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## Leading physicist to speak on 'Realizing Einstein's Dream' May 19

*Talk caps UO's spring celebration of World Year of Physics*

He may be living in Eugene, but Jim Brau is a leader of one of the biggest projects in the history of science. He also led the team that created a beer-sized instrument so sensitive that it can detect particles only a fraction of the size of an atom, even though they're only visible for less than a millionth of a millionth of a second.

On Thursday, May 19, the University of Oregon physicist will bring local audiences up to date on the latest developments in particle physics and cosmology as part of the university's spring celebration of World Year of Physics 2005, the centennial of Einstein's "miracle year."

Brau, who teaches particle physics and astronomy, will speak at 7 p.m. in Room 100 of Willamette Hall, 1371 E. 13th Ave. on the UO campus. A public reception will follow in Willamette Hall's Paul Olum Atrium. Admission is free.

Even if you find this topic somewhat daunting, there's no more approachable—or enthusiastic—presenter than Brau. The sheer pleasure of pursuing knowledge for its own sake has motivated him as long as he can remember.

"Results of research underway today may revolutionize our view of nature as dramatically as the advances which Albert Einstein achieved 100 years ago," Brau says. "Most of the universe remains a mystery despite the depth of our knowledge. This leaves us with exciting prospects for discovery."

Brau directs the university's Center for High Energy Physics, where experiments involving ever-tinier bits of matter attract federal funding adding up to more than \$1 million a year. He is also one of three people leading the worldwide community of physicists preparing experiments at the next major facility for frontier particle physics research: the International Linear Collider 20-mile-long particle accelerator that will be one of the biggest projects in the history of science.

Since joining the UO faculty in 1988, Brau has continued to conduct research with colliding beam facilities at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) described as one of the top "Big Science" installations that "peer into the Alice in Wonderland world that exists on the scale of the atom." He serves on laboratory advisory committees at SLAC, as well as at the Fermilab near Chicago and the German particle physics laboratory, DESY, in Hamburg.

Advances in accelerator design for particle physics research have contributed to advances in other sciences. The intense light sources generated by accelerators are now being used as probes of objects of scientific interest in many fields—for instance, in studies to determine the structure of cancer-related proteins.

World Year of Physics 2005 pays tribute to Einstein's breakthrough theories

about space, time, matter and energy, all published in quick succession in 1905.

Founded in 1876, the UO Department of Physics has roughly 30 faculty members, most of whom are engaged in active research in such areas as condensed matter physics, optics, biophysics, elementary particle physics and astrophysics. One is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and many are fellows of the American Physical Society or the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

For more information, contact the UO physics department, (541) 346-4751 visit its website, <http://physics.uoregon.edu>.

For general information about the World Year of Physics, visit <http://www.physics2005.org>.

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