

## Department of Physics & Astronomy

### PHYSICS NEWS FLASH

## Dr. Townsend Invited to Speak at Nobel Symposium

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Dr. David Townsend

Dr. David Townsend, Adjunct Professor of Physics, has been invited as a Distinguished Scientist Speaker at the 2007 Nobel Symposium, "Watching Life through Molecular Imaging." The meeting will be in Stockholm May 7-9, 2007.

Dr. Townsend came to UT in 2003 and is a Professor of Medicine and Radiology and Director of the Cancer Imaging and Tracer Development Research Program at the UT Graduate School of Medicine. A physicist by training, he has used his science background as the basis for a career in nuclear medicine and medical imaging, most notably in the development of Positron Emission Tomography (PET). This technology uses radiopharmaceuticals to find the smallest physiological changes in the body by tracing molecules like sugar, amino acids, or even water as they make their way through a patient's system. The enhanced sensitivity of PET systems can help detect and stage diseases such as cancer.

The Nobel Symposium will gather researchers to discuss the rapid development and promise of molecular imaging, including novel approaches to imaging cancer and advances in instrumentation, an area with which Dr. Townsend is well-acquainted. The combined PET/CT (Computerized Tomography) scanner that he developed with Dr. Ronald Nutt formerly of Knoxville's CTI PET Systems (now Siemens Molecular Imaging) was named TIME Magazine's medical invention of the year for 2000.

Dr. Townsend was also honored earlier this year with his election as a Fellow of the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers). The IEEE has more than 365,000 members worldwide and is an authority in several technological fields, including biomedical engineering. The total number of Fellows selected in any one year does not exceed one-tenth percent of the total voting Institute membership.