



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2009 ICO/ICTP Prize Awarded

Trieste, Italy, 12 February 2009 - The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and the International Commission for Optics (ICO) have awarded the 2009 ICO/ICTP Gallieno Denardo Award to Dr. Saifollah Rasouli of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Basic Sciences in Zanjan, Iran.

The ICO-ICTP Gallieno Denardo Award is given to young researchers (under 40) from developing countries who are active in optics research and have contributed to the promotion of optics research activities in their own or another developing country. The annual award includes a cash stipend from ICO as well as full financial support from ICTP for the winner to attend an additional training event at the Centre and give a seminar on his/her work.

Dr. Rasouli received the award in Trieste, Italy during the annual Winter College on Optics in Environmental Science, held from 2 to 13 February, 2009 at ICTP. The award cited his creative use of special laser interferometry techniques to study atmospheric turbulence, which have increased resolution over some more conventional methods. Besides its contribution to fundamental research in turbulence, Dr. Rasouli's work has many practical applications, ranging from weather monitoring to improving the fuel efficiency of aircraft and automobiles.

The goal of the Winter College is to expose scientists from developing countries to recent achievements in the theory and applications of optical techniques for assessing the environment, including atmospheric monitoring and remote sensing of land, vegetation, water and the atmosphere. The scientific programme consists of lectures by international experts as well as laboratory demonstrations, on topics ranging from the fundamentals of optical spectroscopy to the use of lidars and sensors.

This year's lecturers include College Director Sune Svanberg from Lund, Sweden, former chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics, and Zohra Ben Lakdhar, Tunis, Tunisia, the 2005 UNESCO L'Oreal recipient for Africa.

The presidents of the three largest international optical societies were present during the College. Thomas Baer, the president of the Optical Society of America (OSA), represented all three societies in an address to a group of African participants in which he described ways in which the organizations could help them further their research.

Along with ICTP, the Winter College is organised with generous support from the Central European Initiative (CEI), the European Optical Society (EOS), ICO, the International Society for Optical Engineering (SPIE), OSA, and the Società Italiana di Ottica e Fotonica (SIOF).

The Winter College also receives support from the US National Academy of Sciences (NAS). NAS has recently agreed to extend their support to the funding of lecturers for the College, as well as sponsoring US students to attend future Colleges as a way to increase the students' awareness of issues in the developing world.

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