

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Honors Technology Innovators

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More than 100 NASA Goddard Space Flight Center scientists and researchers gathered recently at the Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville, Maryland to celebrate their achievements in the field of technology transfer.

The prestigious Kerley Award was presented to Goddard's Dr. Peter Shirron of Hyattsville, Maryland. Shirron was recognized for his work in developing refrigerator technology for cooling sensors and detectors on space instruments such as telescopes, which also could be used in medical diagnostics, protein analysis, nondestructive evaluation, quantum computing and physics research.

Goddard Center Director Dr. Ed Weiler presented the award to Shirron.

"The dedicated women and men of NASA are constantly exploring the frontiers of science and technology" said Weiler. "Efforts such as the one pursued by Dr. Shirron demonstrate how space age quests can also have down-to-Earth applications."

In addition to the Kerley Award, 15 other Goddard innovators received awards for their patented technologies. A list of the award recipients and their home town is included in this release.

The Kerley Award was named after the late Dr. James Kerley, a Goddard researcher who was a prolific inventor as well as a champion of technology transfer for the good of humanity.

Hosted annually by Goddard's Office of Technology Transfer, the event also provides an opportunity to hear details of a technology transfer success story.

This year's story focused on the partnership between Goddard's Laboratory for Terrestrial Physics and AdvR Inc. of Bozeman, Montana to improve lasers used in space exploration. AdvR's Dr. Gregg Switzer presented its new seed laser, which provides a stable, single-frequency, low-power source that greatly improves NASA's overall total laser system's lifetime and specifications.

With funding provided by NASA Goddard as well as the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) program, AdvR and Goddard researchers led by Dr. D. Barry Coyle of Ellicott City have been working together to develop a space-qualified seed laser that is smaller, more efficient, has fewer components and is significantly less expensive than what is currently available. Such a laser could be enormously beneficial to rovers or in lidar systems used to image the surface of the moon or Mars.

During the event, awards for Goddard innovators who had a technology patented in the past year were given to the following individuals:

Dr. Jeannette Benavides of Alexandria, VA
Philip Dabney of Takoma Park, MD

Dr. Per Gloersen of Severna Park, MD
Richard Harman of Elkridge, MD
Dr. Norden Huang of Bethesda, MD
Dr. James Kalshoven of Seabrook, MD
Michael Lee of Stafford, VA
Dr. Henning Leidecker of College Park, MD
Douglas Leviton of Dunkirk, MD
Dr. Irving Linares of Columbia, MD
Richard Luquette of Eldersburg, MD
Julie Thienel of Columbia, MD
Michael Tierney of Fairfax, VA
John Vranish of Crofton, MD
Charles Wright of Salisbury, MD
Source - Goddard Space Flight Center