

### Franco-Spanish Prize for Carmen Nájera

Carmen Nájera (University of Alicante, Spain) has been awarded the Franco-Spanish Prize of the Société Chimique de France (SCF) for her original work in synthetic chemistry. Her research covers several areas, including: palladium- and gold-catalyzed reactions,  $\alpha$ -amino acids, asymmetric synthesis, chiral complexes, enantioselective reactions, and the chemistry of sulfones.<sup>[1]</sup>

Nájera completed her PhD in 1979 at the University of Oviedo, Spain under the supervision of J. Barluenga and M. Yus. Until 1988 she was based at the same university. Between 1983 and 1987, she did several postdoctoral stays at the following institutions: the ETH Zurich (D. Seebach), University of Oxford (J. E. Baldwin), Harvard University (E. J. Corey), and the University of Uppsala (J. E. Bäckvall). Nájera then moved to the University of Alicante in 1988 and was made professor of organic chemistry in 1993. In 2002, she became head of the organic chemistry department there. Other awards include the Rosalind Franklin Lectureship (2006) and the Janssen-Cilag prize from the Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry (2006). Nájera is a member of the editorial board of the *European Journal of Organic Chemistry*.

### ACS Award in Pure Chemistry for Melanie S. Sanford

The American Chemical Society (ACS) will present its Award in Pure Chemistry at their next spring meeting, and the winner for 2011 is Melanie Sanford (University of Michigan, USA). The Sanford group investigates the development and mechanistic study of new transition-metal-catalyzed reactions and their applications in organic synthesis and energy research. Her research aims for high levels of chemo-, regio-, and stereoselectivity for the functionalization of unactivated carbon-hydrogen bonds,<sup>[2a]</sup> alkenes and alkynes,<sup>[2b]</sup> and the synthesis and reactivity of high-oxidation-state metal complexes.<sup>[2c]</sup>

Sanford studied chemistry at Yale University and received her PhD in 2001 from the California Institute of Technology under the guidance of R. H. Grubbs (Nobel Prize in 2005). She then did postdoctoral work at Princeton University with J. Groves (2001–2003). In 2003, she moved to the University of Michigan to start her independent

research career and was promoted to associate professor in 2007. Other honors include the BASF catalysis award (2009).

### AstraZeneca Award in Chemistry for Vy M. Dong

To support excellence in chemistry across Canada, the AstraZeneca Award in Chemistry grants the winner two years funding. In 2010 the award goes to Vy Maria Dong (University of Toronto) for her outstanding contributions to synthetic organic chemistry. Dong is also the recipient of an ACS Arthur C. Cope Scholar Award for 2011.

Dong worked with L. E. Overman while studying chemistry at the University of California at Irvine before earning a PhD in 2003 from UC at Berkeley and the California Institute of Technology under D. W. C. MacMillan. She then did postdoctoral studies with R. G. Bergman and K. N. Raymond at UC at Berkeley (2003–2006) before moving to the University of Toronto to start her independent research career. Her group is interested in finding ways to directly convert C–H bonds into other functional groups, CO<sub>2</sub> activation, and synthesizing biologically active heterocycles.<sup>[3a,b]</sup> The latest paper from her group reports on C–S bond formation and can be found in this issue of *Angewandte Chemie*.<sup>[3c]</sup> Dong is a member of the advisory board of *Advanced Synthesis & Catalysis*.

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### Awarded ...



C. Nájera



M. S. Sanford



V. M. Dong