

# News & Events in Physics

## GREEN CENTER DEDICATION

President **Susan Hockfield**, Provost **Rafael Reif**, and Deans of Science and Engineering **Marc Kastner** and **Subra Suresh**, respectively, joined the Department of Physics, its alumni and friends on October 4th, 2007, to celebrate the official opening of the **Cecil and Ida Green Center for Physics**. Department Head **Edmund Bertschinger** warmly welcomed guests to the gala event, which featured a keynote address by President Hockfield, held in the Center's Sol LeWitt atrium terrace.

An Open House reception and symposium for the MIT community marked the dedication. Featured speakers at "Celebrating Physics at MIT" were **Charles H. Townes**, 1964 Nobel Laureate and Professor Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley; **Shirley Ann Jackson** (PhD '73), President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; alumnus **Robert B. Laughlin**, 1998 Nobel Laureate and Stanford University faculty member; and **Steven Weinberg**, 1979 Nobel Laureate, of the University of Texas at Austin physics faculty.

The Department is grateful to the many alumni and friends who made the Green Center a reality. Those principal donors to the project who made named gifts include **Serpil and Yalcin Ayasli**, **Helga and Eric Cosman**, **Charles A. Duboc**, **James and Sylvia Earl**, **Virgil Elings**, **L. Robert Johnson**, **Kathleen and Curtis Marble**, **Jane and Neil Pappalardo**, **Jay A. Stein**, and **Margaret W. Wong**, as well as the children of the late Provost and Institute Professor emeritus **Francis E. Low**.

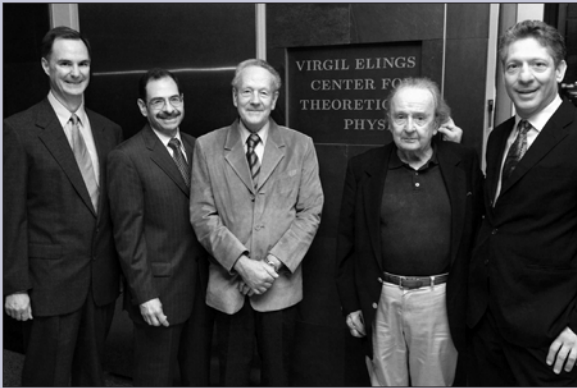


*Standing before the new Pappalardo Community Room are (left to right) Department Head Ed Bertschinger, Dean Marc Kastner, President Susan Hockfield, and Jane and Neil Pappalardo.*



*Outside the new Kathleen and Curtis Marble Undergraduate Common Room with physics faculty are (front row, left to right) Curt and Kathleen Marble, President Susan Hockfield, Dean Marc Kastner and (second row, far right) Department Head Ed Bertschinger.*

All photos Justin Knight



*At the entrance to the Virgil Elings Center for Theoretical Physics are (left to right) Department Head Ed Bertschinger, Dean Marc Kastner, Virgil Elings, Professor of Physics Emeritus Louis Osborne, and CTP Director Professor Edward Farhi.*



*Standing before the Helena Foundation Laboratory ("Junior Lab") are (left to right) Professor Peter Fisher, Department Head Ed Bertschinger, MIT-Kavli Institute for Astrophysics & Space Research Director Jacqueline Hewitt, Dean Marc Kastner, and James and Sylvia Earl.*



*Outside the Jay A. Stein Tutoring Room are (left to right) Professor Walter Lewin, Peter Stein, Jay Stein and Dean Marc Kastner.*



*In front of the Margaret Wong Room for Women in Physics, are (left to right) Margaret's daughter Alexandra Chen, Margaret Wong and sister Patricia Wong.*

### ANNUAL REUNION RECEPTION

The Department held its Alumni Reunion Reception on June 8, 2007. Returning alumni were delighted with the newly completed Pappalardo Community Room, a centerpiece of the Green Center for Physics, with its glorious view of Killian Court. Graduate students led tours of the Center's new Building 6C, home to the Center for Theoretical Physics and the Condensed Matter Theory group. **Riccardo DiCapua** enjoyed his 30th reunion, and **Scott and Lois Poucher**, as well as **Ben and Carolyn Woznick**, also returned for the festivities.

