

University of Reading lecturer named as top UK woman scientist (四)

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[发布时间] 10-March-2007. A University of Reading physics lecturer has been named as one of the UK's six top women scientists. Dr Averil Macdonald was honoured at the "Women of Outstanding Achievement in Science, Engineering and Technology" awards last night (March 8 2007) - appropriately, also the evening of International Women's Day - for her work in communicating science to the masses, making science accessible to everyone from young schoolchildren to grandparents.
[关键词] physics Dr Averil Macdonald Engineering



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The names of all six women were announced by Malcolm Wicks MP, Minister for Science and Innovation. Six specially-commissioned portraits of the women will be unveiled by the Minister at the Science Museum, at the reception preceding the lunch dinner for National Science and Engineering Week.

Dr Macdonald, with "Feminist Physics" as the most successful lecture ever for GCSE students, 45000 students having seen it and the number's still growing, and she is responsible for arguably one of the most novel ways to get people talking about science: Science with Coffee and Hobnobs, where mums and grandmothers talk about science over coffee and biscuits.
Dr Macdonald, who is mum to two daughters as well as being a Governor of Littlehorth School in Reading, said: "My mathematics teacher pointed out that, as a woman, I'd never have any trouble getting a job with science qualifications. So it was more pragmatism than inspiration! After that I discovered a love of performing and communicating science which here I am.

"The best reason to get involved in science is because you want to, not because someone says you should. One of the best things about being a woman in science is seeing the look of surprise on people's faces when I tell them - or perhaps that is one of the worst things!"
"My career advice would be to work out what your real skills are and what really motivates you. If you're doing something that's really 'you' then it's more like a hobby than work and you achieve so much more."

"My message to employers would be to allow people to work as flexibly as they want - you'll get far more out of them than you are paying for. Working and being present on site is not the same thing."

The women were chosen from 66 nominated by their peers for the 2007 Women of Outstanding Achievement in the Science, Engineering and Technology Photographic Exhibition, sponsored by the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (UKRC).

Dr Macdonald's leadership in science communication was recognised by the Institute of Physics and the Royal Society of Chemistry, which commissioned her to write the booklet 'Outreach', advising university academic staff how to communicate science.

Alongside her day job, Dr Macdonald has written numerous magazine and newspaper articles, 17 school textbooks, and appeared many times on TV and radio.

Through all this she has demonstrated that it is possible to have both a high achieving career and a family and thus fulfil an inspirational role for future generations of women in science, engineering and technology.

