NSF Division of Materials Research Announces the
2009 American Competitiveness and Innovation (ACI) Fellows

The Division of Materials Research (DMR) is proud to announce the recipients of the 2009 American Competitiveness and Innovation (ACI) Fellowships. The objective of this program is to offer an enhanced capability to presently funded DMR projects promoting "high-risk, high-payoff" research ideas, and encouraging participation from underrepresented material researchers and investigators early in their careers. Fifty percent of the ACI Fellows are women, and most of them are investigators early in their careers, representing diverse scientific disciplines including chemistry, chemical engineering, materials science and engineering, and physics. This program established in FY 2008 recognizes grantees that have demonstrated transformative research and contributed significantly toward broadening participation of underrepresented groups (http://www.nsf.gov/mps/dmr/awards/ACI_Fellows_2008_Cohort.pdf).

The following 2009 ACI Fellows were selected:

- Professor Valerie Ashby, Department of Chemistry, University of North Carolina, "in recognition of her distinguished research on the design and synthesis of novel functionalized polymeric materials, her acclaimed accomplishments as a mentor and teacher, and her exceptional contributions in broadening participation."
- Professor Zhenan Bao, Department of Chemical Engineering, Stanford University, "for being an outstanding role model in both teaching and research, and for her significant contributions to advancing the technology of flexible organic electronics through understanding of organic semiconductor growth and innovative approaches for highly efficient patterning of organic single-crystal and nano/microwire transistors."
- Professor Gus Hart, Department of Physics, Brigham Young University, "for his innovative research to understand how atoms organize in materials and using computation to design new materials and their structures, and for his vision of a more diverse and internationally connected scientific community in the future."
- Professor Juan C. Nino, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Florida, "for his ground-breaking work on fluorite related ceramics, and his mentorship of young women and Latinos/Hispanics interested in electroceramics."
- Professor Donna Sheng, Department of Physics, California State University Northridge, "for her innovative research to illuminate the nature of new states of matter and materials phenomena through simulation, and her efforts to open the scientific frontiers to a diverse student body and expose them to the excitement of doing science."
- Professor Qian Wang, Department of Chemistry, The University of South Carolina, "for his contributions to the development of nanotechnology building blocks based on chemically modified viruses and his efforts to broaden participation through development of exciting bio/nanotechnology programs for high school and undergraduate students."

Members of the Division of Materials Research and its Director, Dr. Zakya Kafafi, offer their heartiest congratulations to the 2009 ACI Fellows, and wish them success in pursuing their innovative ideas in materials research and education, and broadening participation.