

WE HEAR THAT

AAS Acknowledges Achievements in Astronomy

The American Astronomical Society recently announced the winners of several of its awards for 2001. These awards recognize contributions to astronomy and astrophysics.

The Henry Norris Russell Lectureship, the society's highest honor, will be presented to **Wallace L. W. Sargent**, Ira S. Bowen Professor of Astronomy at Caltech. AAS praises Sargent for being an "intellectual leader and educator" throughout his career and recognizes his contributions to astronomical spectroscopy, including his work in stellar spectroscopy of A-type stars that "led to the discovery of the helium-3 isotope in star 3 Centauri A." He involved many of his students in his work in extragalactic spectroscopy, "which produced the first evidence for a black hole in galaxy M87 and culminated with his studies of quasar absorption lines." His demonstration that the Lyman-alpha forest absorption arises from intergalactic primordial gas clouds "provided a fundamental new probe of primeval gas in the early universe."

The society is presenting a new award this year. The inaugural AAS Education Prize, given in recognition of outstanding contributions to the education of the public, of students, and the next generation of professional astronomers, will go to **Frank D. Drake** for his "inspiration and leadership in many areas of education and public outreach in astronomy." Drake's "wide-ranging popularizations, his tireless help for journalists, and his championship of education and public information through the SETI Institute have helped scientists, educators, and the world at large to think rationally about life in the cosmos." The citation also noted that his course work for and mentorship of students, and his development of the science of SETI (the search for extraterrestrial intelligence) through Pro-

ject Ozma, the Drake Equation, and Project Phoenix, have "brought the excitement of the cosmic quest to several generations." Drake is a professor emeritus of astronomy and astrophysics at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and distinguished scientist and chairman of the board of trustees of the SETI Institute.

Bruce Elmgreen, a research staff member at IBM's T. J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, New York, will receive the Dannie Heineman Prize for Astrophysics, given jointly by AAS and the American Institute of Physics. Elmgreen is being recognized for contributions that "span a remarkable range from theoretical studies of key processes in the interstellar medium to the physics of galaxy-wide starbursts, to investigations of dynamical features, including spiral arms and bars in galaxies."

The Newton Lacy Pierce Prize will be given this year to **Kenneth Sembach**, a research scientist at Johns Hopkins University. Sembach is being acknowledged for work "that has been important in increasing our understanding of the structure and elemental abundances of the gaseous component of the Galaxy, especially of the galactic halo, as well as in discovering new facets of the high-velocity cloud phenomenon in the galactic periphery."

Uros Seljak will receive the Helen B. Warner Prize for Astronomy for his "contributions to the theoretical understanding of the cosmic microwave background anisotropies and to the development of numerical and analytical tools that have been widely adopted for the comparison of observational data and cosmological models in that area." Seljak is an assistant professor of physics at Princeton University.

Michael J. Kurtz, an astronomer and computer scientist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, will be awarded the George Van Biesbroeck Prize. AAS acknowledges Kurtz's contributions as "the visionary designer of the Astrophysics Data System, which clearly has revolutionized for over a decade the speed and thoroughness in which astronomers now can search and access the vast and still growing technical literature."

The Bruno Rossi Prize, given by AAS's high-energy astrophysics division, will be shared by **Andrew Fabi-**

an and **Yasuo Tanaka** for "their discovery, with the ASCA satellite [Advanced Satellite for Cosmology and Astrophysics], of broad iron K lines in active galactic nuclei, which demonstrate the effects of the strong gravitational field characteristic of black holes." Fabian is a Royal Society Research Professor with the Institute of Astronomy at the University of Cambridge, UK. Tanaka is a professor emeritus of astronomy and astrophysics at the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science in Sagami-hara, Japan.

EGS Honors Geophysicists

At its 26th general assembly in Nice, France, last March, the European Geophysical Society bestowed fellowship on one scientist and presented awards and medals to 10 others.

Roger-Maurice Bonnet was named a fellow of the EGS for "his authoritative and wide-ranging support of the space sciences, putting Europe at the forefront of Solar System exploration," according to the society's citation. He is director of research at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and a professor of physical sciences and of astrophysics and geophysics at Liège University in Belgium.

Atsuhiko Nishida, scientific supervisor with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, based in Tokyo, received the Hannes Alfvén Medal for "his outstanding contributions to the study of plasma processes in the Earth's magnetosphere and as an international space science coordinator."

EGS presented the Badge Award to three winners. **Leon Knopoff**, a professor of physics and geophysics at UCLA, was recognized for "his outstanding services as editor and supporter of [EGS's] journal *Nonlinear Processes in Geophysics*." EGS also acknowledged **Peter L. Read**, a reader in physics at the University of Oxford, for "his generous services as chairperson of the interdisciplinary working group of nonlinear processes in geophysics." **Susanna Zerbin** was honored for "her exceptional services as president of the geodesy section and her eminent contribution in promoting geodesy within the society." She is an associate professor of geodesy at the University of Bologna in Italy.



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