### ANNUAL FALL RECEPTION



*(left to right) Joanne and Mark Mueller, Associate Dean for Development Elizabeth Chadis, David and Zoya Soane.*

On September 30, 2007, Department Head **Edmund Bertschinger** and interim Department Head **Thomas Greytak** co-hosted the annual fall reception at MIT's Endicott House. One of the highlights of the Department's academic year, the reception gives its faculty, staff, friends and their families the opportunity to meet and mingle. Joining us this year were **David and Zoya Soane**, **Mrs. David Frisch**, **Mark and Joanne Mueller**, **Neil Pappalardo** and **Colleen Messing**.

### BREAKFAST LECTURE SERIES: SCOTT HUGHES AND GABRIELLA SCIOLLA

More than 60 alumni gathered at the MIT Faculty Club on the morning of October 24, 2007, to hear "Black Holes and Gravitational Waves: Using Einstein to Study Einstein," by Prof. **Scott Hughes**, who explained how physicists plan to use these waves to open a new astronomical window onto the Universe. Among guests attending were **Brit d'Arbeloff**, **Norman Gaut**, **Ted Heuchling** and **Yalcin Ayasli**. For the second breakfast talk, on May 6, 2008, alumni assembled at the Faculty Club to hear Prof. **Gabriella Sciolla** discuss "Shedding Light on the Dark Universe." Attending were **Paul Gray**, **Sherwin Greenblatt**, **Bill Hecht**, **Curt Marble**, **Naimish Patel**, **Greg Moore** and **Neil Pappalardo**.

**John C. Mather**, Senior Astrophysicist and Goddard Fellow at NASA's James Webb Space

Telescope, was the Department's 2007 Distinguished Pappalardo Lecturer. For a capacity crowd in lecture hall 10-250, he tackled the history of the Universe in his talk, "From the Big Bang to the Nobel Prize and on to the James Webb Space Telescope." Afterwards, **Colleen and Howard Messing, Mort Goulder** and faculty and friends of the department joined **Neil and Jane Pappalardo** for an honorary reception and dinner.

The Pappalardo Distinguished Lecture in Physics was established in 1999 in honor of Neil and Jane Pappalardo, friends of the Department of Physics who believe in broadening scientific frontiers for the good of humanity.

## ( PAPPALARDO DISTINGUISHED LECTURE IN PHYSICS

As the 2008 IAP Physics lecturer, alumnus **Lawrence Votta** received a warm introduction from his Ph.D. thesis advisor, **Professor Emeritus**

**Lawrence Rosenson**. A software specialist working both independently and as a member of the Sun Microsystems Customer Advocates for Reliability Group (SunCARE), Votta gave an entertaining and personal perspective on a physicist's life in the high tech industry.

## ( IAP LECTURE IN PHYSICS: "ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION: ONE PHYSICIST'S JOURNEY"

The **Pappalardo Fellowships in Physics**, one of the premier postdoctoral fellowship

programs within the international physics community, wrapped up its ninth annual competition in January 2008 with the acceptance of four new fellows for the 2008-11 term: **Mustafa Amin** (theoretical astrophysics), a 2008 Ph.D. from Stanford University; **James Battat** (experimental astrophysics/neutrino physics), a recent Ph.D. from Harvard University; **Lu Li** (experimental condensed matter), a spring 2008 Ph.D. from Princeton University; and **Yusuke Nishida** (theoretical particle physics), a postdoctoral associate from the Institute for Nuclear Theory, University of Washington.

Detailed biographies, including research descriptions and publications for all Pappalardo Fellows (present, incoming and former), are available on [web.mit.edu/physics/research](http://web.mit.edu/physics/research). The MIT Pappalardo Fellowships in Physics program was initiated, and is sustained, by funds generously provided by **Neil and Jane Pappalardo**.

