

October 7, 2013

## Director's Matters

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



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There must be a better way to run a trillion dollar business

One way to think of the US government in this age of large, multinational corporations is as the management of a trillion dollar business.

As the United States is still the world's largest economy, the actions of the US government affect the well-being of every American citizen, every American enterprise, and a significant portion of the world. US citizens have the privilege of electing the management of this large conglomeration in terms of its CEO (the president) and governing board (the US Congress). We even have a built-in arbitration council when a serious dispute arises between the executive, governance or ordinary citizens (the Supreme Court). This management system has served us well for most of our country's 233 years, but for the last few years, most of us would not give our country's leadership high marks. The most basic function of top management—developing and passing a budget to finance its operations—appears impossible for the last few congressional sessions. Instead, our country is run on stop-gap budget measures, bouncing between manufactured crises that have real impact on our lives and well-being.

I cannot remember when both the House and Senate passed their required 12 appropriation bills and sent them to the president before the fiscal year expired. That discipline has been replaced by monstrous "omnibus" bills that group the funding of many departments and agencies into one unreadable document, or "continuing resolutions" that extend a previous year's expenditures without the time or effort to consider whether changes need to be made. These artifices at least keep the US government and its myriad of direct and indirect activities in operation. Last Tuesday's government shutdown is political theater with real consequences to the 800,000 federal employees who are temporarily furloughed, those who rely on the services that are not being delivered, and all taxpayers who will ultimately shoulder the high costs for the shutdown, which increase with each passing day.

I will limit my lament to that which I have first-hand knowledge: the shutdown's impact on our research establishment. The US government is the primary supporter of basic scientific research. The shutdown of this enterprise is far less visible than closing the entrance to a national park, but the consequences can be far greater because of the timescale for planning and executing research projects.

A few examples: scientists who were expecting to receive hard-won grants from NSF or NIH will have these funds delayed for some unknown period. The processing of new grant applications is also on

hold. Many agencies, such as NIH, USDA, EPA, NOAA, DOD, NIST, NASA, and others, conduct considerable research with their own staffs of scientists. These intramural research programs are now in a holding pattern. Discovery, invention, publication, collaboration, and learning that would have taken place at scientific conferences have been brought to a standstill. To add some perspective, this means, for example, that NIH can't begin scheduled clinical trials; the Center for Disease Control can't monitor the spread of the next flu epidemic; NASA scientists can't examine satellite data; and only a skeletal crew is on duty monitoring the astronauts in the International Space Station. Science does not react well to being turned on and off like a spigot. Science, especially frontier science requiring large teams and sophisticated facilities, is done best in an environment where the resources are carefully planned, distributed, and accounted for.

I spent most of my scientific career designing, building, and operating scientific user facilities that were funded by the US Department of Energy. I took my charge very seriously to manage these projects as a business with financial resources largely provided by the public. I felt it was extremely important to maintain the public trust in the expenditure of these funds, to plan, use, and account for them carefully. As these last few weeks have played out so poorly on Capitol Hill, and as the next serious debate over extending the debt ceiling begins, I am pained to see that our elected representatives continue to fail in their fiscal responsibility to the constituents they are supposed to represent.

## Publishing Matters

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AIP Publishing joins Kudos as pilot partner



Last month the author community welcomed the launch of a new service aimed at growing the visibility and impact of their published works. AIP Publishing is a proud partner in an innovative pilot project for Kudos, a

free service for authors that will help them successfully promote their research in the midst of information overload. With the number of published articles increasing each year, there is growing competition for visibility. Less than half of published works today ever get cited. The Kudos toolkit includes social and multimedia outlets to help increase discovery and filterability. Researchers will benefit as well with more efficient, targeted searches. AIP Publishing joins the Royal Society of Chemistry and Taylor & Francis in the pilot project, which will run through mid-2014. For more information, see the [Kudos press release](#).

## Physics Resources Matters

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SRC considers the Nobel Prize in Physics and women

Last week, the popular [Huffington Post](#) blog picked up a submission by Susan White and Rachel Ivie of AIP's Statistical Research Center. In the article, White and Ivie examine the representation of women among the Nobel Prize in Physics winners: women make up just 1% of the Nobel physics laureates —Why?



Excerpt from the article, "[Blind Ambition](#)":

On Tuesday the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences will announce the winners of the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physics. Since 1901, when Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen was named the first recipient, a total of 193 people have been honored as physics laureates.

In 1903, one of the very first Prizes in Physics went to Marie Curie, and in the 110 years since, the only other woman to win the distinction was Maria Goeppert Mayer, whose prize was announced in 1963, prior to the Kennedy assassination. In the 50 years since, 114 men have won. All the men have deserved it, of course. The prize recognizes the very best scientists and most important discoveries of the day. But with only 2 out of 193 winners, women have won only about 1 percent of the time. So why are so few prizes going to women?

... We used [SRC] data to test five possible explanations for the low number of women who have received a Nobel Prize in Physics. [Continue reading.](#)

## Applications open for AIP's State Department Fellowship



Through its State Department Science Fellowship program, AIP offers an opportunity for scientists to make a substantial contribution to the foreign policy process by spending a year working at the US State Department. This is a unique opportunity for scientists to contribute scientific and technical expertise to the department and raise awareness of the value of scientific input. In turn, scientists broaden their experience by interacting with policymakers in the federal government and learning about the foreign policy process. Applications are due November 1. For more information, visit the [AIP Government Relations website](#).

The American Astronomical Society generously provides an annual contribution to the AIP State Department Science Fellowship program.

## Around AIP

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### Sherry Render appointed to Controller

AIP congratulates Sherry Render on her new position as controller of the Institute. Sherry joined AIP in September 2000; since 2006 she served as assistant controller until her most recent promotion. Sherry holds a Master's degree in accounting and information technology from the University of Maryland



University College and is a Certified Public Accountant.

## Coming Up

October 6-10

- OSA 97th Annual Meeting & Exhibit (FiO) (Orlando, FL)

October 7

- Nobel Prize in Physics Celebration, an AIP Development event (Bethesda, MD)

October 8

- 2013 Nobel Prize in Physics announced

October 9

- Birthday breakfasts (College Park & Melville)

October 9-13

- Frankfurt Book Fair 2013 (Frankfurt, Germany)

October 13-17

- SOR 85th Annual Meeting (Montréal, Canada)
- October 14: AIP Industrial Outreach event, "Rheology in the Real World," 6-7:30 pm

October 14

- Open enrollment sessions (College Park)

October 16

- Flu shot clinic, 1-4 pm (College Park)
- AIP Publishing quarterly "WOW" ice cream social (Melville)

October 18

- AIP Audit Committee meeting (College Park)

October 21

- AIP Executive Committee meeting (College Park)
- ACP Art Reception, "Intersections: Secrets of the Elements"

