

The American Association of Variable Star Observers

The sixth **AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Distinguished Service Award** is presented to

Mary Ann Kadooka

“for her promotion of variable star astronomy through her tireless and inspirational work with educators and students as a leader, a mentor, and a friend to anyone wanting to learn astronomy.”

Mary Ann Kadooka is known throughout the physics and astronomy education communities for her tireless efforts in motivating scientific learning and authentic research experiences for teachers and students.

Mary's desire to promote science learning has reshaped her life, changing a would-be school vice-principal into an educator at the University of Hawaii's Institute for Astronomy. Recognizing that teaching is her calling, Mary jumped from 32 years in the high school classroom teaching physics to the teacher-training classroom, allowing her to multiply the number of students she can affect by the number of teachers to whom she can spread her knowledge of and passion for astronomy. After retiring from the classroom, Mary had hoped to work part-time developing teacher education programs and spend the rest of her time engaging in her other passion: travel. Instead, Mary is now working more than full-time developing and directing all of the outreach for the University of Hawaii's NASA Astrobiology Institute, and is working with the University of Washington's Space Science Network Northwest (S2N2) program for Hawaii. She now makes a national impact with her evangelical educational efforts.

At the heart of many of the programs Mary promotes are authentic research experiences, including observational astronomy projects that use the variable stars we love. In having teachers and their students looking up, she engages them in our core mission of observing and recording as she inspires the next generation of observers, one learner at a time.

Through her involvement with the AAVSO, the American Association of Physics Teachers, and the NASA Astrobiology Institute, Mary has spread the ideal that science is for everyone, no matter what future career may be in store, and that everyone can learn and love astronomy, whether they be poet, painter or even physicist. Mary is learning, too, that to teach, you keep learning, and she is delighted that her full-time job now requires travel to astronomy meetings all over the world.

It gives us great pleasure to present the sixth AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Distinguished Service Award to Mary Ann Kadooka.

David B. Williams
President

Arne A. Henden
Director

*Presented at the AAVSO 95th Annual Meeting
Newton, Massachusetts, October 28, 2006*