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Nature recognises distinguished Irish scientists for lifetime inspiring students

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THREE prominent Irish scientists today receive the 2014 *Nature* Award for Mentoring in Science at the Science Foundation Ireland's 2014 Summit. *Nature* hosts these annual awards to champion the importance of mentoring and inspiring a generation of young scientists.

Cliona O'Farrelly, Professor of Comparative Immunology (Trinity College Dublin) and Professor Martin Clynes, Director of the National Institute for Cellular Biotechnology (Dublin City University), were jointly presented with the lifetime achievement award and €5,000 each. Cormac Taylor, Professor of Cellular Physiology (University College Dublin), receives the mid-career award and €10,000 prize.

Editor-in-Chief of *Nature*, Philip Campbell, said: "In an era when laboratories are under great pressure to be competitive, it is essential that they maintain the technical robustness and ethical integrity of their science, while also empowering creativity. Thus the mentoring of young researchers has never been more important. And good mentoring by laboratory heads is not a skill that can be taken for granted."

Professor Taylor is a leading authority in the field of hypoxia research. His lab has made several important contributions to the understanding of the mechanisms by which cells respond to hypoxia, and the discovery of the importance of this pathway in Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

Former student Eoin Cummins, who is a Lecturer in Physiology at University College Dublin, said: "Cormac is an outstanding mentor with the right blend of experience, knowledge of the business, enthusiasm, insight and generosity to allow all of those fortunate to be mentored by him to thrive in their respective careers."

Alex Cheong, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology at Aston University, UK, praises him as a "very fair and supportive mentor with a great personality". Cheong hopes to emulate Professor Taylor's "attitude and joy for science" in his own current teaching role.

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"It is Professor O'Farrelly's exceptional ability to teach, mentor and nurture confidence that has impacted a generation of students and researchers," said Nigel Stevenson, Assistant Professor at Trinity College Dublin.

Lydia Lynch, Instructor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Boston, said: "She encourages young girls in school and young women in college, as well as older mature students returning to the workforce, to realise their dreams. It is because of female leaders in science like Cliona, that young women feel that being a leader is an achievable goal."

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He is credited with attracting a wide network of industrial companies to invest in research and development in Ireland and is internationally recognised as an expert in biotechnology, cancer drug resistance and stem cell research.

Deirdre Cronin Fenton, Associate Professor Breast Cancer Epidemiology at Aarhus University, Denmark, said: "Martin has dedicated a lifetime to lending his extensive knowledge to better scientific research in Ireland and internationally. His students have progressed to positions in research and industry, and have competed at the highest level for jobs and research funding."

Launched in 2005, the annual Nature Awards for Mentoring in Science recognize outstanding scientific mentorship and focus on a specific country or countries each year. Nature is the leading weekly, international scientific journal.

More information about the Nature Awards for Mentoring in Science is available at www.nature.com/nature/awards/mentorship/

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