



# University of Pittsburgh

*Chancellor of the University*

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Patrick Gallagher  
Chancellor

August 18, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great honor to enthusiastically recommend Dr. Willie May for the position of president-elect of the American Chemical Society.

Willie was both my colleague for many years, and then successor as Director at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). He is a true friend, a humble and warm person, and a remarkable scientist and leader. His impressive 45-year career—including more than 20 years leading research activities in analytical chemistry at NIST—is brimming with tremendous professional accomplishments.

In his personal research, Willie solidified his reputation as an expert in the area of trace organic analytical chemistry and the technique of liquid chromatography. More specifically: He explored the retention mechanisms in liquid chromatography and the development of liquid chromatographic methods for the determination of individual organic species in complex mixtures. His work, conducted largely at NIST, has been described in more than 100 peer-reviewed publications and more than 250 lectures around the world.

However, it has been Willie's ability to translate his science background into effective technical leadership that has led to his greatest accomplishments. Among them: He is a U.S. Department of Commerce Gold Medal recipient—as well as earning the silver and bronze options. He has also received the ACS's Distinguished Service in the Advancement of Analytical Chemistry Award and, more recently, the ACS Award for Public Service.

As director of NIST and undersecretary for standards and technology with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Willie led efforts to enhance the nation's capacity for innovation and industrial competitiveness while overseeing an annual budget of approximately \$1 billion and the work of nearly 3,500 federal scientists, engineers, technicians, and support staff. Willie led the agency through one of its most visible and dynamic periods and was a tireless champion for the agency and its unique scientific mission to the nation. In this role, Willie was a collaboration champion, cultivating NIST partnerships with more than 1,300 manufacturing specialists and staff around the country,

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leading international collaborations in measurement science, and forging new ways in which NIST scientists could partner with universities, national laboratories, and companies.

Beyond his role as a distinguished chemist, Willie is also a dedicated leader and mentor. He was beloved at NIST for his compassionate and open leadership style and his tireless support for the organization and all of its scientists, engineers, and staff. He is committed to supporting future generations of scientists, and is an active member of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers. He understands how imperative it is to grow and diversify the field of science. He has been, and I am confident he will continue to be, a fierce advocate for honing untapped potential and talent wherever it may be found.

In summary: Willie is a tremendous asset to our country's science community. His deep knowledge of the diverse fields of chemical science and engineering combined with his extensive leadership at the highest levels of the U.S. federal science enterprise make him uniquely qualified to lead the American Chemical Society—a professional society that has held enormous personal importance for Willie during his entire professional career. I am thrilled to recommend him for this opportunity and do so with my highest and most enthusiastic endorsement. I hope to watch him excel in this new role and continue to provide leadership to the U.S. science and engineering enterprise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Gallagher". The signature is stylized with a large initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Patrick Gallagher