

Erukhimova Earns Sigma Xi Outstanding Science Communicator Award

May 23, 2014



Texas A&M University physicist **Tatiana Erukhimova** has been honored by the **Texas A&M chapter of Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society**, as the 2014 recipient of the chapter's **Outstanding Science Communicator Award** in recognition of superior skill and dedication to improving science education.

Erukhimova received a commemorative plaque and a \$750 cash prize at the 2014 *Sigma Xi* Induction and Awards Banquet, held May 1 at the College Station Hilton. James Womack, a distinguished professor in the Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, also was honored with the 2014 *Sigma Xi* **Outstanding Distinguished Scientist Award** recognizing faculty members who have demonstrated research and teaching excellence as well as significant contributions to their profession and general science.

Erukhimova, a senior lecturer in the **Department of Physics and Astronomy**, received her Ph.D. in physics from the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1999. In addition to teaching and research, she serves as the physics outreach coordinator, spearheading eight annual **physics and engineering festivals** -- each of which has been attended by thousands of visitors from all over Texas and other states. She developed the **Physics Show**, an interactive presentation involving entertaining physics demonstrations and hands-on exhibits. Since 2007, Erukhimova has conducted more than 170 shows attended by more than 11,000 people of all ages.

In 2012, Erukhimova received a **Texas A&M Tier One Program (TOP) grant** designed to engage students in physics and engineering outreach. In addition, she is a co-organizer of the **Mitchell Institute Physics Enhancement Program (MIPEP)**, which includes annual summer boarding schools for physics teachers from Texas high schools. Moreover, she continues to share her experience and passion for physics outreach through presentations at local, national and international conferences.

As part of the May 1 event, the chapter also presented **Outstanding Math or Science Teachers Awards** to Sally Hughes, Outstanding Math and Science Teacher, Greens Prairie Elementary School in College Station; Rebekah Schaub, Outstanding Science Teacher, Stephen F. Austin Middle School in Bryan; and Jamie Bassett, Outstanding Math Teacher, A&M Consolidated High School in College Station. Prizes also were presented to six winners in the society's annual drawing and essay contest.

Former astronaut Gregory E. Chamitoff, a professor of engineering practice in the Department of Aerospace Engineering, delivered the ceremony's keynote address, "The International Space Station: A Laboratory for the Science and Engineering to Enable our Future."

Sigma Xi is an international, multidisciplinary research society honoring scientists whose work promotes scientific enterprise and rewarding excellence in scientific research. Founded in 1886 at Cornell University, *Sigma Xi* has grown to include more than 500 chapters across North America and around the world at colleges and universities. To date, there are more than 60,000 active members in more than 100 countries around the world.

The **Texas A&M chapter of Sigma Xi** was chartered July 1, 1951, with a mission "to recognize, encourage and promote scientific research at Texas A&M University and to honor the community of science scholars."

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