

Desmond Hartwell Murray

John Nevins Andrews Medallion

August 5, 2018



This morning the recipient of the John Nevins Andrews Medallion is Desmond Hartwell Murray, whose work with community engagement, academic achievements and scholarly contributions have distinguished him among his colleagues.

Murray graduated from Andrews University with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry in 1985, then went to Wayne State University for graduate studies, where he earned his PhD in chemistry in 1992. From 1992 to 1994, he was a Post-doctoral Fellow with Harvard University. In 1995, Murray became an assistant professor of chemistry at Andrews University and a chemistry instructor for the Berrien County Math Science Center. He became a tenured associate professor of chemistry at Andrews in 2011.

In 2005, Murray founded the nonprofit organization, Building Excellence in Science and Technology (BEST), People First, Innovate Early. This program provides early research participation opportunities for high school and college students. Since 2010, Murray has also been the organizer for an annual BEST Early Research Symposia.

In addition to founding and directing BEST Early, Murray has been involved in numerous other community-related activities. Since 2001, he has been an editor and columnist for the Benton Spirit Community Newspaper. In that same year he also developed the Benton Harbor Science Initiative to provide STEM enrichment programs for local students. In 2003 he began the Socrates AfterSchool project, where he helps to organize and lead special joint science department assemblies and tutoring workshops.

Murray has also been a remarkable research mentor for his students. He has mentored 91 undergraduate research students, 28 high school students, 25 J.N. Andrews Honors Research students and seven graduate students. In addition, he has collaborated with over 23 professors and colleagues in research, produced six peer-reviewed publications and written 32 scientific abstracts.

Most recently, Murray created and chaired the Community Engagement Council as part of the University's commitment to meaningfully engage with our surrounding communities. Efforts such as Change Day in 2017 are initiatives inspired by members of this council. He is also a member of the Scholarly Research Council and the Race & Justice Subcommittee.

Due to his dedication, Murray has won several awards, the most recent being the College Science Teacher of the Year Award from the Michigan Science Teachers Association and the Outstanding Service Award from Andrews University, both in 2012.

For his service to the community and his dedication to research and his students, the faculty of Andrews University is proud to present Desmond Hartwell Murray with the John Nevins Andrews Medallion.