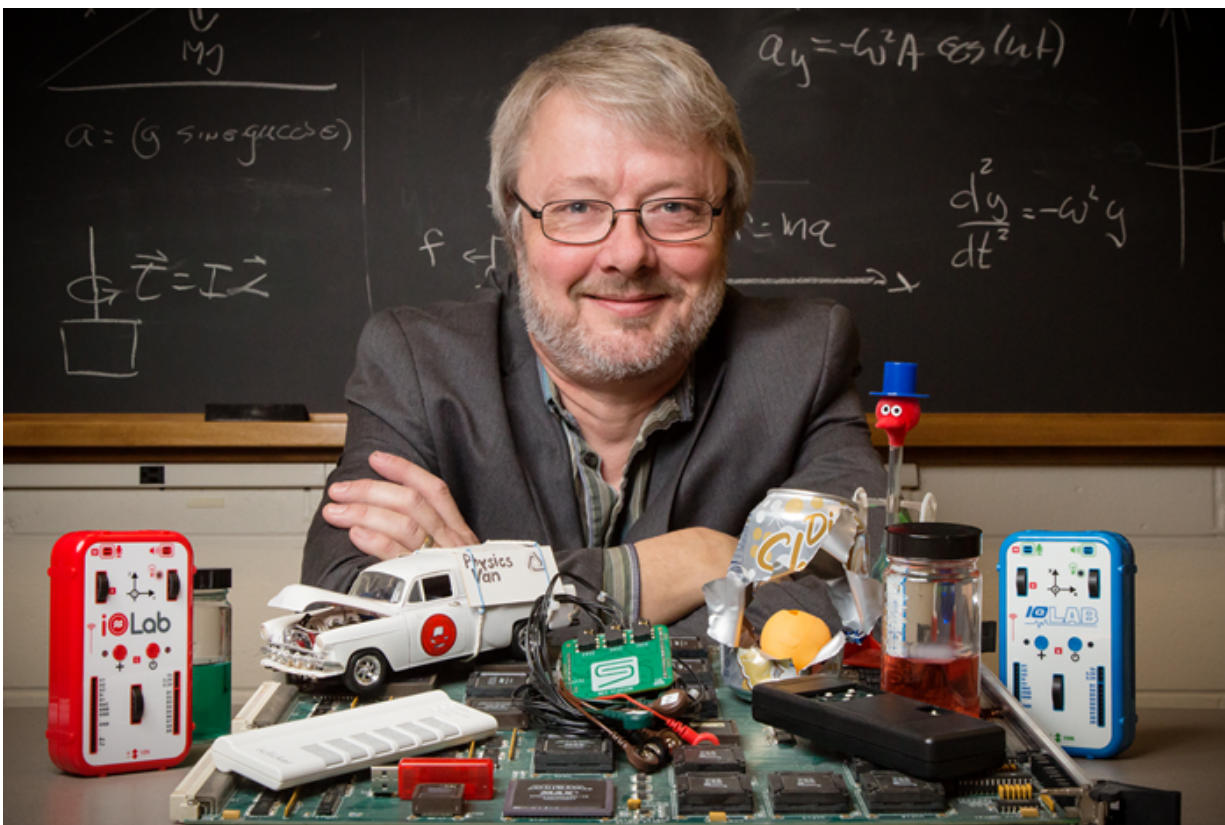


Illinois physics professor named national Professor of the Year

November 19 2015



Mats Selen, professor of physics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-

Champaign, has been named Outstanding Doctoral and Research Universities Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Selen was chosen from a field of more than 300 nominated faculty members from institutions nationwide. The award "salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country - those who excel in [teaching](#) and positively influence the lives and careers of students," according to CASE.

As a professor in one of the most esoteric of subjects - particle physics - Selen uses creativity and innovation to engage students in the classroom. He has developed interactive teaching tools, most notably the i>clicker student response system now used in thousands of classrooms in the United States and Canada. He also developed the IOLab student lab kits and co-wrote the smartPhysics multimedia curriculum, both of which help students explore physics principles in interactive, accessible ways.

Selen's passion for physics education extends beyond his own classroom all the way to the elementary school level. He developed a teacher training class, "Physics Made Easy," taken by about 100 elementary education majors at the U. of I. every spring, and he recently led a multidisciplinary STEM teacher training initiative at the U. of I.

Bringing together university students and learners at all levels, Selen developed one of the most popular educational outreach activities at Illinois, the Physics Van outreach program. U. of I. undergraduate students have brought science to more than 100,000 Illinois elementary school children and teachers through the Physics Van traveling science show and to many more around the world through a web-based "Ask The Van" science question-and-answer database. Selen also brought [physics education](#) to the public through a weekly live science segment on

television station WCIA, the Champaign-area CBS affiliate, from 2002 through 2014.

In addition to teaching, Selen is a respected researcher in the field of particle physics, and has developed both hardware and software for several experiments.

"This is well-deserved recognition for the tremendous dedication Mats has to our [students](#) and to ensuring they have transformational experiences here," said Barbara J. Wilson, the interim chancellor of the Urbana campus. "His passion for teaching extends out of the classroom and into the entire community. He is a great ambassador for the university and we are all very proud that he has been honored as a Professor of the Year."

Selen earned his Ph.D. in [particle physics](#) from Princeton University in 1989. He joined the faculty at Illinois in 1993 and became the [physics](#) department associate head for undergraduate programs in 2014. He has been recognized with a number of campus awards for teaching and advising, as well as the American Physical Society Excellence in Education Award. He lives in Tuscola, Illinois, with his wife, Lyn, and their three dogs and two cats.

Provided by University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Citation: Illinois physics professor named national Professor of the Year (2015, November 19) retrieved 2 May 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2015-11-illinois-physics-professor-national-year.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.