per capita concentrations of federal science, research and engineering facilities in the nation, with renowned scientists whose research has global impact in a range of fields including agriculture, climate and weather, earth science, materials science, natural resource management, renewable energy, space physics and telecommunications,” said CO-LABS Executive Director Dan Powers. “This prestigious event provides a unique opportunity to connect with leading scientists, lab directors, business leaders and policymakers in an informal and celebratory setting, as we highlight the labs’ role in innovation and their significant contribution to the state economy.”

“I am thrilled that this team of talented scientists, engineers, public safety officials and dam owners is being recognized for their innovative, scientific approach to protecting Coloradans from catastrophic flooding,” says Dr. Robert Webb, Director, Physical Sciences Division at NOAA regarding the extreme precipitation modeling partnership. “This project gives the State of Colorado science-based, 21st Century tools to understand the impacts of future extreme precipitation events, and to design dam spillways capable of withstanding them.”

Numerous technology, research, economic development and engineering organizations with an interest in having a robust innovation ecosystem in Colorado are sponsoring the Awards; including Presenting Sponsor Fransen Pittman. “CO-LABS has opened my eyes and given me unprecedented access to the world-changing science happening right here in our own backyard. The people and purpose behind CO-LABS and it's member organizations have had profound effects on me personally and Fransen Pittman as a whole. We're happy to be a part and support the effort of building a better Colorado through collaboration and support of this inspiring event”, says Ben Garey of Fransen Pittman.

Other major supporters include Colorado State University, the University of Colorado – Boulder, Ball Aerospace, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, EarthX 2020 and many more.

Additional speakers and special guest announcements to come.

About the Governor's Awards for High Impact Research

Started in 2009, the annual Governor's Awards for High-Impact Research celebrates the brilliant ground-breaking discoveries and innovative research from Colorado's ecosystem of federally-funded laboratories and institutions. That year, following the creation of CO-LABS in 2007, Governor Bill Ritter suggested hosting a celebratory and spotlighting event; the various labs were prompted to submit nominations and a Selection Committee was convened of professional researchers, technologists, academics and economic development experts to identify remarkable research having "high impact" on society.

Each year at this event, CO-LABS spotlights the men and women creating our future through brilliant technological and engineering discoveries in aerospace, energy, agriculture, public health, weather prediction, wildlife ecology, communication, earth science and dozens of other fields of research right here in our communities. Over the years Governors Ritter and Hickenlooper have presented winners with these awards and comments recognizing their impact on our country's leadership in science.

In 2018 we gathered 250 scientific, economic development, technology and civic leaders at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science for an evening of inspiring recognition. [See video spotlights from 2018.](#)

Special guests in 2018 included Robert R. Redfield, MD, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry; Dr. Walter Copan, Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology & Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST); Dr. Martin Keller, Director, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) & President of the Alliance for Sustainable Energy & Dr. Waleed Abdalati, Executive Director, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences. Plus Keynote Speaker Alice Jackson, President of Xcel Energy - Colorado.

About CO-LABS:

CO-LABS is a non-profit consortium of federal laboratories, research institutions, businesses and economic development organizations that provide financial and in-kind support for programs that promote the retention and expansion of Colorado scientific resources. Through events, economic analyses, strategic communications and networking activities we work to:

- PROMOTE Colorado as a global leader in research and technology
- EDUCATE the public about the labs' impact and importance of sustained funding for research
- CONNECT the labs, universities and businesses to facilitate partnerships and technology transfer

To learn more, visit www.CO-LABS.org or contact Executive Director Dan Powers at 720-389-0455 or dan@co-labs.org.