

## Award Recipients

1961 - Paul Rosbaud  
1966 - H.W. Thompson  
1972 - Gilberto Bernardini  
1978 - Abdus Salam  
1981 - Pierre Aigrain  
1989 - Edoardo Amaldi  
1992 - Roald Sagdeev  
1996 - Willibald Jentschke  
2003 - Herwig Schopper  
2005 - Erio Tosatti  
2007 - Yu Lu

The award consists of a medal, \$10,000, and a certificate.

## The AIP Tate Medal

The Tate Medal was established by the American Institute of Physics in 1959 to recognize distinguished service to physics on an international level. Intended primarily for non-US nationals, the award is for service to the profession of physics. Services that further international understanding and exchange are considered to be of primary importance.



for  
International Leadership  
in Physics



## JOHN TORRENCE TATE 1889–1950

JOHN TORRENCE TATE was born in Lenox, Iowa, on July, 1889. He spent many of his early school years in New York, taking an interest in chemistry. He graduated from the Dewitt Clinton High School and then went on to the University of Nebraska where, majoring in physics, he attained the Bachelor of Science degree in 1910, Master of Arts in 1912. For the Doctor of Philosophy degree he studied at the University of Berlin, receiving the degree in 1914. He returned to the University of Nebraska as an Instructor in Physics, 1914-15, and was made an Assistant Professor the next year. In the following year he went to the University of Minnesota as an Instructor, becoming an Assistant Professor, 1917-18; Associate Professor, 1919-21; Professor, 1921-37; then Dean of the College of Science, Literature and Arts, 1937-43 (though he was on war leave 1941-45). Since it was his desire to return after the war to his scientific work rather than to administration, he resigned the deanship in 1943 and became Research Professor of Physics.

His own scientific work was mainly on electron impact phenomena in gases and electron interactions with matter, though he was a scholar of wide knowledge and interests in physics, theoretical and experimental. In the guidance of students in research, he was stimulating and tireless. His influence in the advancement of physics, through his own researches and through the students trained under his tutelage, has been notable. While he was successful in educational administration, he loved physics better and was gratified to be able, after his distinguished war service, to go back to research. His personal devotion contributed much to the development of the Department of Physics at Minnesota.

Dr. Tate, or Jack Tate to his closer friends, was one of the physicists who took a large part in the initiation and organization of the American Institute of Physics. No one saw more clearly than he the need of, and the possibilities of, a central organization through which physicists and the several societies representing physics could cooperate for the advancement of physics. He was one of the initial members of the Governing Board of the Institute and remained a member until his death. At the beginning it was seen that the Institute would need experienced

counsel on matters relating to scientific publications. Tate was so obviously qualified that he was asked to become the Adviser on Publications of the Institute and also served in that office until his death. When in 1963 Dr. Karl T. Compton declined re-election to the chairmanship of the Institute, Dr. Tate was the obvious choice of the Board for the chairmanship. As the second Chairman of the Institute he served with distinction from 1936 to 1939.

One of Dr. Tate's greatest services to physics was his accomplishment as Managing Editor of the American Physical Society. He edited *The Physical Review* from 1926. As Editor, Tate had to be concerned with the rising cost of publication and how to meet it, as well as with responsibility for the more scientific aspects of editing, in which he was open-minded, impartial, and helpful to contributors. In 1929, Tate launched the *Reviews of Modern Physics* for the Physical Society. In 1931 he sensed the need of an additional periodical for the publication of research papers relating to applied physics, and gained the support of the American Physical Society for the publication of a new journal, *Physics*, which later, in 1936, was taken over by the American Institute of Physics to become the *Journal of Applied Physics*.

Professor Tate's academic life was interrupted by his national service through two wars. In the first World War he was engaged in war research as a First Lieutenant in the Signal Corps, U.S. Army. In the second World War, he served in the very responsible post of Chief, Division 6 of the National Defense Research Committee, in charge of research and development of anti-submarine and subsurface warfare devices, equipment, and methods. After the war, from 1946 to 1949, he served as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Argonne National Laboratory, one of the regional laboratories of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Professor Tate received many high honors in his lifetime. To cite some, he was made President of the American Physical Society for 1939, elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, and received honorary degrees of Doctor of Science from the University of Nebraska in 1938 and from Case Institute of Technology in 1945. He was awarded the Medal of Merit by President Truman, and also King George's Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom in recognition "of the valuable services rendered... to the Allied Cause."

John Tate had the respect and affection of physicists everywhere, and of many other colleagues and friends, as a man of learning and wisdom, and of unfailing good will. His counsel was widely sought and was always given modestly and helpfully. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage on 27 May 1950.

*The preceding comments, with modifications, are taken from an article written in 1950 by George B. Pegram, former Vice President of Columbia University.*