KZN prof wins top physics award

EMINENT physicist and academic, Professor Manfred Hellberg, Professor Emeritus and Senior Research Associate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, has been awarded the highest honour, the 2014 De Beers Gold Medal of the South African Institute of Physics, for his outstanding contribution to the discipline.

The award is in recognition of his “achievements as a researcher and his significant role in the promotion of physics in the South African physics community”.

Hellberg’s research area involves theoretical studies of the properties of plasmas, in particular on linear and non-linear electrostatic waves in kappa-distributed plasmas. His work includes studies on linear waves also involving Maxwellian plasmas and soliton behaviour; and most recently, solitons beyond the double layer speed and supersolitons.

His papers are highly cited and he has held numerous distinguished research fellowships, including the Von Humboldt Fellowship, fellowships at Princeton University and fellowships of the Royal Society of South Africa. – Staff Reporter

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