

**Professor Neal Deveraj Receives
the North Jersey Section's
2019 Leo Hendrik Baekeland Award**



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Neal Deveraj Is 2019 Leo Hendrik Baekeland Awardee

Neal Devaraj, Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at University of California, San Diego, is the recipient of the 2019 Leo Hendrik Baekeland Award, presented by the ACS North Jersey Section. His research accomplishments are in the areas of bioconjugation, chemical biology, and bottom-up synthetic biology.

Born in Torrance, California, he attended MIT for his undergraduate studies and received a dual bachelor's degree in chemistry and biology in 2002 where he carried out research in the lab of Professor Mounqi Bawendi. In 2007, he received his PhD in chemistry at Stanford University under the direction of Professors James Collman and Christopher Chidsey. This was followed by a post-doctoral fellowship in the lab of Professor Ralph Weissleder at Mass. General Hospital/Harvard Medical School.

A major focus of his research involves understanding how non-living matter such as simple, organic molecules can assemble to form life. Areas in which he has made significant advances includes: the synthesis of artificial cells and membranes, the development of tools for the imaging and manipulation of RNA, and in the development and popularization of tetrazine bioconjugation reactions.

He is the recipient of numerous prior awards, among them: a Guggenheim Fellowship in the Natural Sciences (2019), an Eli Lilly Award in Biological Chemistry (2019), a Blavatnik National Laureate in Chemistry (2018), an ACS Award in Pure Chemistry (2017), a Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award (2016) and an NSF CAREER Award (2013).

The North Jersey Section established the award in 1944 to commemorate the technical and industrial achievements of Leo Hendrik Baekeland, who served as ACS president in 1924, and to encourage younger chemists to emulate his example. The award is given biannually in recognition of accomplishments in pure or applied chemistry to an American chemist under the age of forty as characterized by their initiative, creativity, leadership, and perseverance.

A symposium will be held on **November 15, 2019** to celebrate his accomplishments and the receipt of the Award. Other presentations will be given by Dinshaw Patel, Sid Hecht and James Collman.



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