



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC

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15 May 2009

Dr. Neil Gehrels
NASA-GSFC
Bldg 2/Room 245
Code 6610
Greenbelt, MD 20771

Dear Dr. Gehrels:

On behalf of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Board of Directors has chosen to award the Swift Mission team the Society's Maria and Eric Muhlmann Award for 2009.

Under the current terms of the Muhlmann bequest to the Society, this award is given for recent significant observational results made possible by innovative advances in astronomical instrumentation, software, or observational infrastructure. The Board recognizes the innovative way in which the satellite's trio of instrumentation works in concert to discover gamma ray bursts and their afterglow, combining gamma ray, X-ray, ultraviolet, and optical data. You and your colleagues have advanced astronomy in exactly the manner envisioned for the Muhlmann award.

This award has been presented 21 times previously (though the first eight awards were under somewhat different terms) to: Francois and Monique Spite; Dale Cruikshank; Mel Dyck and Ben Zuckerman; Alan Stockton; John Kormendy; the team of Bruce Campbell, Gordon Walker, and Stephenson Yang; the team of Ann Boesgaard, Robert McClure, René Racine and the DAO/NRC Instrumentation Group; Steven Vogt; Robert Tull; Ed Nather; Sam Barden; Barry Lasker; Peter Stetson; Keith Taylor; Francois Roddier; the NICMOS team; John Lacy; Robert Lupton; the 2MASS team; Harold A. McAlister; and to the team of Joss Bland-Hawthorn, Jean-Charles Cuillandre, and Karl Glazebrook. We are pleased to add your project to this distinguished list.

The recipient of the Muhlmann Award receives a cash prize of \$500. In addition, you will receive the following travel expenses, if needed, to the annual meeting of the Society where the award will be presented: one economy round-trip air or train ticket within the United States, one-night's hotel stay, and two banquet tickets. The banquet and award ceremony will occur in San Francisco on 15 September 2009. Please make arrangements for participation with James Manning, the ASP Executive Director. We hope very much that you or a representative from the SWIFT team can be present.

For the official announcement and an article in *Mercury*, the editor will require your photograph. You may send a photograph to be scanned (and returned to you) to the Society office (attention: Leslie Proudfit) or you may e-mail a TIF or JPEG digital file to editor@astrosociety.org with a copy to lproudfit@sofia.usra.edu. The digital files should be 300 dots per inch and at least three inches on a side. The photograph should be relatively recent, in color, and preferably portrait-style. The editor needs the photograph as soon as possible.

I request that you, your colleagues, and your respective institutions keep this information somewhat confidential until the official release, at least to the extent of not making any public announcement. If your institutions do wish to issue a press release, please ask the person in charge to coordinate James Manning so that any announcement appears simultaneously with the Society's announcement.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend to you our collective congratulations on an award well deserved.

Sincerely,



Mary Kay Hemenway, Ph. D.
Secretary, Board of Directors

cc: B. Partridge, President
J. Manning, Executive Director
C. Christian, Awards Committee
P. Deans, Editor *Mercury*
Nominator