


October 30, 2024

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Anne D'Alleva, Ph.D. 
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Appointment of Professor Ji-Cheng 'JC' Zhao to the Raytheon Technologies
Chair in Fuel Cell Technology in the College of Engineering

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Professor Ji-Cheng 'JC' Zhao to the Raytheon Technologies Chair in Fuel Cell Technology in the College of Engineering

BACKGROUND:

The Raytheon Technologies Chair in Fuel Cell Technology was originally established as the United Technologies Corporation Chair in Fuel Cell Technology by an agreement dated February 25, 2002, which amended the terms of the March 21, 2000, "United Technologies Corporation Endowment for Engineering." Following the change of the donor's name to Raytheon Technologies Corporation, the fund was formally renamed during the Board of Trustees meeting on June 29, 2022. This prestigious professorship supports a researcher, scholar, and educator in fuel cell technology who is recognized both nationally and internationally. Professor Zhao's appointment to the Professorship will be for a five-year term from November 1, 2024 through October 30, 2029.

Professor Ji-Cheng 'JC' Zhao joined the University of Connecticut on August 1, 2024 as the Dean of the College of Engineering and Professor of Materials Science and Engineering. He is a distinguished expert in materials science and engineering. Professor Zhao served as a Program Director at the U.S. Department of Energy's ARPA-E (Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy), managing projects to develop energy-efficient and green technologies. Previously, he was a Materials Scientist and project leader at GE Research Center, inventing new materials and processes for gas turbines and jet engines. His pioneering work in the design of advanced alloys and coatings, additive manufacturing, and high-throughput materials science methodologies, among other areas, has established him as a leader in the field, leading to the induction to the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) in 2023. In addition to many materials innovations, he pioneered the development of a diffusion-multiple approach and co-developed several materials property microscopy tools for accelerated materials discovery and development. He holds 49 U.S. patents covering a range of materials, processes, and systems.

Professor Zhao's research has been recognized with numerous awards, including the William Hume-Rothery Award from the Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society and the J. Willard Gibbs Phase Equilibria Award from ASM International. Professor Zhao is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the National Academy of Inventors (NAI), American Society for Metals (ASM), the Materials Research Society (MRS), and the Minerals, Metals and Materials Society (TMS). He served on the Subcommittee on the Materials Genome Initiative (MGI) of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) from 2014 to 2017, and on the Board of Trustees of ASM International from 2019 to 2022.