



## **2022 Recipient of the Distinguished Service Award**

**James P. Deavor, Ph.D.**



This year's recipient of the College of Charleston's Distinguished Service Award is Dr. Jim Deavor, Interim Chair and Professor of the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry. Dr. Deavor has put his heart and soul into serving this institution since his arrival here nearly 40 years ago. Incredibly hard-working, but a gentle presence across campus, Jim has spent 26 of his 39 years serving in the role of Department Chair, Interim Dean, Associate Dean, and lastly, Interim Chair. Despite winning numerous accolades, including two ExCEL Awards, as well as the Distinguished Teaching (1991) and Distinguished Advising (2002) awards, he is never self-aggrandizing but rather has always readily dedicated his efforts in support of his colleagues and in service to the College and the wider community. As he remarks himself, whenever approached to serve, Jim has always said, "Yes."

That willingness to put himself at the service of others is the quality his colleagues stressed in their encomium: "He is a hero, a person who is able to rise above his needs to act for the benefit of others without any expectation of a reward. He has repeatedly gone above the normal call of duty to provide service to the College of Charleston because he has integrity and acts on what he believes is the right thing to do. When the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry needed a Chair, he became Chair, and worked to make the Department in the

top ten of producers of chemistry majors. When the School of Sciences and Math needed an Interim Dean, he stepped into that role on two separate occasions. Most recently, he once again stepped up to serve as Interim Chair.”

Particularly noteworthy in Dr. Deavor’s recent service is his extraordinary leadership during the COVID pandemic over the past two years. While we were all affected by the necessity to switch to on-line teaching, those of us teaching labs or in performance classes faced particular difficulties. Dr. Deavor’s patient leadership was crucial as he guided the Chemistry Department to find innovative ways to maintain experiential learning while following COVID protocols.

One of Dr. Deavor’s most notable achievements in his position as Associate Dean, was his supervision of the renovation of the Rita Hollings building. This was a massive logistical task requiring relocation of the Departments of Biological Sciences and Physics & Astronomy into four separate swing spaces, and working closely with IT and the architects.

Dr. Deavor has also been active in service to K-12 audiences. For the past several years, Dr. Deavor has helped coordinate the annual STEM Day at TD Arena, an event drawing 500+ K-12 students to campus. In 2013 this event was cited by the national organization of the American Chemical Society as the best new outreach event of the year for a local section of the ACS. For service to the discipline, Dr. Deavor has long served as the treasurer of the South Carolina Section of the American Chemical Society. During his tenure of service to this organization, he also helped organize the Southeast Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society, held in Charleston in 2002.

In the School of Science and Math, he has been serving as the College's PI for a 2.4 million dollar grant from the National Institutes of Health to the state of South Carolina. This INBRE grant has provided over 240 research experiences for students in SSM over the years and has provided substantial research support for multiple faculty. He also engages collaboratively across the state and maintains the budget. His constant advocacy for the inclusion of the College on this statewide grant is a key reason we have benefited from these resources for well over a decade.

Given these numerous acts of dedicated service – and many more that we do not have space to articulate -- Dr. Deavor is truly deserving of recognition as this year’s recipient of the Distinguished Service Award.