



Director's Matters

CNSF and Science Funding

Last Wednesday evening I had the pleasure of joining the Society of Physics Students (SPS) summer interns who participated in the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) Exhibit in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill. This important event educates Congress about the research and education programs throughout the United States that are funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The goal is to

increase the national investment in science and science education and to increase support for NSF, the second largest US agency for funding physical science research (next to the Department of Energy's Office of Science).



SPS Interns Mary Mills, Jenna Smith, Meagan Saldua and Logan Hancock pose with Congressman Vernon Ehlers, sporting "rainbow" diffraction glasses.

The principal focus of the SPS interns' booth was ComPADRE, a growing network of physics and astronomy resource collections for teachers, students, and the casual learner. Supported by NSF, ComPADRE is a collaborative project of AAPT, APS, AIP and SPS, and is part of the National Science Digital Library. Also part of the exhibit was a program that widely disseminates science news to the general public, AIP's syndicated television news service, "Discoveries and Breakthroughs in Science." Despite competition from dozens of other exhibitors, our outgoing interns displayed considerable showmanship by attracting three

congressmen to their poster and capturing the attention of NSF Director, Arden Bement and Deputy Director, Kathy Olsen.

The science community received some good news on the funding front that affects the health of NSF and several other agencies that support science. An authorization bill dubbed the America COMPETES Act was passed last August, calling for a doubling of funds for physical science and science education over the next 10 years. Yet appropriations for this fiscal year were well below the expectations of America COMPETES. Congress is unlikely to pass any new funding legislation for non-defense agencies until well after the election. But some assistance seems to be on the horizon—last week the House and Senate passed a supplemental funding bill that includes \$400M of urgent relief for NSF, DOE, NIH, and NIST. The President has indicated that he will sign the bill. This may be the only appropriation bill to emerge from Congress during this session, and the scientific community is fortunate given the current constraints on federal funding. Individual scientists working through their congressional representatives, professional societies, and collaborative groups such as the CNSF were very vocal in stressing the need for additional science funding. And Congress listened. For NSF, this bill would provide an additional \$62.5M by the end of this fiscal year. This good news and the enthusiasm of the SPS interns engendered a light-hearted atmosphere for the seriously remarkable exhibit.

Sincerely,

Fred

Publishing Matters

More java, please

In May, AIP enhanced its online [Scitation](#)® platform with the addition of four new application servers and a complete upgrade to version 10 of its [BEA WebLogic Server](#)®. BEA is a platform for developing and deploying enterprise Java applications. It allows applications to remain up and running when



deploying new versions or changing server configurations, and version 10 includes key BEA enhancements plus support for the latest Java platform. The upgrade introduces a new file system that is double the size of the previous one and contains upgraded versions of [Java](#), [Perl](#), and [Solaris](#). The initial results are very encouraging—Scitation performance has improved sharply, with average abstract load times about 30% faster.

Shedding your skin: A quick introduction to Python

The upgrade to [BEA's](#) WebLogic Server® 10 allows AIP to benefit from the [WebLogic Scripting Tool](#), a Jython interpreter with BEA's libraries available for communicating with WebLogic 10. [Jython](#) is the Java version of [Python](#), a programming language started in 1991 by [Guido van Rossum](#). Python—and Jython, in particular—has unique characteristics that developers can leverage to their advantage. More information about Python can be found in [The Technology Blog](#).

Physics Resource Center Matters

PTCN attends IBM software conference



On June 3, representatives from the *Physics Today* Career Network (PTCN) attended the [IBM Rational Software Development Conference](#) in Orlando, FL. The conference, which focused on the latest developments in software technologies, techniques, and market trends, boasted more than 50 exhibitors, including the IEEE Computer Society. PTCN interacted with such

companies as Black Diamond Software, DataDirect Technologies, and IBM Global Business Services. The response to the new IEEE Computer Society Career Center (see [AIP Matters](#), June 2 issue) was positive.

Around AIP

The ACP Picnic

The ACP Events Committee hosted the annual ACP Employee Picnic last Monday. The theme was "Carnival!" Employees (from AAPM, AAPT, AIP, and APS) engaged in the fun and games: musical chairs, music trivia, line dancing, bingo, and more. AAPT won the Egg Relay Race title for 2008 (*champions pictured at the left*). The SPS interns ran several physics-related activities, including the "Rainbow Room" and "Science Fun with Slinkies and Boomwhackers." Musicians, thespians, and divas shared their talents at the "Open Mic Café" (*middle*). Aside from the good eats, the kids were treated to games, face painting, and the balloon clown (*creations donned at the right*), and they rocked the moon bounce till closing time.



Member Society Spotlight

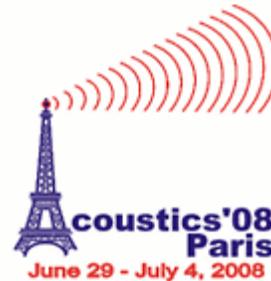
Acousticians, walking the Parisian beat



Thousands of scientists and engineers have descended upon Paris, France, for the largest acoustics meeting of all time. [Acoustics '08](#) is in full swing, incorporating the 155th meeting of the [Acoustical Society of America](#) (ASA) and meetings of the European Acoustics Association and the French Acoustical Society. Acoustics '08 also integrates the European conferences on noise control and underwater acoustics. The science of acoustics is a cross section of diverse disciplines, including architecture, naval warfare, meteorology, psychology, physics, marine biology, medicine, and music. Advances in acoustics research feed the 3,500 planned talks and poster presentations.

AIP has written two press releases (dated [May 30](#) and [June 12](#)), to generate publicity and promote meeting highlights. Here's a sampling:

- Using ultrasound and shear waves to assess liver stiffness and disease
- Paleolithic art and music resonate
- Conservation and the tiger's roar
- Classrooms: Hallowed halls with student-friendly walls
- What have they done with the Stradivarius violins?
- Dialect formation and Mexican-American identity



AIP Executive Director and CEO Fred Dylla and two Media and Government Relations staff members will give reports to the ASA Executive Council and the ASA committees on public relations and public policy.

We invite your feedback to this newsletter via e-mail to aipmatters@aip.org.

For past issues of this newsletter, visit the [AIP Matters archives](#).