

IRA REMSEN MEMORIAL LECTURE

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 | 6:30 PM | Remsen 101

Pre-Seminar Refreshments 6:00 PM, Remsen 140 • Reception immediately to follow, Remsen 140



Dr. Timothy Swager
John D. MacArthur Professor
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology

Electronic Molecular Materials for High-Performance Chemical Sensors

In this lecture, I will detail our efforts to make use of semiconducting and conducting organic materials for the formation of chemical sensors with high selectivity and sensitivity. Key to our methods are the intrinsic transport properties of these highly delocalized electronic materials. I will detail optical (emissive) methods that make use of excitonic transport along with charge transporting (electrical conduction) chemiresistive systems that can be readily integrated into electrical circuitry. I will focus on our recent efforts for the detection of per-/polyfluoroalkane substances (PFAS) at low (parts-per-trillion) levels. I will also focus on the translation of transition metal reactions and catalysis to produce selective sensors. In this case I will make use of classical catalytic organometallic reactions (Heck, Wacker, etc.) and will also demonstrate the utility of metal nanoparticles.



Department of Chemistry



ACS
Chemistry for Life®

AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

Maryland Local Section



National Historic Chemical Landmark

The First Chemistry Graduate Program in the U.S.

Johns Hopkins University

By 1868, Ira Remsen had completed his M.D. in his hometown of New York and begun his practice, but he realized he wanted to pursue a career in chemistry. As doctoral training was not yet available in the U.S., he set sail to Germany, whose universities had created a world-leading model for chemistry training with a strong emphasis on laboratory-based research. With his Ph.D. in hand, he started his career at Williams College before becoming a founding faculty member of Johns Hopkins University. Here, Remsen founded the first chemistry graduate program in the U.S. modeled after the German schools. Remsen trained more than 100 Ph.D. chemists, many who went on to establish chemistry graduate programs at universities across the U.S. He also served as President of the American Chemical Society and Johns Hopkins University.

American Chemical Society

October 20, 2026

NATIONAL HISTORIC CHEMICAL LANDMARK CEREMONY

Remsen Hall Joins the Nation's Chemical Landmarks

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

The ACS honors Ira Remsen, who founded the first American chemistry graduate program here at Johns Hopkins, as JHU and the ACS mark their 150th anniversaries.

At the ceremony: remarks by JHU President Ron Daniels and ACS President Prof. Rigoberto Hernandez. Prof. Hernandez and Dr. Sunita Thyagarajan will speak on Remsen's legacy, and Brady Mediavilla will speak on how that legacy lives on in today's graduate students. Prof. Tim Warren will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

4:00–5:00 PM Landmark Ceremony · Remsen 101

5:00–6:20 PM Reception · Remsen Hall, First Floor

6:30–7:30 PM 2026 Remsen Lecture · Remsen 101

To follow Post-Lecture Reception