

Dr. Feher and Dr. Wheatley are elected to the National Academy of Sciences

April 22, 1975

Two University of California, San Diego faculty members have been elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors for any American scientist.

They are Dr. George Feher, 50, of La Jolla, and Dr. John C. Wheatley, 48, of Del Mar. Both are professors of physics.

The two new members bring UCSD's total academy membership to 45. The ratio of members to total faculty is one of the highest, if not the highest, in the country.

In all, 84 new members were elected today (Tuesday, April 22) at the academy's 112th annual meeting in Washington, D.C., bringing total membership to about 1,150.

Of those elected today, seven were from University of California campuses. In addition to UCSD's members, three were elected from UC Berkeley and one each from UC San Francisco and UC Irvine. Total UC academy membership is now approximately 155, more than any other college or university system.

Chartered by President Abraham Lincoln, the academy is an independent group with the responsibility for advising and counseling the federal government on scientific and technical matters.

Upon his election, Feher was cited for "discovery of the method of electron-nuclear double resonance known as ENDOR, pioneering work in biophysics with emphasis on photosynthesis and co-discovery of paraelectric resonances."

Born in Czechoslovakia, Feher has been a member of the UCSD faculty since 1960. He received his Ph.D degree from UC Berkeley in 1954 and then served as a research physicist at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in Murray Hill, N.J. for six years.

In 1960, he received the American Physical Society Award for "originating and developing the electron nuclear double resonance (ENDOR) technique and for applying it to solid state and nuclear research problems."

Feher served as a National Science Foundation Senior Postdoctoral Fellow in 1967-68 while he was a visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a member of the American Physical Society, the Biophysical Society and Sigma Xi and a member of the board of governors of the Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel.

Wheatley was cited by the academy for "monumental contributions to low temperature physics which have enabled him and others to work regularly, reliably and for long periods of time doing sophisticated experiments in the milliKelvin temperature range."

He has conducted physical research primarily on liquid helium at temperatures close to absolute zero and developed the technology for reading and measuring very low temperatures.

Wheatley earned a B.S. degree in electrical engineering from the University of Colorado and a Ph.D. degree in physics from the University of Pittsburgh.

A member of the UCSD faculty since 1966, he has also taught at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Illinois and the Institute of Physics in Bariloche, Argentina.

He has been a Fulbright Research Scholar (twice), a Guggenheim Fellow and an A.P. Sloan Fellow. Wheatley also served as a Loeb lecturer at Harvard University in 1969.

A member of the American Physical Society, he was awarded the Simon Memorial Prize in 1966 for his contributions to low temperature physics.

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