



American Association of Physics Teachers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AAPT Announces 2010 Klopsteg Memorial Award Winner is Dr. Robert J. Scherrer

College Park, Maryland, April 27, 2010—Robert Scherrer, Chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Vanderbilt University, is the 2010 recipient of the Klopsteg Memorial Award from the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT). Klopsteg awardees are chosen for their extraordinary accomplishments in communicating the excitement of physics to the general public. The Klopsteg awardee presents a lecture on a physics topic of current significance suitable for non-specialists, in memory of Paul Klopsteg, AAPT Past President. Dr. Scherrer will receive the award at the 2010 AAPT Summer Meeting in Portland, OR.



Regarding his selection as this year's recipient, Scherrer said, "I am deeply honored to receive the 2010 Klopsteg Award. I have always enjoyed teaching physics, and in conveying science to the general public, and I hope to present a lecture that is both informative and entertaining."

Scherrer, a well-known cosmologist, has worked in this field since the 1980s and has made major contributions in the study of element production in the early universe, particle physics in the early universe, the clustering of galaxies, and dark energy. Scherrer has published widely in this field. His work has also been mentioned, over the years, in *Physics Today*, *Nature*, *Science*, *Science News*, *Sky & Telescope*, and *Discover*.

In addition to his research, Scherrer is an accomplished teacher and an outstanding speaker. He received the 1999 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching at Ohio State University, Ohio State's top teaching award. He is also the author of a well-respected quantum mechanics textbook, *Quantum Mechanics, an Accessible Introduction* (Pearson, 2006).

However, the basis on which Scherrer has been selected as the Klopsteg winner is his work as a published science fiction author. He has written several short stories, mostly published in *Analog Magazine*. On the basis of this work, he has developed a talk on "Science and Science Fiction." His talk focuses on the way in which new ideas are introduced in physics, and compares this to the way they are developed in the process of writing a science fiction story. He also discusses the predictive nature of science fiction (vs. science), and the way that information is presented in a short story as opposed to a scientific paper.

AAPT is the leading organization for physics teachers and physics education and provides services that help enhance teaching skills and publishes scholarly journals documenting best teaching practices. AAPT is committed to providing the most current resources and up-to-date research needed to enhance a physics educator's professional development. The results are not only a deeper appreciation of the teaching profession, but most importantly, more enthusiastic involvement from their students.

About the Award

Established in 1990, this award is given to a notable physicist in memory of Paul Klopsteg. The Klopsteg Memorial Award recipient is asked to make a major presentation at an AAPT Summer Meeting on a topic of current significance suitable for non-specialists.

Previous Awardees:

2009 Lee Smolin, Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Waterloo, ON, Canada

2008 Michio Kaku, City University of New York, New York, NY

2007 Neil deGrasse Tyson, Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY

2006 Lisa Randall, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

2005 Wendy Freedman, Carnegie Observatories, Pasadena, CA

2004 Anton Zeilinger, University of Vienna, Austria

www.aapt.org/Grants/klopsteg.cfm

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 teaching 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.

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