The following is a Baylor news story by Lori Fogleman.

WACO, Texas (Jan. 16, 2014) - Baylor University has named Meera Chandrasekhar, Ph.D., professor of physics and astronomy and Curator's Teaching Professor of Physics at the University of Missouri, as the 2014 recipient of the Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching. The Cherry Award is the only national teaching award - with the single largest monetary reward of $250,000 - presented by a college or university to an individual for exceptional teaching.

"Baylor University is very pleased to honor Dr. Chandrasekhar with Baylor's 2014 Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching," said Elizabeth Davis, Ph.D., executive vice president and provost at Baylor. "Dr. Chandrasekhar is an internationally known teacher/scholar who combines an impressive academic record with a stellar reputation for the extraordinary impact she has had on undergraduate and graduate students.

"For the duration of our storied 169-year history, Baylor University has dedicated itself to the development and shaping of our students through the value we place on extraordinary classroom teaching. Our outstanding faculty continue that tradition to this day by equipping our students to reach the highest levels of academic and educational achievement," Davis said. "The Cherry Award allows us to extend that experience by bringing to our campus some of the world's greatest teachers, such as Dr. Chandrasekhar. We congratulate her on this award, and we look forward to welcoming her to Baylor University."

The Cherry Award program at Baylor is designed to honor great teachers, stimulate discussion in the academy about the value of teaching and encourage departments and institutions to value their own great teachers. Along with a record of distinguished scholarship, individuals nominated for the Cherry Award have a proven record as extraordinary teachers with positive, inspiring and long-lasting effects on students. (Story continues on page 2)
As the 2014 Cherry Award recipient, Chandrasekhar will receive the $250,000 award and an additional $25,000 for the physics department at the University of Missouri. She is expected to teach in residence at Baylor during the spring 2015 semester.

"I am deeply honored to learn that I will receive the 2014 Robert Foster Cherry Award, and I am humbled to join the illustrious group of teacher scholars who received the award before me," Chandrasekhar said. "The appreciation of excellence in teaching and associated learning has been growing over the past couple of decades. I am excited about my upcoming semester at Baylor, and look forward to collaborating with the faculty and students at the University in the teaching and learning enterprise."

Chandrasekhar visited the Baylor campus in October 2013 to present her Cherry finalist lecture on "Blind to Polarization: What Humans Cannot See." In that public lecture, she took students, faculty and staff on a hands-on journey that explored polarization by using natural phenomena as well as modern-day applications, ranging from 3D movies to engineering design.

"Every exceptional teacher that I have met is a lover of learning - their own, and that of others; their love for learning extends well beyond their particular field of expertise. The remarkable thing about teaching is that it enriches the learner as well as the teacher. I am fortunate to be in such a profession," she said.

"The Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching committee was very pleased with the strength of the nomination pool for the 2014 award," said Michael W. Thompson, Ph.D., chair of the Robert Foster Cherry Award Committee and professor and graduate director in the department of electrical and computer engineering in Baylor's School of Engineering and Computer Science. "It was very gratifying to see the enthusiastic response that each of our three finalists received during their campus visit. Each finalist presented their public lecture to a packed venue and their guest classroom lectures were highly acclaimed.

"Dr. Meera Chandrasekhar has an outstanding record of recognized teaching accomplishments and awards. The selection committee was particularly impressed at the impact her teaching has had at all university levels and with her K-12 outreach efforts," Thompson said.

Greg Benesh, Ph.D., professor and chair of the department of physics in Baylor's College of Arts & Sciences, said his department was very pleased about Dr. Chandrasekhar's selection. "Faculty members tremendously enjoyed Dr. Chandrasekhar's visit last fall and were excited at the prospect of her joining us as the Cherry Professor," Benesh said. "Dr. Chandrasekhar is a gifted and innovative teacher who excites and motivates students by connecting concepts with everyday observations and modern technology. Our students, both science majors and non-science majors alike, will benefit greatly from seeing this outstanding teacher at work."

Chandrasekhar earned her bachelor of science degree in physics and mathematics from M.G.M. College, Mysore University in India, in 1968, master's degrees in physics from the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, India, in 1970 and Brown University in 1973, and a Ph.D. in physics from Brown University in 1976. After a postdoctoral fellowship at Max-Planck-Institut in Germany, she joined the University of Missouri faculty in 1978.
Dear Physics Folks,

I thought I would get a head-start on the notification for the Habitat work day this semester. Hopefully, this will help in a scheduling sense. I would appreciate it if you would consider marking your calendars for a departmental Habitat for Humanity volunteer home construction workday on Sat., Feb. 15 from 1 pm to 4:30 pm at 424 Boyd Street.

(This is behind the Oakwood Cemetery off of S 4th St., east of La Salle.)

A volunteer waiver form is required. You can print one out here:


You may bring it with you or you can sign one on-site. Please let me know if you are planning to come. (I checked to make sure there are not any Baylor basketball games in this time frame!) I would appreciate it if you could also register on the Habitat Volunteer Calendar (under "Wilcox Class") at:

[https://wacohabitat.volunteermatrix.com/](https://wacohabitat.volunteermatrix.com/)

Please tell your friends!

