

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Eugene Commins to Receive First J.D. Jackson Excellence in Graduate Education Award

College Park, Maryland, United States, January 28, 2010—The American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT) will present the first J. D. Jackson Excellence in Graduate Education Award to Eugene Commins, physics professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley. His remarks, *Some Personal Reflections on Physics Graduate Education*, will present a picture of his life as a graduate student and then as an instructor in the Columbia University Physics Department of the 1950s. He will discuss how those early experiences influenced his subsequent experiences as a mentor of Berkeley physics graduate students during the last five decades.

This prestigious award will be presented to Commins at the Ceremonial Session of the 2010 Joint APS/AAPT Winter Meeting at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, DC, on Monday, February 15 at 1:30 pm.

Warren Hein, AAPT Executive Officer noted, "It is a great honor to recognize an educator with such a distinguished career as the first recipient of the J. D. Jackson Award. Dr. Commins sets the standard for graduate physics around the world."

Commins earned his B.A. with Honors in Mathematics and Physics at Swarthmore College and his Ph.D. in Physics at Columbia University, New York, N.Y. He began his teaching career at Columbia University before moving to the University of California, Berkeley in 1960. Frances Hellman, Chair of the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley said, "Eugene has been one of the pillars of the Berkeley Physics Department for several decades. Over this period, he has taught and educated generations of physicists, many of whom have gone on to sterling careers in their own right: our current Energy Secretary, Nobel Laureate Steve Chu, is an outstanding example of a student who was taught and mentored by Eugene! But, by far, the biggest impact that Eugene has had is on the broad spectrum of graduate students from across the country and around the world."

About the Award

Named in honor of outstanding physicist and teacher, J. D. Jackson, this award recognizes physicists and physics educators who, like John David Jackson, have made outstanding contributions to curriculum development, mentorship, or classroom teaching in graduate physics education. It is given in recognition of contributions to graduate physics education and awardees are chosen for their extraordinary accomplishments in communicating the excitement of physics to their students.

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.

For more information: Contact Marilyn Gardner, Director of Communications, mgardner@aapt.org, (301)209-3306, (301)209-0845 (Fax), www.aapt.org.