

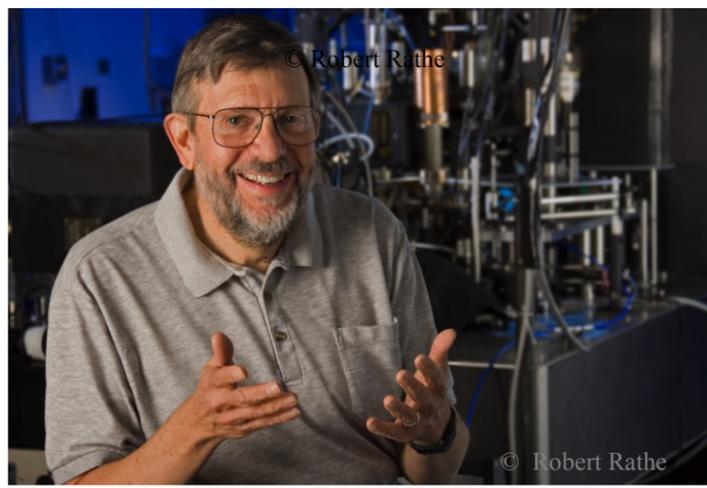
Seminar on

Having a Good Time: A Triumph of Science & Technology

Presented by

Dr. William D. Phillips, NIST

Nobel Laureate in Physics, 1997



Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Building 41-A03

Abstract: People have long been interested in timekeeping. In the 18th century, this interest became particularly keen because of technological demands: the need for accurate navigation on the high seas. While many people believed that the answer to sufficiently good timekeeping at sea would be found in astronomical measurements, it was earthbound engineering that literally won the prize. The construction of accurate seagoing clocks revolutionized navigation in the 18th and 19th centuries. The advent of even more accurate clocks—atomic clocks—in the 20th century gave birth to a new revolution in navigation—the Global Positioning System. This ever-more advanced system for satellite navigation owes its success both to excellent engineering and to seemingly arcane science.

Dr. William D. Phillips is a Senior Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where he leads the Laser Cooling and Trapping Group. He shared the 1997 Nobel Prize in physics with Dr. Steven Chu, now Secretary of Energy, and with Dr. Claude Cohen-Tannoudji, an Algerian-born French physicist, “for development of methods to cool and trap atoms with laser light.” With a physics bachelor’s degree from Juniata College in Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. from MIT, Phillips started his career at NIST only a few years after it left UDC’s Van Ness campus for its location in Gaithersburg.

For more information contact: Akua Sewer, asewer@udc.edu; 202-274-7461.