American Association of Physics Teachers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

David M. Cook Takes on New Role as President of AAPT

College Park, Maryland, United States, February 17, 2010

The American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT) has today announced that David M. Cook, Ph.D. has assumed the role of AAPT President. Cook, who recently retired as Professor of Physics and Philetus E. Sawyer Professor of Science, Lawrence University, will serve as President in 2010 and Past President in 2011.

Cook earned his BS in physics at Rensselaer. Both his AM and Ph.D. in physics were earned at Harvard. While serving on the Physics faculty at Lawrence University, Appleton, WI since 1965 he has taught nearly every undergraduate physics course. His focus, however, has been on computation in the upper-level curriculum. He has served several terms as Physics Department Chair. Additionally, he has served on the Tenure Committee, the Governance Committee, and the Presidential Search Committee at Lawrence.

Since 1985, with support totaling more than $1M for the National Science Foundation, Research Corporation, the W. M. Keck Foundation, and other sources, he has built the Computational Physics Laboratory at Lawrence and guided the design of the computational components of the Lawrence curriculum, including the creation of two courses titled Computational Mechanics and Computational Physics. His self-published text for those courses also contains numerous exercises for other physics courses, and his 1975 text on electromagnetic theory was recently reprinted by Dover.

His AAPT service includes more than four decades of meeting attendance and presentations, membership on the Committee on Computers in Physics Education, and leadership roles.

Recognizing the challenges AAPT faces now and in the future, Cook says, “Both the future of the United States as a leader in science and technology and the strength of the U.S. economy are at risk because too few of our most able young people are preparing for careers in science and engineering. AAPT is already playing an important role in addressing this growing crisis. The current efforts, however, need to be expanded in both intensity and scope. In particular, we need to assess whether the current structure and content of our offerings for prospective scientists are as strong as they can be in preparing students for productive 50-year careers in the 21st century and also whether they are as appealing as they must be to compete successfully with the students' alternatives.”

About AAPT: The AAPT is the premier national organization and authority on physics and physical science education —with more than 10,000 members worldwide. Our mission is to advance the greater good through physics education. We provide our members with many opportunities for professional development, communication, and student enrichment. We serve the larger community through a variety of programs and publications. AAPT was founded in 1930 and is headquartered in the American Center for Physics in College Park, Maryland.

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