

# SIGMA XI

THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH SOCIETY

## FACT SHEET

*The 14th letter of the Greek alphabet, Xi is pronounced with a “Z” sound—as in “xylophone.”*

Sigma Xi is the honor society of research scientists and engineers. It is an international, multidisciplinary society whose programs and activities promote the health of the scientific enterprise, reward excellence in scientific research and encourage a sense of companionship and cooperation among scientists in all fields.

**Founding:** Sigma Xi was founded in 1886 at Cornell University by Frank Van Vleck, a junior faculty member, and a group of engineering students.

**Motto:** *Spoudon xynones*, or "Companions in Zealous Research."

**Location:** The Sigma Xi Center, housing the Society's administrative offices, is located 10 minutes from the Raleigh-Durham airport: 3106 East N.C. 54 Highway, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709  
Phone: 800-243-6534 Hours: Weekdays, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm Eastern Time.

**Membership:** Scientists and engineers are elected to Sigma Xi based on their research potential or achievements. More than 200 Nobel Prize-winning members are commemorated in the Hall of Honor at the Sigma Xi Center.

**Chapters:** Sigma Xi has more than 500 chapters in North America and around the world at colleges and universities, industrial research centers and government laboratories.

**Leadership:** The 2011-2012 president of Sigma Xi is **Michael Crosby**, Senior Vice President for Research, Mote Marine Laboratory, Sarasota, Florida. The immediate past president **Joseph Whittaker**, dean and professor of biology in the School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland, and the president elect is **Kelly Sullivan** (2012-2013), Director, University Partnerships, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

**Major Programs:** Sigma Xi publishes the award-winning bimonthly magazine, *American Scientist*, which traces its origins back to 1913. The Sigma Xi **Grants-in-Aid of Research** program has invested in the future of science since 1922 by awarding small research grants to nearly 30,000 graduate and undergraduate students. For more than 60 years, Sigma Xi has sponsored an annual **Distinguished Lectureships** program, through which 30 leading scientists speak to diverse audiences, offering insights into science and technology. As part of its mission to improve the public understanding of science, Sigma Xi provides a free, daily e-mail bulletin called *Science in the News* that highlights major science and technology stories appearing in the mainstream media. Informal gatherings called **Sigma Xi Science Cafés** are engaging scientists and the public in discussions of news-making topics—from stem cell research to space exploration.

**Awards:** Each year Sigma Xi honors outstanding researchers and communicators with prestigious awards, including the William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement, John P. McGovern Science and Society Award, Walston Chubb Award for Innovation, Young Investigator Award, and George Bugliarello Prize for a superior interdisciplinary article published in *American Scientist*, and honorary life membership.

**Website:** [www.sigmaxi.org](http://www.sigmaxi.org)