

Van Bowersox Meritorious Service Award – David Schmeltz

To commemorate his leadership in advancing mercury science to characterize short- and long-term exposure impacts on the local to global scale.

We enthusiastically present **David Schmeltz** with the **Van Bowersox Meritorious Service Award** in recognition of his 20 years of exceptional dedication to innovation and collaboration to sustaining and advancing long-term environmental monitoring. David's contributions to the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) and CASTNET will leave a profound and lasting impact, both within the United States and internationally.

David's leadership in both coordinating monitoring networks and advancing the science to understand short and long-term impacts of mercury exposure has earned recognition for effective policies, accountability, and public awareness of local to international issues. His foresight in bringing together researchers to establish the first US Atmospheric Mercury monitoring Network (AMNet) provided the largest dataset of Hg air concentrations in the world. Notably, his leadership in this field was recognized by both EPA and Taiwan as the countries worked together to establish the Asia Pacific Mercury Monitoring Network (APMMN) with David as one of the experts to lead this international coordination, viewed by many as one of the most successful projects within the long-standing partnership between the US-EPA and Taiwan's Ministry of the Environment.

Recognizing the power of robust, long-term datasets, David championed the integration of mercury research and monitoring under the NADP umbrella. He coordinated the MercNet, at national policy-relevant mercury monitoring initiative designed to link emission controls to multi-media ecological endpoints (e.g. biota). He was a driving force behind the establishment of the Mercury in the Environment and Links to Deposition (MELD) Science Committee, fostering collaboration, promoting the use of NADP data, improving public communication of scientific impacts, and expanding monitoring networks through engagement with new stakeholders, with a targeted emphasis on new Tribal partners. Under his leadership, MELD has provided critical expertise to the Minamata Convention's effectiveness evaluation framework and broadened NADP participation through workshops and scientific meetings.

David also stepped into key leadership roles that shaped the future direction of NADP while navigating unexpected challenges. He began serving on the NADP Network Operations Subcommittee (NOS) in 2016 and was elected to the Executive Committee in 2018. His 2019 science symposium, "Expanding the Boundaries of NADP" held in Boulder, became the final in-person meeting before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted monitoring operations throughout the U.S. During this period of uncertainty, David's steadfast

leadership helped ensure that long-term datasets were minimally impacted, while also successfully overseeing the continued expansion of NADP at the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene.

Beyond his formal roles, David has consistently shared his knowledge and experience with new staff and students, creating a legacy of mentorship that will benefit NADP for years to come. A trusted colleague and friend to many, he seamlessly blended discussions of policy strategies, fishing spots, Michigan sports teams, or a newly discovered brewery with an unwavering commitment to public service and the mission of NADP.

His vision for leadership, scientific impact, and enduring dedication to environmental monitoring, David Schmeltz exemplifies the values and spirit of the Van Bowersox Award.