

The American Association of Variable Star Observers

It is a great pleasure to present the fifth **AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Distinguished Service Award** to

Janet Akyüz Mattei

“for her untiring promotion of variable star observing through her manifold activities as teacher, speaker, mentor, advocate, colleague, researcher, and administrator for over 30 years, and through her unfailing belief in the essential value of variable star observing and variable star observers.”

Janet promoted variable star observing ceaselessly from 1969, when she learned about variable stars and the AAVSO while working for Dorrit Hoffleit at the Maria Mitchell Observatory, until her untimely death in March 2004. In her many roles and in the diverse settings in which science and education can touch, she worked to make variable star observing a source of and means to inspiration, learning, achievement, contribution, and satisfaction.

As teacher she showed

- students how exciting science could be and how they could make a genuine contribution to science through working with variable stars;
- educators that science and math don't have to be intimidating and how they could inspire their students and themselves through variable star observing;
- astronomers that amateur astronomers can and do contribute scientifically valuable data and that they are worthy of serious consideration and respect;
- administrators that supporting the work of amateur astronomers enhanced their own programs' value, both in their scientific or academic field and in the community.

As speaker, she gave countless talks on variable stars and variable star observing to groups large and small and ranging from the United Nations to the membership of her local temple.

As mentor, she encouraged, guided, and supported countless amateur astronomers and young people in contributing to science and finding joy and satisfaction via observing.

As advocate for the amateur astronomer variable star observer, she worked patiently to help professional colleagues and administrators understand the value of variable star observing to their research and of the amateur observer as a vital member of the variable star astronomy community.

As researcher and colleague, she watched for opportunities for variable star observations to be used to help unravel the mysteries in variable star astronomy and stellar evolution, and she ensured the AAVSO data were honorably used and correctly interpreted and that the observers were properly acknowledged.

As administrator, first as Assistant to Margaret Mayall and then as AAVSO Director for 30 years, she studied the broad range of necessary skills and applied them, with her own gifts, in her unyielding efforts to develop the AAVSO into the leading variable star observing association worldwide.

In recognition of Janet's unfailing belief in the essential value of variable star observing and variable star observers and her continuous expression of this belief, we are proud to present her with the AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Award.

William G. Dillon
President

Arne A. Henden
Director

*Presented at the AAVSO 94th Annual Meeting
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