Director's Matters

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) summer interns are in the home stretch of their internships -- just 10 days to go. It's striking how quickly this summer is flying by and how much these bright students have accomplished in a short time. On Tuesday at ACP, the students will give formal presentations on their projects.

AIP promotes the value of undergraduate research experiences (in scientific research or educational/policy). They are essential in a student's formative education. SPS started the internship program in 2001, and since then 46 undergraduate students have participated in the program. They come from two-year colleges, small private colleges, and large big-name universities across the country. They are diverse in background, race, and age, yet uniform in their love of physics.

SPS internships are designed to create broad-based learning opportunities for undergraduate physics majors. SPS interns are placed in organizations such as AAPT, APS, NASA, NIST, and SPS. These organizations utilize the energy and enthusiasm of aspiring students and contribute to their professional development through substantive assignments relevant to their institutions' programs. You may remember the interns best from the splashy Mentos and Diet Coke experiments at the ACP picnic, but they are working on many different projects -- from preparing propulsion and kinematics lessons for SPS members to share in the classroom to researching organic semiconductors and lunar neutron detection. Check out the interns' journals for a running commentary on their experiences this summer.

After the interns present their research on Tuesday, we have a special guest speaker -- Worth Seagondollar, a cofounder of SPS and an eyewitness to the 1945 plutonium fission devise explosion in the New Mexico desert. Seagondollar will give a personal account of his work with Enrico Fermi on the Manhattan Project, as a young graduate student. Interested College Park staff are welcome to come to Seagondollar's talk (12:45 - 1:45 pm). If you would like to attend, please email SPS by 1:00 pm today (Monday).

Sincerely yours,

Fred

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Publishing Matters

Can you find it?

Dan Penny, Director and Lead Analyst for Outsell, visited the Melville Publishing Center on July 13 to meet with several AIP staff to discuss findability -- specifically, improving AIP's findability on the web by employing industry best practices. Dan follows the STM (scientific - technical - medical) publishing segment of the information marketplace for Outsell and is AIP's key contact for its Outsell market research subscription. During this annual visit, we learned that AIP is doing many of the right things to ensure its content is found by web search engines. The meeting also generated new ideas and new strategies, such as social networking. Also discussed
was research Outsell had conducted relevant to the implementation of Mark Logic software as a next-generation content store for Scitation.

52nd MMM Conference

![52nd MMM Conference](image)

The program committee for the 52nd Magnetism and Magnetic Materials Conference held a successful meeting (in record time!) July 15 - 16 at ACP to review, sort, and decide on 2,100 submitted abstracts. The conference's steering committee also met the same weekend. The MMM program committee is made up of approximately 40 volunteer members from the magnetism community. Since abstract submission and review take place via the web, some members of the committee participated remotely. Proceedings of the 52nd MMM Conference (to be held on November 5 - 9, 2007 in Tampa, Florida) will be published in the Journal of Applied Physics in April 2008.

Physics Resource Center Matters

Do internships and research fellowships make a difference?

![Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship](image)

For the third time in five years, the AIP Statistical Research Center conducted a survey of the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Each summer, approximately 100 U.S. undergraduates majoring in science participate in the program, which began in 1993. The study assessed SURF's impact on the educational and career paths of the participants.

Virtually all respondents agreed that SURF provided a good opportunity to learn what it is like to be a research scientist. A high percentage of participants reported having many useful discussions about research with their advisors at NIST. Because of students' research experiences in the SURF program, many decide to go into research or narrow their fields of study. The summer program also reinforces many students' plans to pursue higher degrees.

Furthermore, participants noted that the social environment among the students and NIST staff was the best part of their summer experience. The second best aspect of SURF was the "real work" and "hands on" professional experience with the research projects to which participants were assigned.

AIP’s development activities

AIP is designated a 501(C)(3) organization that can accept charitable donations and grants for several of its programs. AIP's Development Office assists program directors and other responsible parties to raise funds in support of the Center for History of Physics and Niels Bohr Library and Archives, Sigma Pi Sigma and SPS programs, the US Physics Team, Discoveries and Breakthroughs Inside Science (DBIS), and several other projects, as needed. Through direct mail campaigns, major gifts solicitation, planned giving, proposal writing, events management, and other actions, AIP raises over $1,000,000 annually for both endowment and operating funds. Look for brief articles on the fund-raising aspects and activities for each of these programs in future issues of AIP Matters.

Around AIP

Benefits renewal time

Each year AIP Human Resources (HR) staff enter into negotiations with health insurance carriers, with assistance of AIP's benefits broker. The goal is to develop the best overall benefit package while controlling cost increases. The ensuing negotiation process often entails increasing some specific benefits and decreasing others. As HR begins this process in the next few weeks, it is very helpful to know how you feel about the benefits you receive under the current package. We invite you to let us know how satisfied you are with current medical, dental and vision benefits. Contact Human Resources, identifying the subject of your email as "Benefits Feedback." Please be as specific as
possible. We look forward to hearing from you!

We invite your feedback to this newsletter via email to aipmatters@aip.org.