

**2018 Mildred S. Christian Career Achievement Award Winner:  
Dr. Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S.**

Dr. Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S., received the Mildred S. Christian Career Achievement Award from the Academy of Toxicological Sciences on March 12, 2018. In honor of Dr. Christian, this award recognizes individuals who demonstrate extraordinary scientific achievement and a lasting impact on toxicological sciences through publications, professional activities, and leadership that has enhanced the practice of toxicology.

As the first female, and the first toxicologist, to serve as the Director of both the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Toxicology Program (NTP), Dr. Birnbaum embodies the spirit of the Mildred S. Christian award. Under Dr. Birnbaum's leadership, the NIEHS has become the world leader in toxicology research, and NIEHS science underlies regulatory decision making in the U.S. and abroad. Scientific reports, such as the bi-annual Report on Carcinogens, generated by the National Toxicology Program, serve as the "gold standard" for scientific analysis of substances that may cause cancer.

Dr. Birnbaum earned her B.A. in Biology from the University of Rochester, New York in 1967, her M.S. in Microbiology from the University of Illinois in 1969, and her Ph.D. in Microbiology with a Biochemistry minor from the University of Illinois in 1972. After completing her postdoctoral work at the University of Massachusetts, Dr. Birnbaum returned to New York and held various research positions for four years at the Masonic Medical Research Laboratory in Utica.

In 1979, Dr. Birnbaum began her 39-year career as a scientific leader with the U.S. federal government. She moved to Research Triangle Park (RTP), North Carolina to hold a Senior Staff Fellow joint-position with the NTP and National Cancer Institute. She did not stay a fellow for long, and was hired as a Research Microbiologist with the NTP and NIEHS in 1980. She continued to move up the ranks, and in 1989 Dr. Birnbaum moved across the federal campus in RTP to serve as the Director of the Experimental Toxicology Division in the National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After a prestigious 19-year career with the EPA, Dr. Birnbaum returned to the NIEHS and NTP as the Institute and Program Director in 2009, where she continues to serve today.

Dr. Birnbaum stepped in as the Director of the NIEHS and the NTP at a difficult time. As one of the very few NIH institutes not located in the Bethesda, MD – Washington, DC area, and as the only NIH institute studying the effects of the environment on human health, NIEHS was often overlooked. Since she has assumed the role of Director in 2009, Dr. Birnbaum has made NIEHS the premier source of environmental health research and information. She accomplished this by simple hard work – reorganizing the NIEHS to better help its stakeholders and by working with those same stakeholders to create a new set of Strategic Goals. She further created a new group, the Office of Science Education and Diversity to ensure that NIEHS provided opportunities for outreach to students and teachers.

Dr. Birnbaum has been a tireless global ambassador raising awareness throughout the world of how environmental health research offers great hope for preventing disease. She is an internationally recognized expert in the fields of environmental health and toxicology, especially dealing with the human health effects of dioxin, Bisphenol A, asbestos, and flame retardants. She is widely known for her scientific contributions, and was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, one of the highest honors in the fields of medicine and health. She was also elected to the Collegium Ramazzini,

and received honorary doctorates from the University of Rochester in New York, the Ben-Gurion University in Israel, and the Amity University in India.

Dr. Birnbaum has long been recognized nationally and internationally as a world class scientist. Her hundreds of scientific papers, book chapters, and reports have been cited thousands of times by scientists, government officials, and community environmental activists. She has been elected as the President of the Society of Toxicology, where she was later awarded a public communications award for her extraordinary ability to communicate science to others, including scientists, students, Congress, the media, and community groups across the USA and in countries in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. She has represented NIH and the USA at national and international scientific meetings on many occasions.

Dr. Birnbaum has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to focusing research on community concerns over environmental hazards and health problems. For her distinguished achievements in scholarly research, and for her leadership that has inspired toxicologists and women scientists throughout the world, the Academy of Toxicological Sciences is proud to present the 2018 Mildred S. Christian Career Achievement Award to Dr. Linda Birnbaum.