Plenary Speaker
Sunday, August 3, 2014 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Fieldhouse

John C. Warner

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John received his BS in Chemistry from UMASS Boston, and his PhD in Chemistry from Princeton University. After working at the Polaroid Corporation for nearly a decade, he then served as tenured full professor at UMASS Boston and Lowell (Chemistry and Plastics Engineering). In 2007 he founded the Warner Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry, LLC (A research organization developing green chemistry technologies) where he serves as President and Chief Technology Officer, and Beyond Benign (a non-profit dedicated to sustainability and green chemistry education). He is one of the founders of the field of Green Chemistry, co-authoring the defining text Green Chemistry: Theory and Practice with Paul Anastas. He has published over 200 patents, papers and books. His recent work in the fields of semiconductor design, biodegradable plastics, personal care products, solar energy and polymeric photoresists are examples of how green chemistry principles can be immediately incorporated into commercially relevant applications. Warner received The 2004 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Mentoring, the American Institute of Chemistry's Northeast Division's Distinguished Chemist of the Year for 2002 and the Council of Science Society President's 2008 Leadership award. Warner was named by ICIS as one of the most influential people impacting the global chemical industries. In 2011 he was elected a Fellow of the American Chemical Society and named one of "25 Visionaries Changing the World" by Utne Reader.

Plenary Abstract:

Green chemistry: New eyes and new ideas in science

We constantly hear rumblings regarding the inability of scientists to innovate "like they used to". We hear about the hazards of chemistry and the desperate need to put society on a sustainable pathway. We scientists worry about the general public's lack of appreciation or ability to understand basic science. It is an inescapable reality that the next generation of students in chemistry will be living and working in a very different world than the previous generation. Despair is not an option. The future is brighter than ever. We need to attract the next generation of students into the optimistic promise of green chemistry. The evolution of Green Chemistry is happening around us. Industrial labs are embracing the principles and Academic Departments across the country are reorienting their curriculum. This discussion will explain why students (and their instructors) need to know that they are essential to achieving a sustainable future. Albert Einstein once said that "No problem can be solved at the same level of awareness that created it". We need a diversity of students that have new perspectives and new ideas, to help us chart our path forward.