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UNH Researcher Recognized for Life-Long Achievements in Endocrinology

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Long-time New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station (http://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/) researcher Stacia Sower (https://colsa.unh.edu/faculty/sower), professor emeritus of molecular and biochemical neuroendocrinology at the University of New Hampshire, recently gave the prestigious Bargmann-Scharrer Lecture at the quadrennial meeting of the International Congress of Comparative Endocrinology.

Considered the pinnacle lecture of the discipline of comparative endocrinology, the Bargmann-Scharrer Lecture (http://www.icce18.ca/B_Sc_lecturers.html) was created in honor of two pioneers in the field of comparative neuroendocrinology.

STACIA SOWER WITH HER FORMER GRADUATE ADVISOR, CARL SCHRECK FROM OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY, AT THE MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF COMPARATIVE ENDOCRINOLOGY WHERE SOWER GAVE THE PRESTIGIOUS BARGMANN-SCHARRER LECTURE.

Neuroendocrinology is the study of the interactions between the nervous system and the endocrine system. The concept arose from the recognition that the secretion of hormones from the pituitary gland was closely controlled by the brain, and especially by the hypothalamus (http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/Hypothalamus).

“It was a very special honor and opportunity for me to be the recipient of this prestigious lecture,” said Sower. “I really feel so fortunate to have begun my research in comparative neuroendocrinology in the late 1970s. My beginnings in comparative neuroendocrinology coincided with the early advancements in this field.”

Using a multidisciplinary approach, Sower, who came to UNH in 1982, studies the molecular evolution of the neuroendocrine system in basal vertebrates -- lampreys and hagfish. The contributions and major breakthroughs made by her laboratory in the biological sciences and neuroendocrinology are related to the origin, evolution, and function of the neuroendocrine system in vertebrates.

“In my opinion, Dr. Sower is the clear and current global leader in the understanding of reproduction and neuroendocrinology in the agnathan fishes whose work has implications well beyond her area of study. Although to some, this may appear to be rather specialized, it is important to note that biological understanding of the chordate lineage that the lampreys belong to is essential to understand reproductive neuroendocrinology of all chordates including mammals and, indeed, humans,” said David Lovejoy, professor of neuroendocrinology at the University of Toronto.

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Founded in 1887, the NH Agricultural Experiment Station (http://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes) at the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (http://www.colsa.unh.edu/aes) is UNH's original research center and an elemental component of New Hampshire's land-grant university heritage and mission.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH's research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than $100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Editor's Notes:

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Stacia Sower with her former graduate advisor, Carl Schreck from Oregon State University, at the meeting of the International Congress of Comparative Endocrinology where Sower gave the prestigious Bargmann-Scharrer Lecture.

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