

The history of the Science Educator of the Year awards

Dr Oliver Ryan

In 1983 four students, who were completing an M.Ed. in Science Education, and myself were invited to visit the BP headquarters in London to get some information on the Oil Industry. We were working on a publication called "The Science of Oil" which was subsequently published by BP.

I was fortunate to meet the Director of the **BP Education Section** and we discussed a number of topics. One was the possibility of sponsoring an award for a Science Teacher who made a significant contribution to Science Teaching at a National level.

They very quickly agreed and I was asked to draw up criteria for the Award. They commissioned a Trophy and agreed to give a cheque to the winner to cover travel and expenses to attend the British Science Teachers Conference. They also contacted a number of National Science Teaching Associations and offered to sponsor awards for them. Branches throughout the country were asked to nominate suitable candidates and a winner was selected from among those nominated.

The first winner was **Randal Henly** who was presented with the B.P Science Educator of the Year Award in Sligo in 1984. This continued until 2006 at which time BP had left Ireland and it became more difficult to get them to continue with the sponsorship.

I was very fortunate to meet **Vincent English of Vernier** and he agreed to provide a trophy and prize for the following two years. At the 2008 AGM **PharmaChemical Ireland** (who were by then sponsoring awards for H.Dip Science students) agreed to sponsor the Pharmaceutical Science Educator of the Year award. They have increased the sponsorship and each year provide a trophy and substantial prize to the winner. The adjudication panel consists of all former winners of the award and I have the privilege of acting as Chairman of the group.

Looking down the list of former winners one can see the names of people that any country would be proud to have in their Educational Systems. I can only hope that the award will continue for many years and will help to stimulate many young Science Teachers.

ISTA Science Educator of the Year award winners

1984	Randal Henly	1999	Siobhan Greer
1985	Dr. Peter Childs	2000	Pádraig Ó Léime
1986	Fr. D. Collins	2001	George Porter
1987	Jim Hurley	2002	John Daly
1988	Br. Maurice Murphy	2003	Seamus McManus
1989	Helen Renehan	2004	Noel Brett
1990	Peter Burke	2005	Dr. Oliver Ryan
1991	Patrick Hogan	2006	Paddy Daly
1992	Dr Declan Kennedy	2007	Pat Hanratty
1993	Marion Palmer	2008	Yvonne Higgins
1994	Oliver Harrington	2009	Mary Lee
1995	Sr. Mercedes Desmond	2010	Marge Anderson
1996	Margaret O'Brien	2011	John Lucey
1997	Tom Bolger	2012	Mary Mullaghy
1998	Ann Wilkinson		



Dr Oliver Ryan presenting the 2012 Science Educator of the Year award to Mary Mullaghy, our current Chairperson