Department Honors Physics Alumnus Tom Gaylord

The Physics Department was pleased to present alumnus Thomas Gaylord (BS ‘65, MS ‘67) with a Professional Degree in Physics during the May 2001 Commencement. Tom serves as the Julius Brown Chair and Regents’ Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He has authored 350 technical publications and holds 25 patents in the areas of semiconductor devices, diffractive optics, and optoelectronics, and is known for his development of a rigorous coupled-wave analysis method currently used worldwide for the design of diffractive optical elements.

Tom earned a B.S. degree in physics in 1965, an M.S. and professional degrees in electrical engineering from UMR in 1967 and 1985, respectively. He received a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Rice University in 1970. In October 2000, Tom also visited the department as homecoming speaker, giving a talk entitled “Diffractive Optics”. During his visit to the department for Spring Commencement, Tom spoke extensively with many of the department’s undergraduate students and met with UMR Chancellor Gary Thomas to discuss the value of a strong Physics program, both for students of Physics and as an essential component of any engineering curriculum. At an unusually warm Spring Commencement, Tom was joined by his wife Nan, and his daughter Grace.