



American Association of Physics Teachers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AAPT Recognizes Diane Riendeau with Excellence in Precollege Teaching Award

College Park, Maryland, United States, April 26, 2010—The American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT) announced today that the 2010 AAPT Excellence in Pre-College Physics Teaching Award winner is Diane Riendeau, a high school physics teacher at Deerfield High School in Deerfield, IL. This award is in recognition of contributions to pre-college physics teaching and awardees are chosen for their extraordinary accomplishments in communicating the excitement of physics to their students.



On her selection for this recognition, Riendeau said, “I am honored to receive this award. Many of my mentors, who supported me through my career, are previous recipients. I am humbled to join them as Pre-College award winners. The key to becoming a good teacher is support. I had fantastic high school physics teachers myself that became unbelievable mentors during my early years as a physics teacher. My husband supported me by handling the children while I went to AAPT or local physics alliance meetings and encouraging me when I hit some lows. My colleagues at the schools I taught shared their ideas with me and together we sharpened each other. I am not a great physics teacher due to my own hard work...I am a great physics teacher because of the input of others.”

Riendeau has a BA in Mathematics from Northeastern Illinois University and earned her MA in Curriculum and Instruction from Concordia University. Additionally she had extensive coursework in Physics. She has received numerous awards including AAPT’s Innovative High School Teaching Award, the Illinois finalist for Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching, and the AAAS Leadership in Science Education for High School Teachers.

One of her philosophies is that high school physics curricula should be concepts driven instead of math driven and hands-on instead of lecture-based. This way students walk away with lived physics experiences. This philosophy is especially applicable to high school freshmen who are still children at heart and enjoy learning by doing and playing. Throwing math at a group of students whose math skills are underdeveloped would be counterproductive to our school’s goal of providing physics for all. She has served as a mentor for several years, teaching colleagues this philosophy.

According to her Department Chair, Judi Luepke, “Diane is always searching for new ideas to bring to the classroom. She is a lifelong learner, continually taking online courses to learn more about making physics relative to students’ lives.”

Riendeau joined AAPT in 1992 and served on the AAPT Committee on Physics in High Schools and is the current Chair of the Pre-High School Committee. She also served as head judge for the High School Teaching Grant 2005-6. She also serves on the Editorial Board.

She was a co-author of the 2006 AAPT “Physics First” pamphlet and has contributed numerous articles to *The Physics Teacher*. Additionally, she was a contributing author to “Conceptual Physics” (2008).

About AAPT: AAPT is an international organization for physics educators, physicists, and industrial scientists—with more than 10,000 members worldwide. Dedicated to enhancing the understanding and appreciation of physics through teaching, AAPT provides awards, publications, and programs that encourage practical application of physics principles, support continuing professional development, and reward excellence in physics education. AAPT was founded in 1930 and is headquartered in the American Center for Physics in College Park, Maryland.

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