Hamburger receives nation's Medal of Science

President George Bush awarded Viktor Hamburger, Ph.D., professor of biology emeritus, the National Medal of Science, the nation's highest scientific honor, at a White House ceremony Oct. 18.

Hamburger, who chaired the University's zoology department from 1941 to 1966 and who still serves on the faculty, is credited with some of the field's most fundamental contributions to the fields of development, anatomy and embryology. He was honored along with 18 other scientists and engineers from throughout the United States.

"I cherish this award very much," said Hamburger, "It's a once-in-a-lifetime honor that I am thrilled to receive."

The Department of Biology is hosting a reception for Hamburger on Oct. 30, 4:30 p.m. at the Women's Building Lounge.

Hamburger is the third person affiliated with Washington University to be honored with the medal in the past three years. In 1987, Rita Levi-Montalcini, Ph.D., professor emerita of biology, who also is affiliated with the Italian National Research Council, Rome, Italy, and George E. Pake, Ph.D., retired group vice president of Xerox Corp., and former provost of Washington University, were honored by President Reagan.

"All of us in the University community are very proud of Viktor Hamburger, who has made monumental contributions to science in his lifetime," said Christian G. H. Dunford. "That this award is the highest our president can give to a scientist reflects the magnitude of Dr. Hamburger's role in science over the last six decades."

Called one of the "supreme biologists of our time" by John T. Edsall, editor of the Journal of the History of Biology, Hamburger came to Washington University in 1955 as assistant professor of zoology. Since that time, he has been a leader in research that involved the development of the nervous system and the behavior of embryos.

"When I embarked upon my career in the 1930s, there were maybe 20 people in the world studying embryology; now, there are perhaps more than 1,000," said Hamburger, who was born in 1900 in Silia, Germany, now a part of Poland. "Enormous advances have occurred in that time, far greater than I ever would have thought possible. The molecular aspects of problems we discovered in the 1930s, 40s and 50s may well be solved in the next decade. It's satisfying to see new generations of scientists building on our foundation, taking up our unfinished business."

Hamburger was among the first scientists to show the effects of the growing limb upon the parts of the nervous system that control the muscles in that limb. He also established the basis for a general relationship.

Hamburger collaborated with Levi-Montalcini, whom he brought from Italy to work at Washington. Together, they found that nerve cells that normally excite limb muscles will not survive in the absence of the limb.

This key find led to Levi-Montalcini's discovery of the Nerve Growth Factor. A vital protein for the growth of certain types of nerve cells, the Nerve Growth Factor has important implications in cancer research as well as in nervous system research. Levi-Montalcini later shared the 1986 Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine with Stanley Cohen, Ph.D., a biochemist now at Vanderbilt University, who collaborated with Levi-Montalcini in Hamburger's laboratory.

"Rosy Outlook"

Air becoming cleaner as sulfur, metal emissions decline, says Husar

Behind the nation's dark cloud of pollution, there may be a silver lining. Rodolfo J. Husar, Ph.D., professor of mechanical engineering, says that during the past 30 years, the environment has benefited from the same forces that have improved the economy.

"We are facing a slow process, but we may be on the brink of an era where local air pollution is no longer a dominant concern in our society," he says. Husar heads the University's Center for Air Pollution Impact and Trend Analysis (CAPITA), the world's largest private library for air pollution data and computerized statistics.

The economies of developed countries are changing from smokestack-driven systems to those that are service-driven. This shift in style was largely unheralded and represents the biggest change in the way money is exchanged since the industrial revolution. One upshot could be a real pollution outburst.

According to Husar, the most significant change in emissions during the past 30 years occurred between 1973, the year of the Arab oil embargo, and 1985.

The rate of decline in gas station lines and fuel-boarding, emission rates of sulfur dioxide, lead, dust, particulate matter and volatile organic compounds as gasoline vapor have been quickly decreasing in industrial and population centers throughout much of the country, especially the traditionally industrial Northeast. Sulfur emissions, for instance, have declined 25 percent throughout the United States since 1973, according to Husar.

"Up until the 1970s, the rate of air pollution in the United States grew with the economy," the scientist says. "But this reversal we are seeing shows that economy and pollution can be decoupled. We have a 20 percent larger gross national product than we did 15 years ago, but a 20 percent reduction in energy consumption and less pollution. This reflects a long-held tenet in pollution studies — that prosperity equals pollution."

While Husar's perspective goes against the grain of the doomsayers, he by no means considers himself Pollyannish on pollution trends.

"The statistics we have compiled relate mostly to smokestacks and tailpipes," he says. "I will not argue against the potential danger of chlorofluorocarbons to the ozone layer, or the contribution of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides to the greenhouse effect, or the impact of acid rain due to nitrogen oxides. But there is a definite ray of hope that has been obscured for some time. We are making progress in pollution reductions in this major area and the changes have come about relatively painlessly — the government has not resorted to stringent controls."

Winds of change

Images that reflect the metabolites of the American economy are bountiful. A windshield survey of the United States, Carole Simpson, senior correspondent for ABC-TV News in Washington and anchor of the network's "World News Saturday" program, will speak on minority issues in journalism at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 1, in Graham Chapel, as part of the University's Black Arts and Sciences Festival, which will be held Oct. 30-Nov. 5. The theme of the festival is "Black Excellence: Our Cultural Celebration."

A reception for Simpson will be held from 1:30 to 5 p.m. Nov. 1 in the Women's Building formal lounge.

