

1961 Nobel Prize Winner Is Named to UH Faculty

The 1961 Nobel Prize winner in medicine and physiology, Georg von Bekesy, yesterday was appointed professor of sensory sciences at the University of Hawaii. He will be the first Nobel Prize winner ever to serve on the UH faculty. Von Bekesy will come to Honolulu next spring to fill the academic chair recently provided by the Hawaiian Telephone Co.

"It is with real pleasure that I make this announcement," University President Thomas H. Hamilton said yesterday.

"Dr. von Bekesy adds stature and eminence to the University of Hawaii. As the first Nobel Prize winner to join the university faculty, he will play an important role in assisting with the scientific development of Hawaii.

"I want to express my gratitude to the Hawaiian Telephone Co. for providing the financial means to bring a distinguished scientist like von Bekesy to Hawaii."

The Hungarian-born scientist is one of the world's outstanding workers in the field of anatomy and physiology of the ear.

He has worked since 1947 in the Psycho-Acoustic Laboratory at Harvard University.

Von Bekesy became interested in the University of Hawaii last year when he came

to the Manoa campus for a short seminar and lecture series sponsored by the UH Speech and Hearing Clinic. He returned to Hawaii for a few days last month to discuss the possibility of coming here permanently.

The science chair which he will hold was created in June by the Hawaiian Telephone Co. in recognition of the importance of higher education in Hawaii and to assist the university in bringing a noted educator to its faculty. The company agreed to provide \$25,000 a year for three years for the chair.

Von Bekesy received his early education in Munich, Constantinople, Budapest and Zurich. He studied chemistry at the University of Berne and took his Ph.D. in physics at the University of Budapest in 1923.

He later entered the service of the Hungarian post office and stayed there until 1946, working with problems in long-standing telephone transmission. He also worked in the Central Laboratory of Siemens and Halske A.G. in Berlin, one of the early centers of the development of telecommunication.

Von Bekesy's work for the Hungarian post office led him to considerable research on the human ear as a main component for the transmission system.

In 1946, he went to Sweden, where he was a guest at the Karolinska Institute and did

research at the Technical Institute in Stockholm which led to the development of a new type of audiometer (a device to measure hearing), operated by the patient. The type of audiometry known as Bekesy audiometry was the result of this development.

Von Bekesy is the author of a book, "Elements in hearing," which was published in 1960 and contains many hours of his research studies. He also is the author of numerous technical papers,

He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Other honors include the Shambaugh Prize in Otolaryngology (study of the ear), the Howard Crosby Warren Medal from the Society of Experimental Psychology, honorary M.D. degrees from Wilhelm University and the University of Bern, gold medals from the American Otological Society and the Acoustical Society of America, and an award from the Deafness Foundation.