

Judith S. Young receives Maria Goeppert-Mayer Award

The first recipient of the Maria Goeppert-Mayer Award is Judith S. Young (University of Massachusetts, Amherst). Young was presented with the award at the APS April Meeting in Washington, DC. The Goeppert-Mayer Award and the new Award for Research in an Undergraduate Institution, which was presented to Jerry P. Gollub at the March Meeting in Las Vegas (PHYSICS TODAY, March, page 83), highlight the Society's commitment to excellence in physics education as well as research.

The Maria Goeppert-Mayer Award was created "to recognize and enhance outstanding achievement by a woman physicist in the early years of her career and to provide opportunities for her to present these achievements to others through public lectures" (PHYSICS TODAY, September, page 107).

Young received a BA with honors in astronomy from Harvard University in 1974. She earned her MS and PhD in physics at the University of Minnesota in 1977 and 1979, respectively. In 1979 she accepted a postdoctoral position at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she went on to become a faculty member. Her research specializations are extragalactic radioastronomy, galactic evolution and cosmic-ray physics.

Her award certificate cites her "studies of the structure of galaxies," in particular her "extensive measurement of the molecular distributions in these galaxies and their correlation with star formation." Young has said that her "primary research interest is studying the evolution of galaxies. My radio telescope observations have suggested that the available supply of molecular gas is a primary factor influencing the amount of star formation which occurs. By studying different galaxies to see how much gas there is now and how many stars have already been formed, we can learn more about the evolution of galaxies."

"I grew up seeing that science was fun," says Young. "I love what I do." Her parents, Robert J. and Vera C. Rubin, are both scientists. Her mother is an observational astronomer at the Carnegie Institution in Washington, DC, and her father is a theoretical

physicist at the National Bureau of Standards.

"I think it is extremely important for young women to see women scientists in action. In addition to seeing my mother enjoying science as I was growing up, I also benefited from having a woman as my PhD thesis adviser. The only way to encourage more women to go into science is to have more women on faculties. I hope to see US universities take leadership roles in providing more faculty positions for women in the sciences."

Young is the second female faculty member in the University of Massachusetts's department of astronomy and physics and the first woman in the astronomy program as such. This year she is supervising three female and three male graduate students. About a third of the astronomy graduate students at her institution are women, which is twice the national average. Young feels that part of the reason for that is the presence of a woman on the faculty.

The selection committee for the 1987 Maria Goeppert-Mayer Award invites



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nominations from the physics community. The deadline for receipt of suggestions is 15 September 1986. Nominations should be sent directly to Elizabeth U. Baranger, Goeppert-Mayer Committee Chair, FAS Graduate Office, 910 Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15260.

Contributions sought for matching grants

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