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Symposium and Dedication Honors Historic Oberlin Scientist Charles M. Hall

Oberlin College and the Oberlin Heritage Center will receive plaques from the American Chemical Society in recognition of Charles Martin Hall's discovery of an inexpensive process to produce aluminum and his principal patent. These institutions each were selected to receive a Citation for Chemical Breakthrough award, which honors publications, patents, and books that have made breakthroughs in chemistry and the molecular sciences that have been revolutionary in concept, broad in scope, and long-term in impact. A handsome plaque will be given to each institution by the American Chemical Society's Division of the History of Chemistry on Monday, February 23, 2009, the 123rd anniversary of Hall's initial discovery and a crucial date in making his claim for the U.S. patent.

To announce the award and to recognize Hall's innovative work, the Oberlin College Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, in cooperation with the Oberlin Heritage Center, put together a symposium titled "**Entrepreneurial Activity, Then and Now.**" The event includes two key talks, both of which will take place in the Craig Lecture Hall of the Oberlin College Science Center at Lorain and Woodland Streets in Oberlin. (Free parking is available in the lot on the west side of Woodland Street.) At 4:45 p.m., the symposium opens with an address by Oberlin College Professor of Chemistry emeritus, Norman C. Craig, who presents "*His Eye Fixed on Securing a Patent, Charles Hall Pursued an Economical Method for Refining Aluminum Metal.*" Craig offers an historical account of Hall's development of the electrolytic process for extracting aluminum metal, discusses the five patents awarded for Hall's work, and also touches upon the environment for entrepreneurial activity in the last quarter of the 19th century.

At 8:00 p.m., there will be a brief presentation of the award plaques made by Kenneth Adamo, a member of the History of Chemistry Division of the American Chemical Society. Adamo is a noted patent lawyer of the Jones Day law firm. Joining Adamo at the podium will be David Ball, chair of the Cleveland Section of the American Chemical Society, and Professor of Chemistry at Cleveland State University.

At 8:10 p.m., Dr. Dennis Flood, addresses technical entrepreneurial and patent activity in the 21st century in his talk "*The Scientist as Entrepreneur – Miscible or Immiscible: Lessons Learned from Real Life.*" Dr. Flood, a physicist, retired early from the NASA Glenn Center to pursue the commercialization of patentable ideas developed by scientists at NASA and elsewhere. Since then, he has been involved in four startup companies, all of which were based on patents either owned outright or to which exclusive commercial rights had been obtained.

Each of these events is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Norman C. Craig, at (440) 775-8664 or Norm.Craig@oberlin.edu.

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