

Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO



The journey to the Nobel

I look forward to early October when the Nobel prizes in science are awarded because, for a few rare hours, the international news media pays avid attention to these prestigious prizes and the scientists who earned them. It's a tremendous occasion to inform the public and instill broader appreciation for science. When members of the general press ask me to comment about the Physics Prize, I try to make the most of the opportunity. Most reporters are working on a short deadline, and they are anxious to submit a brief story that describes in lay language what the prizes are about and why these particular award winners rose to the top of the Nobel Committee's highly selective list. I do my best to accommodate this primary objective, but if I am afforded a little more time during the reporter's typical rushed interview, I try to interest the writer in a backstory. The extraordinary journey that the prizewinner(s) travel from their research's genesis to the seminal events recognized by the prize's citation is often as remarkable as the discovery itself. For most Nobel prizes, this journey stretches over many decades.



Image credit: Alexofdodd via Wikimedia Commons

This year's [Nobel Prize in Physics](#) was awarded to three Japanese scientists: Isamu Akasaki of Meijo University and Nagoya University, Hiroshi Amano of Nagoya University (an OSA member), and Shuji Nakamura, who is now a US citizen and professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Their prize was for the invention of the blue light emitting diode (LED)—an eminently practical invention that has pervaded all aspects of life in the last decade, from general illumination, visual displays, and optical disks to research tools and medical devices. Reporters often inquire about the prize-winning research's impact on society.

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Physics Resources Matters

Science Nobels by numbers

[Inside Science](#) produced three news stories and six blog entries, including an [interactive infographic](#). Page views of these items on the Inside Science website reached 14,000 in the first 2.5 days. Media Services staff translated all three Inside Science news stories into Chinese for the AIP China website and distributed the stories to news organizations in China.

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Around AIP

Anticipating Nobel

For the second year in a row, AIP has invited notables in the physics community to gather as a prelude to the announcement from the Royal Swedish Academy of Science. “Anticipating Nobel” is an event that recognizes and honors the work and prestige of Physics Nobel laureates and others of prominence in the physical sciences community.

Graciously hosted again at the Bethesda home of author Nancy Thorndike Greenspan, this year’s October 6th event included three Nobel laureates in Physics: William D. Phillips (1997), Adam G. Riess (2011), and Klaus von Klitzing (1985) of Germany, who is visiting and working in the DC Metro area for a few weeks. Other guests included accomplished science writers, historians, and supporters of AIP’s history and student programs. Phil Schewe, of the UMD Joint Quantum Institute (and former, longtime employee of AIP), served as our celebrity emcee.

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Klaus von Klitzing (left) and Bill Phillips sport von Klitzing's Nobel award medal that he received in 1985.

Member Society Spotlight

AAPT offers Nobel Prize resource for teachers

In celebration of the 2014 Nobel Prize in Physics, AAPT has developed a [new resource](#) to help its

members and the physics community teach about the science behind the Nobel Prize.

» [Read more](#)

Women encourage women with HER stories



Not many women have received the notoriety of Nobel, compared to their male counterparts. To bring to light the important work that women do in the physical sciences, AAPT, APS, SPS, and AIP have collaborated to offer the video production, [HerStories: Wisdom and Encouragement from Women in Physics](#). Please share the video with colleagues and women who are considering a career in physics.

Coming Up

October 14

- Staff training: Proofreading skills and strategies (College Park)
- ACP Art Reception, "Density Fluctuations," 5:30-7:30 pm (College Park)

October 15

- ACP Flu Shot Clinic (College Park)

October 16

- AIP Annual Milestone Presentations (College Park)

October 19-20

- AIP Publishing 2014 Journal Editors' Fall Conference (Melville)

October 19-23

- OSA 98th Annual Meeting and Exhibition (FiO) (Tucson, AZ)

October 27-31

- ASA 168th Meeting (Indianapolis, IN)

November 3

- AIP Executive Committee meeting (College Park)
- L.S. Trimble science heritage public lecture, "Atomic Tracings: Radioisotopes in Science and Medicine." Reception at 5:15 pm; talk begins at 6:15 pm. (College Park)

November 4

- AIP Governing Board meeting (College Park)

November 9-14

- AVS International Symposium & Exhibition (Baltimore, MD)