Request for Nominations for the
2016 FACULTY SPONSOR AWARDS

A good definition of, or instructive distinctions between the qualifications and features of great supervisors and mentors are hard to come by. To complicate issues, we will use the term Faculty Sponsor.

Faculty Sponsors invest time and money into the education of their trainees with the expectation that this investment is returned in the form of outstanding research with outcomes that advance the research of the laboratory and enhance the standing of the Principle Investigator (PI) as well as the trainee in the research community. A faculty sponsor has all the qualifications of a good mentor with the additional attribute that he or she, more then traditionally expected from mentors, is a strong supporter of the trainees career development, i.e. his or her success beyond the PI’s laboratory or office.

Excellent faculty sponsors challenge trainees to go beyond what they know and are already able to do. They coach them on their performance and offer critical feedback. They mention the trainee’s success to colleagues around the world, thereby making the trainee more visible and valuable to a network to which he or she aspires to belong. They are open to sending trainees abroad to experience for a short while the challenges of a research environment in a different culture, and they are sensitive to the cultural differences and assimilation needs of those who come from abroad to learn from them. Faculty sponsors enjoy seeing their trainees grow and have the strength to acknowledge when the trainees themselves have advanced so much in some skills or knowledge that the PI can now learn from them.

Good faculty sponsors lobby for opportunities that allow their mentees to shine. They encourage conference attendance as well as participation at events where trainees will have to convey their knowledge in lay terms. They make themselves available for discussions and consider it a part of their role to help trainees balance the freedom of exploration without getting lost in testing out opportunities. At the same time, they are open and supportive if trainees decide not to step in their own footsteps but want to employ their knowledge and expertise in a career outside the arena of the PI.

While it might be difficult to find the perfect faculty sponsor, we would like to encourage you to evaluate faculty members (inside and outside of your own laboratory) regarding the qualities listed above. Please send nomination letters (no less than 3/4 page and no more than 2 pages) to Pat Goggans (patricia.goggans@ucdenver.edu) by Monday May 2, 2016. Please include the following information in your letter:

1. Name of Nominee, Email Address, Graduate Program, Department for Postdocs
2. Name of Nominator, Email Address, Graduate Program, Primary Mentor, Years of Graduate or Postdoctoral Training
3. How long have you known the nominee?
4. Describe in detail and with examples why you find the nominee deserving of the recognition.