

Mario Molina Named 'Trailblazer' In Science

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Mario J. Molina, a Nobel-Prizewinning professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of California, San Diego, has been named one of the outstanding "trailblazers" in science by *Science Spectrum* magazine.

"These '*Science Spectrum* Trailblazers' represent outstanding Hispanic, Asian American, Native American and Black professionals in the science arena whose exemplary work on the job and in the community extends throughout and beyond their industry," the magazine's editors said in announcing the award. "The chosen winners have all made a significant, quantifiable, personal impact on the industry, while making contributions that have uplifted their communities and maintaining a powerful position of influence regarding public policy for minorities in science."

Sixty five others named by the magazine include Shirley Ann Jackson, president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; John Brooks Slaughter, former director of the National Science Foundation and current president and CEO of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering; and Elias A. Zerhouni, director of the National Institutes of Health.

Molina, who last year moved from MIT to join the faculty of UCSD's Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and the Center for Atmospheric Sciences at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, won the 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his role in elucidating the threat to the Earth's ozone layer of chlorofluorocarbon gases, or CFCs. He is UCSD's sixteenth Nobel Prizewinner.

A native of Mexico, Molina's early research convinced governments around the world to eliminate CFCs from spray cans and refrigerators. He has focused much of his recent research on the chemistry of air pollution in the lower atmosphere, working with collaborators from other countries, most notably colleagues in Mexico City, on assessing and mitigating the air pollution problems of rapidly growing cities around the world.

Born in Mexico City, Molina received a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the Universidad Autónoma de México in 1965, a postgraduate degree in 1967 from the University of Freiburg in West Germany and a doctorate in physical chemistry in 1972 from UC Berkeley. As a postdoctoral researcher in 1974 at UC Irvine, he was a co-author with F. Sherwood Rowland of a paper in the journal *Nature* that detailed their research on the threat to the ozone layer in the stratosphere of CFCs, then widely used as propellants in spray cans and as refrigerants in refrigerators.

He held teaching and research positions at UC Irvine, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology before arriving at MIT in 1989 as a professor in the Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences and the Department of Chemistry. He was named MIT Institute Professor in 1997. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. He has served on the U.S. President's Committee of Advisors in Science and Technology, the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, National Research Council Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology and on the boards of U.S.-Mexico Foundation of Science and other non-profit environmental organizations.

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