Nashville, Tenn., January 9, 2015 - The Division of Materials Research at the National Science Foundation (NSF) notified Fisk University that Dr. Natalie Arnett has been selected for a five-year CAREER award. Her project, "SusChEM: Synthesis and Characterization of Disulfonated Poly(arylene ether sulfone 2,4,6-Trichloro-1,3,5-triazine) Hybrid Copolymers" will support research for developing novel membrane materials for fuel cell applications and the integration of this research into polymer education through appropriate courses and laboratory experiences.

The NSF CAREER Award Program is NSF’s premier program in the nation emphasizing the importance that NSF places on the early development of academic careers dedicated to stimulating the discovery process in which the excitement of research is enhanced by inspired teaching and enthusiastic learning.

Dr. Arnett, who is Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Director of Graduate Studies for Chemistry, is the first female and only Fisk faculty member to win the prestigious award in almost two decades. The award is expected to total $547,465.

Dr. Arnett will design the "Introduction to Polymer Chemistry: General Chemistry Concepts" lecture and lab, a new course for freshman students at Fisk. The award also includes support for one Fisk chemistry graduate student to participate in research.

“The NSF CAREER Award is the most prestigious and highly competitive science award of NSF. We are extremely proud of Dr. Arnett and NSF’s recognition of her excellence in integrating research and education. Her project will impact the retention of undergraduates (including underrepresented minorities) in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and increase the pipeline of talent for STEM advanced degrees and careers,” said Fisk University President, Dr. H. James Williams.

About Fisk University:
Founded in 1866, Fisk University is Nashville’s first institution of higher education and currently ranks in the top 20% of all liberal arts institutions in the nation according to The Washington Monthly. According to the American Physical Society, Fisk is the #1 producer of underrepresented minority Master's in Physics degrees. Fisk is ranked in the top 15 institutions for awarding the Master's in Physics degree for all students, and tied for fourth place for Master's degrees awarded to women. Fisk is the fourth highest ranked institution in Tennessee and the highest ranked Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Forbes magazine's 2014 edition of “America's Top Colleges.” Fisk has ranked in Princeton Review’s “Best Southeastern Colleges” publication for 22 consecutive years. U.S. News & World Report ranks Fisk in the elite Tier One liberal arts institutions. Fisk has earned 4 R&D 100 Awards, the only HBCU to do so, for work in the creation of radiation detectors developed in collaboration with several national laboratories and corporations. According to the National Science Foundation, Fisk produces more African-Americans who earn doctoral degrees in the natural sciences than any school in the nation. For more information on Fisk University, please visit www.fisk.edu.