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Contact: Heidi Normandin  
e-mail: hnormandin@ecs.org  
Phone: 303.299.3629  
ECS Web Site: www.ecs.org

The Education Commission of the States Honors Linda Darling-Hammond with 2010 Conant Award

Linda Darling-Hammond is the recipient of this year’s Education Commission of the States (ECS) James Bryant Conant Award for her lifetime commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning across the 50 states. Minnesota Governor and ECS Chair Governor Tim Pawlenty will present the award at the ECS National Forum on Education Policy in Portland, Oregon, August 18-20.

Named for former Harvard University president and co-founder of ECS, James Bryant Conant, this award has been called one of the most prestigious in the national education community. The honor recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to American education. Darling-Hammond joins the esteemed list of past recipients including Thurgood Marshall, Fred Rogers, Claiborne Pell and Marian Wright Edelman, along with former Governors Gaston Caperton, Roy Romer, Richard Riley and James Hunt Jr.

“Dr. Darling-Hammond has dedicated her career to making sure all students have access to opportunities for quality instruction, and that all teacher candidates have access to excellent preparation programs that will train them to provide that quality instruction. Her work embodies the spirit of James Bryant Conant and we are pleased to honor her this year,” says ECS President Roger Sampson.

Darling-Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, founded and co-directs the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. She also founded and oversees the School Redesign Network, which works on issues of school and district reform and leadership development.


Darling-Hammond began her career as a public school teacher and has since dedicated her professional life to improving educational policy at the national, state and local level. She led President Obama’s education policy transition team.
Darling-Hammond received her B.A. from Yale University and her doctorate in Urban Education from Temple University. She is the author or editor of 16 books and more than 300 journal articles, book chapters and monographs on issues of policy and practice.

ECS is the only nationwide, nonpartisan interstate compact devoted to education. ECS helps governors, legislators, state education officials and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. A nonprofit organization, ECS was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.