



Alumni of Achievement

Dr. Krista Walton

BSE Chemical Engineering '00

Staying close to family while excelling in her career remains uppermost for Krista S. Walton, an alumna of The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH). "I grew up about 45 miles west of Huntsville, in Elgin, AL, and always knew about UAH. I went to space camp when I was younger, and my dream was to study engineering at UAH and then work at NASA."

An exceptional student, Walton, was offered the opportunity to work in the laboratory of Dr. Krishnan Chittur (UAH Professor of Chemical and Materials Engineering), as an undergraduate researcher studying protein crystal growth. "I never had exposure to independent research and will never forget how patient and encouraging Prof. Chittur was. He gave me my first research experience and, a few years later, was one of my biggest supporters when I decided to apply to graduate schools. One of the great things about studying chemical engineering at UAH is the focus given to undergraduate education.

"I am fortunate to have started my chemical engineering career as a student at UAH and will always be grateful for the many experiences gained there from serving as president of the UAH Society of Women Engineers, to singing in the UAH Concert Choir," said Walton. "UAH provided me with a rich undergraduate experience that no doubt set me along the path to success as both a well-rounded adult and an accomplished engineer."

Walton, is an associate professor in the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology. She also holds the position of Marvin R. McClatchey and Ruth McClatchey Cline Faculty Fellow. Additionally, she serves as the principal investigator for the Walton Group at Georgia Tech. Research in the Walton Group focuses broadly on the design and synthesis of next-generation multifunctional, porous materials with molecule-specific properties for adsorption applications.

Her previous academic posts include assistant professor at Georgia Tech, Tim and Sharon Taylor assistant professor of chemical engineering at Kansas State University, ACS Postdoctoral Fellow at Northwestern University, graduate research assistant and IBM Fellow at Vanderbilt University, and process engineer at Solutia, Inc., through the UAH Cooperative Education Program.

Walton is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including the Alabama Association of Colleges & Employers Cooperative Education Student of the Year (1999), IBM Graduate Fellowship, 2000-2004, Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, 2008, and the American Chemical Society Women Chemists Committee Rising Star Award, 2015.

Last year, Walton was awarded a \$11.2 million dollar grant from the U. S. Department of Energy to fund the Center for Understanding and Control of Acid Gas-Induced Evolution of Materials for Energy (UNCAGE-ME). Internationally recognized for her contributions to the adsorption and materials fields, Walton's publications have been cited by more than 2800 articles, and she has presented more than 100 times at conferences worldwide. She is also the co-founder and CEO of start-up company Inmondo Tech, Inc.

"It is such a great honor to be receiving the 2015 Alumni of Achievement Award," Walton said. "An award of this stature brings a new level of distinction and recognition to my career and is even more meaningful coming from the place that transformed me into an engineer more than 15 years ago."

In 2005, Walton earned a Ph.D., in chemical engineering from Vanderbilt University, and from 2005 to 2006 she was a postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University.

