

March 5-7, 2008

ITEM 138-2001-R0308

Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Physics upon George Tuthill; Montana State University-Bozeman

THAT:

Upon the occasion of the retirement of George Tuthill from the faculty of Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION:

George Tuthill received his baccalaureate degree from Williams College in 1967, and his doctoral degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, completing the Ph.D. program in Physics in 1975. After postdoctoral research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he joined the Montana State University College of Letters and Science faculty as an Assistant Professor in 1976. During his 31 years at MSU, Professor Tuthill made outstanding contributions to teaching, research, and service as a faculty member, as well as serving for two years (2004-6) as Associate Dean and one year (2006-7) as Interim Dean of the College of Letters and Science.

Professor Tuthill's research was initially in the area of theoretical condensed matter physics, more specifically in statistical mechanics and cooperative phenomena, especially involving electrically and magnetically active materials (e.g., ferroelectrics and ferromagnetics, piezoelectrics). His work has been computational and theoretical in character, but generally was carried out in close collaboration with experimentalists. Over his career, this resulted in 53 publications in the most prestigious refereed journals in the field.

Professor Tuthill's broad interest in excellence in teaching was well known in the Physics Department, across the campus, and in fact across the entire nation. He devoted increasing time and effort to science education and outreach beginning in the 1990's, and in particular to creating new opportunities for K-12 teachers of science to engage in content-focused professional development. Since 1995 Professor Tuthill was Principal Investigator and Co-Director of the National Teachers Enhancement Network (NTEN), a program of online teacher professional development

courses. NTEN was initiated with a series of sizable NSF grants and has recorded over 10,000 enrollments since its inception. An outgrowth of NTEN is MSU's Master of Science in Science Education (MSSE), which now graduates roughly 50 students each year. Professor Tuthill participated in the MSSE as a student advisor, and as a member of the faculty steering committee for the program. He was the advisor of six students earning the M.S.S.E. degree at MSU.

He also developed a national reputation for supporting the education and public outreach components of NASA space science missions, including the MESSENGER mission to the planet Mercury, and New Horizons, on its way to Pluto.

More locally, he taught courses all across the physics curriculum, with outstanding results and strong appreciation by the students fortunate enough to encounter him in the classroom. He received the Phi Kappa Phi Distinguished Teaching Award in 1985, as well as Chamber of Commerce Teaching awards in 1991 and 1999. He served as major advisor to five Ph.D. students in Physics.

Professor Tuthill provided exemplary service across campus, with a consistent focus on the needs of the students throughout the institution, not merely within the Physics Department. He served on numerous campus committees, and played a particularly significant role in the MSU Honors Program, where he was a member of the Advisory Committee from 1985-1987 and again 1990-1992.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer George Tuthill the rank of Professor Emeritus of Physics at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.