Scholarships & Awards

Physics Award Descriptions

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Andersen Scholarship

The Gregory Lynn Andersen Scholarship is dedicated to the memory of Gregory Lynn Andersen, who graduated with great promise from the department. Gregory Andersen received the Bachelor of Science in Physics cum laude from the University of Washington in December 1980. He died tragically in an automobile-bicycle accident only a month later. Gregory Andersen had been an outstanding physics student. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and of the Physics Honors Program. He received the Emilie Peaslee Scholarship for high academic achievement. As a student, he participated in the research program of the University of Washington Nuclear Physics Laboratory. At the time of his death he was engaged in the design and construction of a magnetic spectrometer for the laboratory. The Scholarship Fund was established in 1983 as a memorial to him by his parents, the Norman L. Andersen family, and friends. It is awarded each year to a Physics Major for academic excellence, and is a one or two quarter tuition scholarship for the junior or senior year.

Boas Scholarship

After her illustrious career, Dr. Mary L. Boas is happy to be able to offer a small repayment to the department where she got her start and encourage other women to be theoretical physicists. Dr. Boas received her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees at the University of
Washington in 1938 and 1940, and her Ph.D. from M.I.T. Dr. Boas spent 30 years on the faculty of the Physics Department at DePaul University in Chicago and continued to teach, learn and write in the field of mathematical and theoretical physics. She is the author of Mathematical Methods in the Physical Sciences which is widely used across the country, including in the UW undergraduate Mathematical Methods courses. The Mary L. Boas Endowed Scholarship recognizes undergraduate women students in the Department of Physics for outstanding academic achievements.

Dehmelt Prize

The Hans G. Dehmelt Prize was established by the distinguished Nobel Laureate Professor Emeritus Hans G. Dehmelt. Dr. Dehmelt completed his Master's thesis in 1948 and his Ph.D. in 1950, both from University of Göttingen. Dr. Dehmelt was invited to Duke University as a postdoctoral associate in 1952, later accepting an assistant professor position at the University of Washington in 1955. He conducted his research work on ion traps, receiving the Davisson Germer Prize in 1970, elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1978, awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1989 and the National Medal of Science in 1995. In September 2002, after a brilliant career, Dr. Dehmelt retired from the University of Washington as Professor Emeritus. The purpose of this award is to recognize students in the Department of Physics for outstanding achievements in the area of “table-top” experimental physics. This award is given to an undergraduate or graduate student based on academic merit.

Henderson Prize

The Henderson Family Prize commemorates Professor Joseph Henderson and his wife. Prof. Henderson joined the faculty of the University of Washington in 1929. Mrs. Henderson was precluded from regular faculty appointment by the anti-nepotism rules in effect, although she taught occasional courses. The first Ph.D. awarded by the Department of Physics was earned by one of Professor Henderson's students in 1934, and in all 25 students received Ph.D.'s under Prof. Henderson's guidance. Research in nuclear physics here began when he and his students undertook to build a high voltage x-ray source for the Swedish Hospital to use in cancer therapy. Prof. Henderson contributed substantially to the physics war effort in World War II and he established the Applied Physics Laboratory here afterwards. He served as Director of the Laboratory until 1969. The Prize is financed by the Henderson Family Fund, established in 1983 by the gifts from Prof. and Mrs. Henderson, their family, friends, colleagues, and former students. It is awarded for an outstanding Ph.D. thesis.

Higgs/Osborn Prize

The Prize commemorates two early faculty members of the Department. Professor Higgs earned a degree from the Department in 1919 and he taught here from then until his retirement in 1966. He was outstanding for his talent as an experimentalist and for his many contributions to teaching, particularly in bringing physics alive through the design, construction, demonstration and use of laboratory equipment. Professor Osborn came to the University in 1902 as the first Professor of Physics and Director of the Physics Laboratories. He served as department head until his death in 1942. The Prize is awarded to undergraduate students who have shown exceptional ability in laboratory courses. This award closed in Spring 2011.

Karrer Prize

The Sebastian Karrer Prize was established from a gift from Annie May Hurd Karrer in memory of her husband Dr. Sebastian Karrer. Dr. Karrer received his undergraduate and master's degrees in Physics at the University of Washington in 1911 and 1913, and his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1918. Dr. Karrer had a distinguished career in thermoelectricity, refrigeration and solid state physics at several universities, government laboratories and industries. He was consultant to the office of Scientific Research and received the National Defense Research Award of the Office of Naval Ordinance. The Karrer Prize was first awarded in 1947. It is given to an outstanding student in the first three years of graduate study. The Award is made to a senior or graduate student on the basis of need
scholarship, and good character.

Miller Scholarship
The Miller Physics Scholarship award honors the memory of Eugene Kenneth Miller, who was a graduate student in the Department of Physics at the time of his death. It is made possible through a bequest from Mr. John M. Miller.

The Dahlstrom Prize
This award was established in 1993 in the name of Robert K. Dahlstrom who in 1934 received the first Ph.D. in Physics awarded by the University of Washington. His thesis work was directed by Professor Joe Henderson, founder of the Applied Physics Laboratory at the UW. He left Eastern Washington State College to do defense work during World War II. After the war, he worked for the APL in Silver Spring, MD, applying his physics to various defense problems. In his memory we honored outstanding graduate students who passed the General Examination in experimental physics. This award closed in 2000.

Weis Prize
The Joseph H. Weis Prize honors the memory of an outstanding young theoretical physicist and former member of this Department, who died in a mountain climbing accident in 1978. Joseph Weis was known for his enthusiasm and dedication to physics and for his concern for teaching. This award was established in accordance with these commitments. It provides for a travel grant each year to support a graduate student's trip to a conference, a workshop, or a visit to a laboratory.

Faculty Excellence in Graduate Teaching
This award was established in 2004 to honor excellence in teaching graduate level courses. The awardee is selected by the graduate students.

Faculty Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching
This award was established in 2004 to honor excellence in teaching undergraduate courses. The awardee is selected by the undergraduate student organization, the Society of Physics Students.

Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching
This award was established in 2004 to honor excellence in serving as a teaching assistant and includes the AAPT award of a subscription to the American Journal of Physics.

First Year Excellence in Teaching
This award was established in 2011 to honor excellence in serving as a 1st year teaching assistant and includes the AAPT award of a subscription to the American Journal of Physics.

Mentoring Awards (Faculty)
This award honors excellence in student mentoring by faculty.

Mentoring Awards (Graduate)
This award honors excellence in student mentoring by other students.
For a list of awardees, see Award Recipients.

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