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Chemist Hind Al-Abadleh named Laurier's University Research Professor

WATERLOO – [Hind Al-Abadleh](#), a professor in Wilfrid Laurier University's Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, has been named [University Research Professor](#) for 2021-22. The annual internal award recognizes excellence and leadership in research and provides time and funding for the winner to complete a major research endeavour.

Al-Abadleh conducts research in the field of environmental physical chemistry, tackling unresolved scientific problems related to air quality, atmospheric chemistry and geochemistry. She is currently leading an [academic-industry-government collaboration](#) with the University of Waterloo, Hemmera Inc., the City of Kitchener, the Region of Waterloo, and Environment and Climate Change Canada to assess air quality and children's exposure to traffic emissions in Kitchener.

"I am very happy to see the fruits and impacts of my research programs being recognized and celebrated at Laurier," said Al-Abadleh. "I want to discover and understand how molecular-level knowledge aids in scientific advances for the benefits of humanity. I also enjoy shaping the minds and finetuning the lab skills of students to increase their confidence as future researchers."

Al-Abadleh's latest study, published in the [Journal of Hazardous Materials](#), analyzed the statistical significance of short-term events like COVID-19 lockdowns on air pollutant levels. Using data from 16 air-monitoring sites across southern Ontario during the period of April to June 2020, Al-Abadleh found pollutant levels temporarily dropped 20 per cent lower than in the previous three years.

"These pollutants contribute to air pollution and respiratory diseases, and Canada is known to have faster-growing rates of childhood asthma than other countries," said Al-Abadleh, whose findings were featured on [CBC News: The National](#). "I hope that the public and different levels of government will use our study as a benchmark for their future measures or regulations, either to limit the spread of new diseases or to control air pollution and smog episodes."

As recipient of the University Research Professor award, Al-Abadleh will receive a \$10,000 research grant and time to write a book and a review article on the state of the science of atmospheric aerosols. She also plans to begin new partnerships with colleagues in the United States once academic travel can safely resume.

"This award recognizes Professor Al-Abadleh's outstanding record of scholarship at Laurier, which will contribute greatly as our society works toward a healthier, more sustainable future," said Jonathan Newman, Laurier's vice-president: research.

Since joining Laurier in 2005, Al-Abadleh's research lab has secured \$2.15 million in research funding and she has regularly published in leading environmental science and chemistry journals. She is a fellow at the Balisillie School of International Affairs, an adjunct professor at the University of Waterloo and was elected as chair of the Environment Division of the Chemical Institute of Canada.

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In 2018, Al-Abadleh was named the [Fulbright Canada Research Chair](#) in Climate Change, Air Quality, and Atmospheric Chemistry at the University of California, Irvine, and in 2017 won the Women Who Inspire Award from the Kitchener-Waterloo Coalition of Muslim Women. She was also awarded the 2015 Faculty Mentoring Award by the Laurier Alumni Association.

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