

# MUSC Establishes Chapter of the National Academy of Inventors

## [\(Announcements/Newsletters - UMA\)](#)

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Message:

MUSC establishes chapter of the National Academy of Inventors  
Ophthalmology professor Dr. Baerbel Rohrer recognized as 2014 NAI National Fellow

The new chapter of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) inducted 52 charter members, including MUSC President Dr. David Cole, at its inaugural reception Wednesday, Jan. 21.

"The National Academy of Inventors will offer added support and inspiration to the talented group of innovators here at MUSC as they generate vital new technology and research," said Michael Rusnak, executive director of MUSC Foundation for Research Development (FRD).

In addition, the chapter recognized two NAI National Fellows from MUSC.

Professor Baerbel Rohrer, Ph.D., an endowed chair in the MUSC Department of Ophthalmology, was recently elected to the rank of NAI fellow by a 2014 selection committee and will be inducted in March with a ceremony at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

Rohrer is an academic and innovative leader in diseases of the retina. She holds three U.S. patents and five international patents, with an additional 23 applications pending. Her intellectual property provided the foundation for three start-up companies, one of which she co-founded. A major pharmaceutical company acquired one, and the other two companies are continuing clinical development of her therapies.

The MUSC chapter also recognized 2013 NAI National Fellow John Vournakis, Ph.D., an MUSC graduate studies professor who also serves as vice president for research and development of Marine Polymer Technologies, Inc., and Admune Therapeutics, LLC.

Founded in 2010, NAI is a non-profit organization with more than 200 chapters and 3,000 individual inventor members. NAI seeks to recognize and encourage inventors with U.S. patents, enhance the visibility of academic technology and innovation, encourage the disclosure of intellectual property, educate and mentor innovative students, and translate its members' inventions to benefit society.

About MUSC Foundation for Research Development

FRD has served as MUSC's technology transfer office since 1998. During that period, FRD has filed patent applications on more than 320 technologies, resulting in 126 U.S. issued patents. Additionally, FRD has executed 148 licenses and spun out more than 46 start-up companies. MUSC start-ups have had products approved by the FDA and acquired by publicly traded corporations while attracting substantial investment dollars into South Carolina. Innovations from MUSC, including medical devices, therapies and software, are positively impacting health care worldwide. Please visit us online at [frd.musc.edu](http://frd.musc.edu)

