



## **Former PNNL director receives Distinguished Associate Award**

Last month, the Department of Energy Headquarters in Washington, D.C., presented Lura Powell, director of Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, with the Distinguished Associate Award. The award recognizes Powell's outstanding performance as PNNL's director and her efforts to lay the groundwork for innovative strategies for 21st-century contracts between DOE and its major multi-program laboratories.

Powell's long history of outstanding service to science and to the nation most recently included her tenure as the PNNL director from March 1, 2000, to Dec. 31, 2002. She previously served as director of the Advanced Technology Program for the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Washington, D.C. She also operated her own technology consulting business.

During her 28-year career at NIST, Powell received the Department of Commerce Gold Medal for her leadership of the Advanced Technology Program and the Silver Medal for building the biotechnology research program.

Under her leadership as PNNL director and a Battelle senior vice president, Battelle's contract with DOE was extended for five years, and the last two annual reviews of the laboratory resulted in "outstanding" ratings. She also enhanced the scientific capability of PNNL recently through the acquisition of two major pieces of equipment — a leading-edge \$24 million super-computer and the world's first 900-megahertz wide-bore nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer. NMR spectrometers allow scientists to determine the three-dimensional structure of molecules, and the new 900-MHz superconducting magnet will enable studies on more complex molecules and collections of cells with greater resolution than was previously possible.

During Powell's tenure, PNNL also forged a broad research alliance with public and private universities in Oregon and is working on nanotechnology projects with the University of Washington. Partnerships were also formed with Washington State University and two institutions in Idaho to develop bioproducts from farm waste.

Powell has been active in many other science, professional and community organizations, serving on a number of advisory boards and committees, including the Biotechnology Research Subcommittee of the President's National Science and Technology Council, where she was responsible for leveraging more than \$4 billion in federal biotechnology research.

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She served on the National Institutes of Health's Women's Health Initiative Advisory Committee and led the Board of Overseers of the Center for Advanced Research in Biotechnology. Powell also contributed to the international dialogue on biotechnology by serving on the U.S. delegation of the U.S.-European Commission Task Force on Biotechnology and as vice-chair of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Working Party on Biotechnology.

Powell was also very active in the Tri-Cities community, promoting economic growth and providing leadership in the role of science and technology in the education, work and daily lives of citizens. She served on the board of directors of Kadlec Medical Center, the United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties, and the Tri-City Industrial Development Council. Powell also served on the Junior Achievement of the Greater Tri-Cities Honorary Board.

Powell announced her decision to resign as PNNL director last summer, citing a desire for more time flexibility and a more balanced life. ■