## ( 2008-11 PAPPALARDO FELLOWSHIPS IN PHYSICS COMPETITION

## DISTINGUISHED DAVID & EDITH HARRIS LECTURE AND DINNER: FALL & SPRING

Gregory Hien Photography



*Neil Pappalardo at the spring Harris lecture.*

On November 29, 2007, Nobel Laureate **Theodor W. Hänsch** of the Ludwig-Maximilians-

University in Munich discussed, "What Can We Do With Optical Frequency Combs?" for the fall semester's David and Edith Harris Distinguished Lecture. Followed by a department dinner in honor of Prof. Hänsch, Department faculty and friends, including **Benjamin and Carolyn Woznick**, joined members of the Harris family. The spring 2008 Harris lecture was held on March 13, 2008, featuring **Boris Kayser** of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, who spoke on "Exploring the Neutrino Questions." Attending were physics faculty and friends, including **Neil Pappalardo**.

The Harris Lecture was established by Edith Harris in honor of her husband, MIT physics alumnus David H. Harris (SB'22), for a life and career dedicated to education.

## PATRONS OF PHYSICS FELLOWS DINNER

The Department celebrated its Patrons of Physics Fellows program on April 9, 2008, with

a reception and dinner in the Green Center's Pappalardo Community Room. Close to 60 guests attended the event, held annually to bring together the department's patrons of graduate fellowships and their students. **Josh Bendavid**, the 2007–08 Lourie Fellow, **Leslie Rogers**, a 2006–07 Whiteman Fellow, and **Abolhassan Vaezi**, a 2007–08 Whiteman Fellow, all gave presentations about their experiences as research students in the department. Founding member **George Elbaum** shared his thoughts on the program's success at the end of evening. Along with George and his wife **Mimi Jensen**, attending the dinner were **Juan Carlos Torres Carretero**, a new member of the Patrons Society, and Department friends and alumni **Tom Frank, Robert Lourie, Curt and Kathy Marble, Neil Pappalardo** and faculty.

*Founding members of the Patrons of Physics Fellows George Elbaum and wife Mimi Jensen with the Whiteman Fellows, named in honor of George's mother Pauline.*



Gregory Hien Photography

On May 1, 2008, **John and Stella Seo** hosted **Wolfgang Ketterle**, the John D. MacArthur Professor of Physics and 2001 Nobel Laureate, and Physics Department Head **Ed Bertschinger**, at the beautiful waterfront L'Escale restaurant in Greenwich, CT. Professor Ketterle spoke on his research group's exploration of the properties of ultracold gases, and his work in the field of atomic physics and laser spectroscopy (the latter research led to his 2001 Nobel Prize). In the audience were two former Ketterle group students, **Ken Davis** and **Michael Andrews**. Also attending the event were **Tom Halket**, **Jeffrey and Julie Satinover**, **Emmin Shung** and **John and Francie Tsai**.

## WOLFGANG KETTERLE LECTURE, GREENWICH, CT



Fred Cancoplar/Studio A Photography

*Ketterle lecture hosts John and Stella Seo.*

The Department's prestigious postdoctoral fellowship program, the **Pappalardo**

## 7TH ANNUAL PAPPALARDO FELLOWSHIPS IN PHYSICS SYMPOSIUM

**Fellowships in Physics**, held its 7th annual symposium on May 16, 2008, featuring public talks by a selection of its outstanding young fellows. Attended by a broad cross-section of members and friends of the MIT physics community, featured speakers included Fellows **Jeffrey Gore** (biophysics), **Nitya Kallivayalil** (experimental astrophysics), **Paola Rebusco** (theoretical astrophysics), **Jacob Taylor** (hard condensed matter theory) and **Jocelyn Monroe** (neutrino physics). Among enthusiastic audience members sat program founder and benefactor **Neil Pappalardo** and his wife **Jane**, longstanding Department friends and Patrons of Physics members **Curt and Kathy Marble** and **Colleen and Howard Messing**, as well as alumnus and Department supporter **Mark Mueller**.

For more information on all aspects of the Pappalardo Fellowships in Physics program, please visit the program's pages in the Research section of the Department's web site at [web.mit.edu/physics](http://web.mit.edu/physics).