Other festival activities include a talent show featuring Washington University students and a "Voices of the Music of African-Americans." All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

A broadcast journalist for more than 20 years, Simpson was named anchor of "World News Saturday" in July 1988. She reports on family and social issues for "World News Tonight with Peter Jennings" as well. Her reports have appeared on the network's "Nightline," "20/20" and "World News Saturday," programs will speak on minority issues in journalism at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 1, in Graham Chapel, as part of the University's Black Arts and Sciences Festival, which will be held Oct. 30-Nov. 5. The theme of the festival is "Black Excellence: Our Cultural Celebration."

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Blasingame, Volkmann named vice chancellors; effective 1990

David T. Blasingame, associate vice chancellor and director of alumni and development programs, and M. Fredric Volkmann, associate vice chancellor and director of advancement and support of public relations, will be named vice chancellors of Washington University effective July 1, 1990, according to Chancellor William H. Danforth.

Blasingame and Volkmann will succeed Herbert F. Hitzeman Jr., who retires as senior vice chancellor for university relations on June 30, 1990.

"I am extremely pleased that Dave Blasingame and Fred Volkmann will move into our top alumni-development and public relations posts, respectively," Danforth said.

"They bring extensive experience and thorough knowledge of leadership in areas that have flourished under Herb Hitzeman's tenure. Each has worked directly with Herb for many years, and therefore, will continue the momentum of the programs he helped establish."

Blasingame joined Washington University in 1974 as associate director of alumni relations, after receiving his bachelor's degree in psychology in 1969 and the master of business administration degree from Washington University. He also served as an officer in the U.S. Army during 1971-73.

He organized alumni councils in 14 major cities and directed the University's Alumni-Parents Admissions Program for his first two years here. Then in 1976, he was named associate director for alumni annual giving and in 1978 became director of development for both the John M. Olm School of Business and the School of Arts and Sciences.

In 1985, Blasingame became executive director for schools alumni and development programs, which involved working closely with 11 of the University's 12 schools. Later that year, he was promoted to assistant vice chancellor for schools alumni and development programs, which included additional responsibilities for alumni and parent relations.

In 1987, he was again promoted, to vice chancellor, Washington University, an office of 64 employees that manages direct solicitations in the areas of annual giving, planned giving, and scholarships.

This time to associate vice chancellor and director of alumni and development programs, assuming responsibility for the offices of corporate and foundation affairs, and planned giving. In his new role as vice chancellor, he will assume the current responsibilities with the addition of the School of Medicine's alumni and development programs and the office of development services.

"Blasingame is active as a volunteer and currently serves on the board of directors of the Gifted Resource Council. Blasingame is a widower and has one son, Joshua.

Volkmann joined Washington University in 1980 as director of public relations. Previously he had served as director of university relations at Ohio State University, where he worked from 1975 to 1980. At Albion College in Michigan, he served from 1967 to 1975 as head of the public relations program. From 1963 to 1967, he held a similar position at Iowa Wesleyan College, from which he graduated in 1966. He previously worked for two newspapers -- the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, and the Mount Pleasant News.

Volkmann is the past national chairman of the board of CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) from 1983-84. For his service to the educational advancement profession, CASE presented him with the Frank I. Adomir Award service award in 1987. He has won numerous grand and exceptional achievement awards for his work in public relations, publications, periodicals, multi-media presentations, fund-raising materials and institutional identity systems.

After joining the University, he was promoted to assistant and then associate vice chancellor in 1985. He manages the public communications and office of public relations efforts with 12 schools at Washington, a role in which he will continue.

Volkmann is married to the former Barbara Jean Drakeley. They have three grown children.

United Way contributions encouraged

There is still time for Washington University employees to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people in the St. Louis area by contributing to the annual United Way fund-raising campaign.

"Money raised in this year's campaign will provide support to 135 St. Louis area health and human service organizations, including the University's Campus Y and Central Institute for the Deaf."

"As of Oct. 19, we have reached 62 percent of our goal — that means we have already collected $150,000. Response from throughout the University has been encouraging thus far, but we still have a long way to go to reach our goal of $280,000," said Bob Franklin, the University's campaign chair.

Some 250 employees from both campuses are assisting in the campaign and have distributed pledge cards as well as sponsored activities to encourage contributions.

Doreen McKenna, personnel administrative assistant at the Irene Walter Johnson Institute of Rehabilitation at the School of Medicine, came up with a unique idea to communicate the importance of the United Way campaign to the 175 employees at the institute. To kick off the campaign, she and other employees placed bushel baskets of apples in the lobbies on three floors of the building. Beside the apples, they placed a poster of a thermometer showing the difference in the lives of thousands of people in the St. Louis area by contributing to the annual United Way fund-raising campaign.

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Air becoming cleaner — (continued from p. 1)

Hamburger also made basic contributions to the study of embryogenesis and applies also to human fetuses. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and of the American Philosophical Society.

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Thursday, Oct. 26

Northwestern University, Department of Music-Fall Seminar Series. "Coordination of Yeast Nuclear and Mitochon-
drial Transcription." Judith Judah, Dept. of Biology, Indiana U., 406 South Bldg.
4:30 p.m., room 102, 125 E. Washington Ave.

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Friday, Oct. 27

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Friday, Oct. 30

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Friday, Nov. 3

Northwestern University, Department of Music-Fall Seminar Series. "Coordination of Yeast Nuclear and Mitochon-
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4:30 p.m., room 102, 125 E. Washington Ave.

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Friday, Nov. 10

Northwestern University, Department of Music-Fall Seminar Series. "Coordination of Yeast Nuclear and Mitochon-
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4:30 p.m., room 102, 125 E. Washington Ave.

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