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## **iUTAH's Michelle Baker to Receive Prestigious Governor's Medal for Science and Technology**



USU professor of biology and iUTAH Project Director Michelle Baker

Utah State University biology professor Michelle Baker is one of four USU faculty members to be honored with the 2015 Governor's Medal for Excellence in Science and Technology.

Baker will receive the State's highest science honor in the field of education for her work as an aquatic ecologist studying biological, chemical, and physical processes that affect water quality in streams and rivers. She is also the Project Director of iUTAH EPSCoR, a multi-institutional project integrating research, training, and education, aimed at strengthening science for Utah's water future.

Baker's award nomination says that her "leadership has been key to the success of this highly interdisciplinary project, which includes partners from educational institutions, government agencies, industry, and non-profit organizations."

"I was very surprised and honored to be nominated," said Baker, who was also recognized in 2014 as the USU College of Science Researcher of the Year.

When asked about what contributed to her success, she said "mostly the great people that work with me in iUTAH, and the graduate and undergraduate students in my lab that have been working with me over the last 15 years."

While working with iUTAH, Baker has been instrumental in the installation of a sensor network, along the Logan, Red Butte, and Provo waterways. These stations track variables in water quality in order to assess how the waterways are affected by changes in climate and urban development patterns.

The Governor's Medals for Excellence in Science and Technology are awarded annually to residents and companies who have provided distinguished service or made significant contributions to Utah's advanced scientific and technological knowledge, education and industry. Eleven individuals and businesses will be honored this year.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert said in a statement that "the accessibility of science and technology resources statewide benefits not only the quality of STEM education for our students, but also the quality of life for Utahns."

Other USU recipients include Noelle Cockett, USU's executive vice president and provost; Christine Hailey, dean of the College of Engineering and a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering; and Paul Hill, USU Extension professor in Washington County. This is the second time that four faculty members from USU have received the Governor's Medals since the award program's inception in 1987.

Related links:

iUTAH website ([iutahepscor.org](http://iutahepscor.org))

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