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American Association of Physics Teachers
Enhancing the understanding and appreciation of physics through teaching

AAPT Member & Physics Community Obituaries

Robert G. Fuller, April 9, 2012

We are sad to report the passing of Bob Fuller who had experienced a brain aneurism last Thanksgiving. He passed away on Monday April 9, 2012.

Professor Robert G. Fuller was the leader of the Research in Physics Education Group (RPEG) in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at UNL from 1989 to 2005. He became a full time emeritus professor in the spring of 2005.

Fuller earned his B.S. in Physics at the University of Missouri, Rolla. Both his M.S. and Ph.D. in Physics were received from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He started his physics career as a research Assistant in 1956 at Owens Illinois Glass Company in Toledo, OH. Over the next 50 years his contributions and opportunities took him from California to New York before he became a professor in the Department of Physics at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL) in 1976. He retired from UNL as Professor Emeritus in 2005.

Fuller, an Emeritus Member of AAPT, joined the Association in 1959. He actively served in many roles over his lifetime, including; Vice President (1978), President-elect (1979), President (1980), Past-president(1981); Instructional Media Committee (1974-1977, 1985-1988), Chair(1985-87); Student Confidence Workshop Committee Chair(1983-1986); Physics Teaching and the Development of Reasoning Committee (1973-75); Editor, AAPT Instructional Materials Center, 1987-1994.

He received the AAPT Distinguished Service Citation in 1986 and the Robert A. Millikan Medal for outstanding contributions to the teaching of physics in 1992.

Additional honors given to Fuller include: Distinguished Teaching Awards, UNL, 1973 and 1986; American Association of Higher Education Faculty Leadership Salute, March 1986; Insight magazine, "one of 10 best college professors in America", March 11, 1987; Commendatory resolution 307, Nebraska Legislature, March 10, 1988 ; UMR-MSM Alumni Merit Award, 1988; and Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award, University of Nebraska, April, 1993.

An innovative educator, he eagerly embraced new technologies and developed learning activities to include them as partners in learning, notably: Topics in Environmental Science Course, team taught, 1971-74; Individualized Instruction in Physics using the Keller Plan; Multidisciplinary, Piagetian-based program for college freshmen (ADAPT); Interactive videodisc lessons, beginning with The Puzzle of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Collapse; Workshops on College Teaching and the Development of Reasoning; Energy in Perspective physics course for non-science freshmen; Problem Solving Using Computers course for non-science majors; "Paperless" Physics; and Computer Intensive Physics.

He is also recognized for his books, *A Love of Discovery: Science Education - The Second Career of Robert Karplus* and *College Teaching and the Development of Reasoning*.

Fuller's contributions to education will have a continuing impact through the projects he helped lead and the many books and articles he authored or co-authored. AAPT joins the UNL and the physics education community in recognizing the lasting legacy of Dr. Robert G. Fuller.