Thank you and very best wishes,

Walt Wilcox

New Additions

Libbie Dawn Moehnke made her arrival on Wednesday November 20. She weighed 8 lbs 6 oz and was 21.5” long. Mom Marcie and baby Libbie (left pic) were home in a few days to meet daddy Craig and big brother Brayden.

Join us in congratulating Brikha and Meera Gurung on the birth of their daughter, Sara. Sara (right pic) was born during the evening of December 24, 2013. Sara was 20.5 inches long and weighed 8.4 pounds at birth.

Mother and daughter are doing well.
Physics Newsletter

Out and About …

Drs. Jay Dittmann, Lorin Matthews, Jeffrey Olafsen, Linda Olafsen and Walter Wilcox served as faculty marshals at the December Commencement ceremony at Baylor University on Saturday December 21st. *Jeff was an Asst. Chief Marshal for the first time and the ceremony wasn’t a disaster (Carol Schuetz is the one to thank for that!)*

Jared Greenwald, a member of Dr. Jerry Cleaver's string theory research group, successfully defended his dissertation, “Automated Systematic Generation and Exploration of Flat Direction Phenomenology in Free Fermionic Heterotic String Theory,” on December 17. On December 19 Jared and wife Abby drove to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where Jared begins a postdoctoral research position at Sandia National Laboratories on January 6. Sandia is a federal lab under the management of Lockheed-Martin. At Sandia, Jared will be working in a division whose responsibility is international nuclear test ban treaty verification. While initially a two-year postdoctoral fellowship, Jared's job holds the potential to transform into a long-term position.

Dr. Cleaver and his research group congratulate Jared on his successful dissertation defense and job acquisition. (More proof that dissertations in string theory can lead to real-world jobs!)

Drs. Jay Dittmann and Kenichi Hatakeyama attended the CMS experiment collaboration meeting held at CERN, Geneva, Switzerland from December 9 to 13.

Drs. Azeddine Kasmi, Hongxuan Liu, Zhenbin Wu, and Kenichi Hatakeyama attended a workshop "SUSY at the Near Energy Frontier" held at Fermilab, IL on November 11-13. Drs. Liu and Hatakeyama served on the local organizing committee for this workshop. Dr. Hatakeyama also served as one of the organizing committee members for "Workshop on QCD Tools for LHC Physics, From 8 to 14 TeV" held at Fermilab, IL on November 14-15.

Dr. Hatakeyama visited Angelo State University on November 25, and gave a seminar on "What Did We Learn from the Large Hadron Collider? Higgs Boson and Beyond”.

CASPER members Truell Hyde, Lorin Matthews, Jie Kong, Ke Qiao, Jorge Carmona-Reyes, Michael Dropmann, Brandon Harris, Mudi Chen, and Bo Zhang attended the 55th Annual Meeting of the APS Division of Plasma Physics in Denver, Colorado, November 11-15, 2013. Members of the group presented six oral talks and two posters. In addition, Dr. Truell Hyde gave an invited talk, “Confinement and Structural Changes in Vertically Aligned Dust Structures.”

Listed presentations:


2. The Relationship Between the Sloshing and Breathing Frequencies in a 1D Vertically Aligned Dust Particle Chain, J. Kong, K. Qiao, H. Sabo, L. Matthews, and T. Hyde.

Out and About …


8. Examination of the Wake Potential and the Intergrain Force for Particles within a Glass Box, B. Zhang, J. Kong, L. Matthews, and T. Hyde.

Dr. Jeffrey Olafsen was selected to take part in the Summer Faculty Institute in 2014 by the Baylor University Academy of Teaching & Learning.

Dr. Jeffrey Olafsen attended the 2014 Dynamics Days meeting in Atlanta, Georgia held on January 2 - 5, 2014. He presented the contributed talk entitled “Velocity-dependent coefficient of restitution measurements in an inelastic billiard experiment.”


During January 6 – 9, 2014, Dr. B.F.L. Ward visited the Institute of Nuclear Physics, Krakow Poland and participated and lectured in the 2014 Krakow Epiphany Conference on the Physics at the LHC. The title of his talk was “Status of LHC Physics: Precision Theory View.”

During January 9-19 period, Dr. Ward travelled to CERN in Geneva, Switzerland and visit the CERN TH Unit in support of the LHC physics theory program there. More precisely, this is the first of three such ten day visits that Dr. Ward will make to the CERN TH Unit this calendar year, as a Visiting Scientist for 2014, in support of the TH Unit’s effort to maximize the physics output from the LHC experimental program based on analysis of the 2010-2012 LHC data.

Dr. Ward will also support the TH Unit’s efforts to optimize the strategies for the future running of the LHC and for the possible extensions of the CERN’s accelerated beam device portfolio as indicated by the respective data analysis and running.

Dr. Zhenrong Zhang, graduate student Yaobiao (Eric) Xia, and undergraduate student Blake Birmingham presented two talks and one poster at the 69th Southwest Regional ACS Meeting held at Waco, TX in November 2013.

### JANUARY 2014

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<td>MLK Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstracts for URSA Week Due 2/26!</td>
<td>Feb 5: URSA Deadline for Grant Apps.</td>
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<td>5 4:00 pm Dept. Colloq. L. Matthews</td>
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