

Dr. Phillip A. Sharp Receives 2026 Distinguished Service Award from NABT

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The National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) is proud to announce that Dr. Phillip A. Sharp, Institute Professor and Professor of Biology Emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Intramural Faculty member of the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, has been named the recipient of the 2026 NABT Distinguished Service Award for Enhancing Education through Biological Research.

Established in 1988 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Association, the NABT Distinguished Service Award honors nationally recognized scientists and science communicators who have made major contributions to life science education through their research, writing, and/or teaching.

Dr. Sharp is widely recognized for his groundbreaking contributions to molecular biology, particularly his work on the molecular biology of gene expression, cancer, and RNA splicing. His landmark research in 1977 provided the first indications of “discontinuous genes” in mammalian cells, a discovery that fundamentally changed scientists’ understanding of gene structure and earned him the 1993 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

“Dr. Sharp’s discoveries transformed the way we understand gene structure and expression, and his work continues to shape biology education and research today,” said Vedham Karpakakunjaram, NABT 2026 President. “NABT is honored to recognize his extraordinary contributions to the biological sciences and their lasting impact on educators, students, and the broader scientific community.”

A native of Kentucky, Dr. Sharp earned a B.A. from Union College in Barbourville, Kentucky, and a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. In addition to his academic and research achievements, Dr. Sharp has played a significant role in the biotechnology field. He co-founded Biogen in 1978 and served as chair of its Scientific Advisory Board and as a member of the Board of Directors. He also co-founded Alnylam Pharmaceuticals in 2002 and serves on its Scientific Advisory Board.

Dr. Sharp will be recognized during the [2026 NABT Professional Development Conference](#) in Dallas, Texas. After the award presentation, Dr. Sharp will give remarks during the closing

general session and have a Q&A on Saturday, October 31st, at 10:15 AM Central.

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About NABT: Since being established in 1938, the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) has been the recognized "leader in life science education." Thousands of educators have joined NABT to share experiences and expertise with colleagues from around the globe, keep up with trends and developments in the field, and grow professionally. For more information about NABT, please visit www.NABT.org.

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