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Nobel physics prize winner to speak at WKU

By the Daily News 6 min ago

A winner of the 2016 Nobel Prize in physics will headline an upcoming mathematics conference at Western Kentucky University this summer.

Physicist John Michael Kosterlitz, who was one of three winners named that year, will give the keynote address at this year's Summer Conference on Topology and its Applications. WKU is hosting the 33rd annual conference July 17-20.

WKU mathematics professor Tom Richmond is organizing the conference. He said he hopes Kosterlitz' talk will highlight the mathematical field of topology, which isn't widely understood by the public.

Put simply, topology is the mathematical study of the properties that are preserved through deformations, twisting and stretching of objects, with the exception of tearing. Richmond said the field has practical applications for physical and computer sciences.



Kosterlitz, currently a physics professor at Brown University, will discuss his career and life. That includes his “other life as a mountaineer” and a simplified version of his Nobel-prize winning work on topographical pieces of matter, according to a flyer for the event.

The talk begins at 7:30 p.m. July 17 in Ogden College Hall.