

What: Faculty/Staff Honors Luncheon

When: Thursday, May 25

Length of Speech:

5 minutes

Notes: You will be the last speaker and it is your responsibility to introduce the most prestigious award of the year

Good afternoon. It is my pleasure today to present Georgia Tech's most prestigious faculty award, the Distinguished Professor Award. This award is given each year to a nationally and internationally recognized faculty member who has exhibited sustained scholarship, leadership, outstanding achievement, and excellence in teaching, research, and service and who has made major contributions to the educational careers and personal development of students at Georgia Tech.

The 1995 winner of the Distinguished Professor Award, Dr. Raymond Flannery, is a man who has been described by colleagues as (tick off on your fingers to demonstrate different quotes from different individuals) "one of the senior statesmen of the physics field," "the acknowledged leader in theoretical studies of recombination processes," "a preeminent figure in applied atomic physics," an "innovative theorist," and—"the Christopher Columbus of atomic collision theory," referring of course to his trailblazing research in atomic collision theory, not his sense of direction.

His colleagues also cite him for his creative and original thinking and his prolific publishing of useful and innovative research; throughout his career, he has published more than 140 papers and articles.

A renowned researcher, he is currently the associate editor of the *Physical Review Letters*, a periodical most physicists refer to as the most prestigious journal for the field of physics. Dr. Flannery is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and the Institute of Physics and currently serves as chairperson of the American Physical Society Will Allis Prize Committee. From the spring of 1993 to the spring of 1994, he served as an Invited Fellow at the Institute for Theoretical Atomic and Molecular Physics at Harvard University and in 1994 was named a distinguished scholar by the Queen's University of Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Research accomplishments include developing a new theory of dissociative recombination, a new theory of laser assisted electron-atom collisions, and a new theory of termolecular recombination.

I'm not sure what that means he has done, but it certainly sounds both impressive and laudable.

His guest lectures have been delivered throughout the world—from France, Germany, and Mexico to Louisiana, Texas, California, and New York. His sought-after seminars have been described as being delivered with “enthusiasm and style.” These lectures have enhanced his already renowned worldwide reputation for excellence and have established him as an excellent ambassador for Georgia Tech.

Here at Georgia Tech, although his students are aware of his international reputation, they are much more impressed with his reputation as an entertaining, fair, and caring teacher. He has advised approximately 10 Ph.D. candidates, while also teaching

undergraduate and graduate classes. I have with me two quotes from former students. The first is from a former Ph.D. student who states: “Dr. Flannery had a very significant influence as a mentor and teacher on my development as a physicist and a researcher. He was very generous with his time and made himself readily available to me and his other students.” Another former student praises him by writing: “...he explains the material clearly and with special insight and enthusiasm. Even highly mathematical subjects like Hamiltonian dynamics were taught with delight, as if he were discovering each result for the very first time himself.”

Dr. Flannery obtained his Ph.D. from the Queen’s University of Belfast. He first came to Tech in 1967 as an assistant professor of physics. He was lured away by Harvard but came back to us in 1971 as an associate professor of physics and to our great appreciation has been with us ever since. He was named a professor in 1974 and Regents’ professor in 1993. The grand total of his research grants received while at Georgia Tech total more than \$1.6 million.

I, personally, am not sure what to be more impressed with—the accolades of his colleagues, the praise of his students, the volume of his work, or the impact of his research. All add up to a valuable member of our faculty and a very deserving recipient of the 1995 Distinguished Professor Award.

It is my great honor to present this award to a great teacher and researcher, Dr. Raymond Flannery.

