The John and Olga Lectureship in Plant Biochemistry

The endowment was established in 1987 by Phyllis and Duane LeTourneau as a memorial to his parents. Because their opportunities for a formal education ended at the grade school level, John and Olga LeTourneau desired more for their son. Their encouragement and sacrifices made it possible for Duane to obtain a college education and subsequently complete the Ph.D. degree at the University of Minnesota.

Phyllis and Duane moved to Moscow in 1953 when he accepted a position as an assistant professor and Assistant Agricultural Chemist in the Department of Agricultural Chemistry. One of Duane's teaching assignment was to organize and teach a senior/graduate level course in Plant Biochemistry for students majoring in Biochemistry and various areas in plant Science. The course content emphasized the metabolism and role of secondary plant products in higher plants. The course, taught in alternate years, first offered in the fall semester of 1955 and last taught by Duane in 1989. During his UI career Duane taught a number of other courses. But Plant Biochemistry was his favorite course to teach. In January 1990 Duane left the Department of Microbiology, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry to become the Secretary of the Faculty. He Retired as Professor of Biochemistry and Chemistry Emeritus and secretary of the Faculty Emeritus on August 31, 1991. He then returned to the Department to teach on a part-time basis, to edit "The Promoter", the Department newsletter, and serve on Departmental and University Committees. He maintained an office on campus until December 2001.

The LeTourneaus supplemented the endowment, thus allowing for principal growth and the Department of MMBB to begin the program earlier than was originally projected. The endowment provides for inviting an outstanding scientist to the University of Idaho campus for a minimum of two (2) days. While on campus, the scientist delivers at least one public lecture, takes part in classes where his/her area of expertise is applicable, and consults with graduate students and faculty. The scientist's research emphasis should stress the metabolism and function of secondary plant products.

In 1993 the department presented the first "John and Olga LeTourneau Memorial Lectureship." The following is a list of the distinguished speakers, their affiliations and the subject of their lecture.

Dr. Jan Miemyk (1993)	USDA/ARS	The Stress-70 Proteins as Molecular Chaperones for the Membrane Trans-Location of Plant Precursor Proteins"
Dr. James H. Tumlinson (1994)	USDA/ARS	"How Parasitoids and Predators Find Their Host and Prey: Chemistry of Eavesdropping, Alarm and Deceit"
Dr. Elizabeth Bernays (1996)	University of Arizona	"The Benefits of Plant Secondary Metabolites to Insect Herbivores"
Dr. Robert L. Last (1997)	Cornell University	"Using Genetics to Understand Stress Adaptation Mechanisms in Plants"
Dr. Milton Zaitlin (1998)	Cornell University	"Tobacco Mosaic Virus: 100 Years of Contributions to Virology"
Dr. Anthony Cashmore (1999)	U. or Pennsylvania	"Cryptochromes: Blue Light Photoreceptors For Both Plants and Animals"
Dr. Jonathan Gershenzon (2000)	Max Planck Institute Germany	"Glucosinolates: Model Plant Defense Compounds in a Model Plant"

Dr. Michael Thomashow (2001)	Michigan State Univ.	"Molecular Switches that Control Plant Stress Tolerance"
Dr. Ian Baldwin (2002)	Max Planck Institute Germany	"Answering Ecological Questions with the Tools of Plant Molecular Biology in *Nicotiana attenuata"*
Dr. Gary Felton (2003)	Pennsylvania State University	"Salivary Signals from Caterpillars: Role in Evasion of Host Plant Defense"
Dr. Jorge M. Vivanco (2005)	Colorado State University	"How Plants Communicate Using the Underground Chemical Info Superhighway"
Dr. Kirsi-Marja Oksman-Caldentey (2006)	VTT Technical Research Center of Finland	"A Functional Genomics Approach Towards the Understanding of Plant Secondary Metabolism"
Dr. Richard Flavell (2007)	Chief Scientific Officer Ceres, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA	"Moving the Frontiers of Genomics to Help Plant Biology and Breeding"
Dr. ***Nigel G. Halford*** (2008)	Plant Science Department Rothamsted Research Harpenden, United Kingdom	"Acrylamide in Everyday Foods is a Plant and Agronomic Science Issue"
Dr. Richard Sayre (2009)	Donald Danforth Plant Science Center St. Loius, Missouri	"The Promise of Plant Biotechnology; Innovations for Global Health and Renewable Energy"