

May 12, 2024

## Opening Remarks

*Professor Jonathan Sweedler — James R. Eiszner Family Endowed Chair in Chemistry,  
and Acting Head, Department of Chemistry*

## Introduction of Speaker

*Professor Lisa Olshansky — LEAP Scholar, and Assistant Professor of Chemistry*

## Speaker

*Dr. H.N. Cheng (PhD, '74) — Southern Regional Research Center, U.S. Department of  
Agriculture*

## Presentation of Awards

Announced by

*Professor Jonathan Sweedler — James R. Eiszner Family Endowed Chair in Chemistry,  
and Acting Head, Department of Chemistry*

[Description of Awards](#)

## Presentation of Graduates

Announced by

*Professor Martin Gruebele — James R. Eiszner Endowed Chair in Chemistry*

Diplomas presented by

*Professor Jonathan Sweedler & Professor Scott Silverman*

## Class of 2024 — List of Graduates

### Marshals

*Dr. Jordan Axelson & Dr. Elise McCarren*

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*All graduates and their guests are invited to join us for a reception with live music and light refreshments immediately following the ceremony in Room 314 of the Illini Union.*

#### **2024 Convocation Speaker: Dr. H.N. Cheng**

H.N. Cheng (BS, UCLA; PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) retired in May 2022 from Southern Regional Research Center (SRRC) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in New Orleans. Currently, he serves as a collaborator at SRRC, where he continues his research activities in several projects.

He has authored or co-authored over 315 scientific papers, 26 patent publications, 26 professional articles, edited or co-edited 25 books, and organized or co-organized over 45 symposia since 2000. In his research, he has made significant advances in developing green chemistry methodologies pertaining to agro-based materials and using agricultural materials and byproducts to produce eco-friendly and sustainable products. He has also contributed to new developments in polymer NMR, polymer reactions, and biocatalysis.

He is active in the American Chemical Society (ACS), having served in many leadership roles, including ACS President in 2021. His Presidential theme was “Growth, Collaboration, and Advocacy,” and he advocated for innovation, disciplinary growth, sustainability, digitization, industrial engagement and entrepreneurship.

Recognition of his scientific contributions includes ACS Fellow (2009), POLY Fellow (2010), AGFD Fe (2018), Herty Medal (2022), Spencer Award (2022), and SRRC Outstanding Scientist of the Year (2014, 2019). Recognition of professional contributions includes ACS Volunteer Service Award (2016), Outstanding Contributor to Cultural Diversity at (2011, 2017), Special Service Awards given by ACS Polymer Chemistry Division (2005, 2015, 2020), and Tillmans-Skolnick A given by ACS Delaware Section (2006).