

**RESOLUTION TO AWARD THE UT PROSIM SCHOLAR AWARD
TO DR. CARLA FINKIELSTEIN**

WHEREAS, a profound commitment to service has been indelibly embedded into the culture of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University since the adoption of its motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), in 1896, and in order to honor those singular instances of the application of scholarship in truly extraordinary service to humanity, the Board of Visitors established the “Ut Prosim Scholar Award” in 2016; and

WHEREAS, an associate professor of biological sciences and award-winning cancer researcher, Dr. Carla Finkelstein, anticipated the limitations of existing methods for testing the novel coronavirus in February of 2020 and in a bold move enlisted a team of volunteers at Virginia Tech to develop an innovative testing method that would more accurately, reliably, and rapidly detect the virus and help mitigate its spread; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Finkelstein and her team designed new testing primers that detected three genes of the virus in lieu of the single gene detected by the CDC testing kit, making it possible both to provide more accurate results and detect various mutations of COVID-19, which has become instrumental for both the university community and local health districts as new strains are being discovered; and

WHEREAS, now serving as Director of the Molecular Biology Diagnostics Lab at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC, Dr. Finkelstein leads Virginia Tech’s COVID-19 lab analysis process in collaboration with Schiffert Health Center, having run over 70,000 tests to date, 40 percent of which were completed for local health districts outside of the university community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors commends Dr. Carla Finkelstein and her team for their work on improving and streamlining COVID-19 testing practices and confers upon Dr. Finkelstein the Ut Prosim Scholar Award for her innovative and tireless effort during this global health emergency to mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus and save lives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that commensurate with the impact of Dr. Finkelstein’s and her team’s service to humanity through the application of their scholarship and expertise, this award is accompanied by a sum of \$250,000 to be expended over five years for operational support for work performed at Virginia Tech.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the above resolution commending Dr. Carla Finkelstein and her team for devoting their expertise and working tirelessly to improve COVID-19 testing efficiency and effectiveness in support of both Virginia Tech and local health districts, and honoring Dr. Finkelstein for her service to humanity during this global health emergency by conferring upon her the Ut Prosim Scholar Award accompanied by a sum of \$250,000 to be expended over five years for operational support for work performed at Virginia Tech be approved.

March 22, 2021

**RESOLUTION TO AWARD THE UT PROSIM SCHOLAR AWARD
TO DR. LINSEY MARR**

WHEREAS, a profound commitment to service has been indelibly embedded into the culture of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University since the adoption of its motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), in 1896, and in order to honor those singular instances of the application of scholarship in truly extraordinary service to humanity, the Board of Visitors established the “Ut Prosim Scholar Award” in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Linsey Marr, the Charles P. Lunsford Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Virginia Tech, is one of fewer than 12 experts worldwide on the aerosol transmission of viruses, having published over 100 journal articles and completed over 35 sponsored research projects as part of her interdisciplinary approach to science; and

WHEREAS, based on her previous research on the transmission of the flu and other airborne diseases, Dr. Marr hypothesized that the novel coronavirus was an aerosol virus while scientists around the world were still debating the nature of its spread. Taking it upon herself to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by communicating directly with the public about the myths of airborne illnesses initially via Twitter in March of 2020, she has consequently given over 300 interviews and been quoted more than 4,000 times worldwide due to her ability to communicate simply and effectively and has provided high-level reviews to the World Health Organization, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and staff members of the U.S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Marr, assisted by her team at the Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Air (AIR2) Laboratory, has researched the efficacy of common face coverings in experiments modeling real-life experiences to identify those face coverings that are most effective in minimizing the spread of COVID-19;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors commends Dr. Linsey Marr and her team for researching the efficacy of common face coverings and confers upon Dr. Marr the Ut Prosim Scholar Award for applying her expertise in aerosol transmission to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 and effectively educating the public on proper safety protocol in an effort to save lives during this global health emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that commensurate with the impact of Dr. Marr’s and her team’s service to humanity through the application of their scholarship and expertise, this award is accompanied by a sum of \$250,000 to be expended over five years for operational support for work performed at Virginia Tech.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the above resolution commending Dr. Linsey Marr and her team for their research and efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and honoring Dr. Marr for her service to humanity during this global health emergency by conferring upon her the Ut Prosim Scholar Award accompanied by a sum of \$250,000 to be expended over five years for operational support for work performed at Virginia Tech be approved.

March 22, 2021