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Director's Matters

By *H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO*



AIP forms AIP Publishing LLC

Last Friday was a landmark day in the history of the American Institute of Physics. February 1, 2013 marked the creation of AIP Publishing LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of AIP dedicated to scholarly publishing in the physical sciences. AIP has evolved a great deal since it was formed by five of its Member Societies on the heels of the Great Depression. The societies created AIP in part to take advantage of economies of scale in scholarly publishing, an activity that has always been an important part of AIP's mission. Over time, in response to the needs of the scientific community, AIP's products and services have evolved and expanded.

The evolution began in 1948 with the launch of *Physics Today* magazine, an outreach publication for the broader physical sciences community, followed by the formation of the Niels Bohr Library and Archives in 1962. In the ensuing decades, AIP experienced a steady diversification in programs to encompass activities in science outreach, education and career development of interest to our Member Societies. Likewise, AIP's scholarly publishing activities have been evolving in response to market changes. While AIP's organization, business, products, programs, and services have been adapting to keep pace with the needs of our community and stakeholders, macro environment trends such as globalization, demands for increased public access to scholarly content, and competition from commercial publishers, AIP's governance structure had remained essentially unchanged until now.

The AIP Governing Board undertook a close examination of AIP's publishing business and determined that it required a dedicated Board with relevant expertise to guide its development. This more focused board will put AIP Publishing in a better position to fulfill AIP's publishing mission, stay financially healthy and thrive into the future. The subsidiary will also support AIP's mission in its numerous outreach activities to the physical sciences community such as science media and education. John Haynes begins his new role as CEO of AIP Publishing LLC with a strong leadership team in place, and we anticipate a bright future for AIP, our new subsidiary and our Member Societies.

This event is the culmination of extensive reflection, examination, planning and hard work from the members of AIP Governing Board and its Governance Task Force, which includes Lou Lanzerotti (chair of the Governing Board), Eva Adams (director of corporate strategy), and Ben Snavely (corporate secretary). I thank them for their dedication to the Institute and to its mission.

[See the February 1, 2013 press release.](#)

Physcon poster sessions lively and inspiring

“If there is any take-home message from the [PhysCon] poster session, it is that students are capable of great things and should be encouraged to pursue these opportunities.” -St. Peter’s College SPS chapter

Two of the most energetic and dynamic sessions during the recent Sigma Pi Sigma Quadrennial Physics Congress (PhysCon) were poster sessions. PhysCon proved itself a superb forum for undergraduate physics students to showcase their efforts in scientific research, outreach, and community service. Nearly 200 student presenters engaged with peers, science faculty, and practicing physicists while discussing research in two dozen categories. For many of these students, it was their first-such presentation at a national science meeting. A small army of volunteer judges did a fantastic job critiquing and ranking those who opted in to the poster competition, and several AIP Member Society sponsors contributed funds and other prizes for the most outstanding presenters.



From the left: Michael Duncan, OSA Board representative, with Outstanding Student Poster Award winners Adam Simpson (Abilene Christian Univ.), *Valerie Jacobson (Colorado State Univ.), Andrew Peterson accepting the award on behalf of Michael Alemayehu (Morehouse College), Kelsey Schafer (Ohio State Univ.), *Adeyemo Adetogun (North Carolina Central Univ.), Morgan Smathers (Rhodes College), and Christopher Trennepohl (Davidson College). *Honorable mention. Photo by Ken Cole.

The OSA Foundation sponsored an overall Outstanding Student Poster Award for five presenters. These five winners each received \$1,000 cash, with two students receiving certificates as honorable mentions (see photo).

The APS Forum on Physics & Society funded prizes for the students presenting work relevant to the role of physics in our society. The 1st place winner received \$500 cash and partial support to present at an APS meeting, and two 2nd place winners received \$250. There were two honorable mentions.

AAS funded awards for students presenting astronomy-related work. The outstanding astronomy presenters in 1st-3rd place each received varying levels of support to attend an AAS meeting, and there were two honorable mentions.

See the [poster titles and abstracts of all the winners](#) on the PhysCon website.

From AIP Publishing

New astronomy thesaurus free to astronomy community



In collaboration with IOP Publishing, AIP has made available a new research tool called the [Unified Astronomy Thesaurus](#) (UAT) to the American Astronomical Society. This information resource will help scientists conduct research by providing a common vocabulary, which is essential in all research fields but especially so in astronomy, where objects and phenomenon can go by various names and

international collaboration is the emerging standard of research.

Through the AAS, the UAT will be freely available within the astronomy community, and with many thousands of articles being published each year in the field, this resource will help ensure that researchers will be able to find relevant information quickly.

The Astrophysics Data System (ADS) and International Virtual Observatory Alliance will continue to enhance and extend the thesaurus to ensure that it meets the needs of the astronomy community. Adoption of the thesaurus within the ADS will result in better linking with the majority of astronomy research journal articles, which will improve the accuracy of information discovery.

Member Society Spotlight

Jazzing it up with AAPT in New Orleans



Physics teachers, students, and professionals from across the US came to New Orleans earlier this month for the 2013 AAPT Winter Meeting. Each of the plenary talks can be viewed on [UStream](#).

AIP government relations staff attended and supported a session led by staff from the American Physical Society on advocacy and policy issues. Session speakers addressed advocacy of physics education and physics education research to university administrators, on Capitol Hill and at the State Board of Education level. Through one-on-one discussions with members of AAPT, staff from AIP and APS also addressed questions about advocating for physics funding in Congress.

AIP Member Societies such as AAPT and APS have resources to help their members approach these unfamiliar environments in order to better advocate for their work in research and teaching. AIP partners with AAPT to develop advocacy and policy resources to help facilitate those important discussions.

SPS sponsored several undergraduate student presenters, a poster session during the meeting's opening reception, and a special reception for undergraduate students and their mentors. Carrying out an annual tradition, SPS worked with AAPT to present an outreach event to 107 local 6th–8th grade students from Jefferson Parrish public schools. This annual event was begun by tireless AAPT volunteer Betty Preece, and continues in her honor. This year, SPS volunteers presented four hands-on stations, each dealing with an “invisible field.” Students learned about gravity, along with electric and magnetic fields. Each student constructed a simple motor to take home as they learned about the connections between the electric and magnetic fields.



SPS Program Coordinator Kendra Redmond works with a student at the Students Exploring Engineering and Science (SEES) outreach program during the AAPT Winter Meeting.

Off the Press



SPS Observer, [Fall 2012 issue](#)

More than 120 schools were represented at the 2012 Quadrennial Physics Congress held in Orlando, FL, November 8-10, 2012. See the special congress section beginning on page 8.

The issue also includes stories on failure in physics, cool stars, and public outreach with a BANG!



Computing in Science and Engineering, [January/February issue](#)

Coming Up

Wednesday, February 6

- January WOW drawing (Melville)

February 6-8

- PSP Annual Conference (Washington, DC)

Wednesday, February 13

- Staff birthday breakfasts (Melville and College Park)

February 14-18

- AAAS Annual Meeting (Boston, MA)

Thursday, February 28

- AIP Development Board meeting (College Park)