

ORNL physicist Hix cited as top young investigator

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William Raphael Hix of the Physics Division of the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory has won the 2006 Young Investigator Award from Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society.

The award recognizes young scientists in the physical sciences and engineering for scientific achievements, interdisciplinary research and the ability to communicate the significance of their achievements to the general public.

Hix, who will be honored at the society's 2006 annual meeting in November in Detroit, has been on the research staff of the Physics Division since 2004 and has been a member of the division's Theoretical Astrophysics Group since 1997.

An adjunct assistant professor of physics at the University of Tennessee and mentor to 10 high school, college and postgraduate students, Hix was formerly a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas.

His research has focused on stellar nucleosynthesis, which is the study of the ways that chemical elements are produced in stars, along with the related study of the lives and deaths of these stars. He has authored or co-authored 35 papers in refereed publications and has also delivered numerous presentations during his career at ORNL, both professionally and to community groups.

Hix earned bachelor's degrees in physics and astronomy and another in

mathematics at the University of Maryland, and a master's degree and doctorate in astronomy from Harvard University.

Hix and his wife, Dacia L. Maxwell-Hix, have two children - Ronan Nathaniel and Lorelei Elisabeth - and are residents of Farragut.

Sigma Xi was founded in 1886 to honor excellence in scientific investigation and encourage cooperation among researchers in all fields of science and engineering. Today it is an international organization with nearly 65,000 members in more than 100 nations dedicated to promoting scientific enterprise and honor scientific achievement.

Source: ORNL

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