

ERIC HEGG

Biography

“Engineering Our Way to a Sustainable Bioeconomy”

House Science, Space & Technology Subcommittee on Research & Technology Hearing
March 12, 2019

Dr. Hegg is a professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at Michigan State University (MSU). He received his B.A. in Chemistry and History in 1991 from Kalamazoo College and a Ph.D. in 1996 from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. It was during his time at Wisconsin that he became interested in metalloenzymology, studying the role of metal ions in enzymes that hydrolyze DNA, RNA, and proteins. After receiving his Ph.D., Dr. Hegg completed a National Institutes of Health postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Minnesota where he studied non-heme iron dioxygenases and established his long-standing interest in understanding how nature synthesizes and activates small molecules such as H₂ and O₂. Following his postdoctoral work, Dr. Hegg and his family moved to Salt Lake City in 1999 where he joined the faculty of the University of Utah and began his independent research career. He received a National Science Foundation Career Award in 2004 and the Cottrell Scholars Award in 2002. When the opportunity arose, Dr. Hegg and his wife returned to the northern Midwest to join the faculty at MSU in 2006 where he is a professor of biochemistry & molecular biology and the MSU Subcontract Lead for the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center. In addition to studying heme biosynthesis and O₂ utilization, he is involved in developing renewable bioenergy, converting biomass into ethanol and other transportation fuels as well as using microbes to generate H₂. Dr. Hegg has recently participated in two leadership activities at MSU. In 2016, he was a Big Ten Academic Alliance Leadership Program Fellow and in 2017, was an Academic Advancement Network Leadership Fellow. When Dr. Hegg is not busy in the lab, he enjoys running, hiking, and most outdoor activities.