

The American Association of Variable Star Observers

The thirteenth AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Distinguished Service Award is presented to

Donn R. Starkey

“for his for his enthusiastic commitment to educating and mentoring both the current and next generation of variable star observers, and assuring the future success of the AAVSO through his forward-thinking service on Council, lending his considerable business acumen to the Investment and Budget Committees, and serving as a tireless advocate for the observation of variable stars.”

Embodying the true spirit of William Tyler Olcott, Donn is a tireless advocate of the organization and has been an inspirational mentor as well as an over-achieving volunteer. Donn has spent many years teaching others about astronomy, stars, and variable stars as well as how to observe them using today's modern methods and techniques. As the Coordinator of the AAVSO Mentor Program, Donn has no peers. He matches new AAVSO members with seasoned AAVSO members who serve as mentors in Visual, CCD, DSLR, and PEP photometry. Donn concentrates on CCD photometry in the areas of cataclysmic variable photometry, minor planet rotational light curve photometry, and extra-solar planet photometry. He has guided new CCD observers up the learning curve, and is known as an excellent communicator and a patient teacher famous for his trademark sense of humor. He also served for several years on the AAVSO Education Committee.

Not only is Donn an effective mentor for those already involved in variable star observing, but as a long-time volunteer for the HISTAR Program for high school students at the University of Hawaii Institute for Astronomy, he has shared not only his remote control telescope but his astronomical knowledge and life experience with countless youth, many of whom have successfully completed college and graduate school after this experience.

Finally, as a member of the AAVSO Council from 2010 to 2014, Donn led the organization in a new and forward-thinking direction in terms of how it manages its investments, assuring that the organization will continue to serve variable star observers and variable star science for decades to come.

In recognition of the lasting impact he has had on both individual variable star observers as well as the AAVSO as a whole, it is our great pleasure to present the AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Award to Donn Starkey.

Dr. Kristine M. Larsen
President

Dr. Stella Kafka
Director

*Presented at the AAVSO 105th Annual Meeting
Burlington, Massachusetts, November 12, 2016*