



International Baron Marcel Nicolet Medal for space weather and space climate

The Baron Marcel Nicolet medal rewards efforts to structure the space weather community at an international level. This year, the International Medal Committee decided to award

Dr Joseph Davila

Dr Davila is a world-class space physicist. He has a long heritage of space mission involvement and leadership, including key projects such as STEREO, Solar Orbiter and SERTS, and has an established research record. However, he has been particularly active over more than a decade in raising the profile of space weather and heliospheric issues, in particular pressing for international co-operation and communication. He was a founding member of the team proposing the International Heliophysical Year (IHY), which was held in 2007. This involved Dr Davila, as an individual, taking the lead in forming an international committee and in shaping the IHY that became such a great success in encouraging international cooperation and discussion on heliospheric and space weather issues world-wide. This led, in particular, to practical involvement in many countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, or Zambia, and providing them with opportunities in partnership with established space-faring nations. Linked to this was a string of international meetings. The success of IHY is well documented and its links to the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs was key in bolstering an international programme that has continued well beyond 2007.

One aspect of this is a continuing programme called the International Space Weather Initiative (ISWI), which, with the UN Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, has continued an active programme in establishing ground-based instrumentation around the world, in particular in non-traditional sites. Dr Davila has also ensured that the IHY and ISWI discussions led to recommendations that have been fed into international strategy for space weather applications, particularly through the UN.

Dr Davila has remained at the helm of these activities since the conception of IHY to this year. He has become a father figure in the international programme that came out of IHY and, as an individual clearly demonstrated great innovation and generated a step-change for the community.

The committee acknowledged that Joseph Davila worked for binding the space weather community in a spirit of peace and friendship, for educating in and outside of the space weather community, and went beyond the space weather research community, addressing a larger audience. The committee further noticed Joseph Davila developed a creative vision and his leadership yielded a highly successful program that benefited scientists and non-scientists alike in countries where space weather awareness was minimal.

For all these reasons, the Committee decided to award Joseph Davila with the 2014 Baron Marcel Nicolet Space Weather and Space Climate medal.