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Owen J. Newlin Honored with Distinguished Lifetime Achievement and Service Award from Iowa State University Seed Science Center

AMES, Iowa—The Seed Science Center at Iowa State University honored one of the seed industry’s greatest champions, Owen J. Newlin, with a Distinguished Lifetime Achievement and Service Award for Seed Science, Technology and Systems.

Newlin was honored April 12 during the center’s annual Leroy and Barbara Everson Seed and Biosafety Symposium in Ames. The award recognizes Newlin for his exemplary leadership and commitment to excellence as a tireless advocate for Iowa State University and the seed industry around the world.

“It is our great privilege to recognize Dr. Newlin for the outstanding achievements that he has accomplished during the more than 60 years that he has devoted to the seed industry,” said Manjit Misra, director of the Seed Science Center. “It is difficult to put into words the tremendous impact that he has had, both on the seed industry and on Iowa State University. He is truly an industry legend and we are fortunate to have been the beneficiaries of his leadership, unwavering dedication, integrity and forward-thinking over the years.”

Newlin is a retired senior vice president and director of Pioneer Hi-Bred International. He received a bachelor’s degree in agronomy and a master’s degree in crop production from Iowa State. After earning a PhD in plant breeding and genetics at the University of Minnesota, Newlin began his career at Pioneer Hi-Bred as a research assistant in 1955. Later he went on to graduate from Harvard University’s Advanced Management Program.

Newlin has distinguished himself through his service to Iowa State University, Iowa and the seed industry in countless ways over the years. He is a past president and past board member of the Iowa State University Achievement Foundation, past national chair of the university’s Partnership for Prominence Campaign and is currently a member of the Iowa State University Foundation Board of Governors. Newlin was as a member of the Iowa Board of Regents for 12 years, serving as board president for eight years.

He is a past president of the American Seed Trade Association, past president and board member of the American Seed Research Foundation, past president of the Iowa Seed Association and delegate and past chair of the U.S. Grains Council.

Newlin has earned many recognitions and awards. In 2016, the American Seed Trade Association presented him with its highest honor, the inaugural Lifetime Industry Achievement Award. Iowa State University has honored him with ISU’s first True and Valiant Award, the
Order of the Knoll Campanile Award, the Alumni Merit Award, the Distinguished Achievement Award and two of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' highest honors — the Floyd Andre Award and the Henry A. Wallace Award. Newlin is a Fellow of both the American Society of Agronomy and Crop Science Society of America and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science as a result of his accomplishments in the seed industry and agriculture.

The Seed Science Center is a center of excellence in seeds at Iowa State University. Its mission is to improve the production, quality assurance, marketing, utilization and regulatory environment of seed through research, testing, teaching, outreach and international programs.

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Photo: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Senior Associate Dean Joe Colletti (left) presents Dr. Owen J. Newlin (right) a Distinguished Lifetime Achievement and Service Award on behalf of the Iowa State University Seed Science Center April 12 during the Leroy and Barbara Everson Seed & Biosafety Symposium in Ames. Photo credit: ISU SSC