January 19, 2016

**Director's Matters**

*By Mike Henry, Director, Science Policy*

2016 — A year of budget relief for science

The biggest science policy story in 2015 was the strong year-end spending growth for most of the science agencies, but will this year’s budget increases for science have staying power?

When the American Association for Advancement of Science (AAAS) CEO and former member of Congress Rush Holt sounded alarms last year that support for science is eroding in our country, he pointed to the trends backing his assertion. The United States spent nearly 12 percent of the federal budget on R&D in the mid-1960s, when the Apollo Program was at its peak, but by 2015 it was spending a mere moon’s shadow of that: 3.4 percent. The United States at one time clearly led the world in overall R&D investment as a percentage of GDP but has since fallen to 10th place, and continues to fall short of the three percent goal proposed by recent presidents, including President Obama.

In 2012, federal budget sequestration struck, and the major science agencies and offices have seen declining budgets in real dollars ever since. It has been a stressful several years for the US scientific community, with priorities delayed, programs slashed, hiring freezes at the science agencies, and travel to scientific conferences restricted.

Read more.

**Physics Resources Matters**

Adopt-a-physicist Q&A with Josh Weber

Josh Weber, research associate and physicist at the Laboratory for Optical and Computational Instrumentation (LOCI) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has been featured in a Q&A on the LOCI website about his recent sessions with Adopt-a-Physicist.

Read more.
SRC publishes list of top-producing physics bachelor's departments

As part of a report on the status of physics bachelor’s degrees in the United States, the Statistical Research Center (SRC) has made available lists of the departments that award the most physics bachelor’s degrees. Separate lists are available for PhD-granting, master’s-granting, and bachelor’s-granting departments. “Several universities have issued press releases highlighting that their physics departments made AIP’s top producers list,” said Patrick Mulvey, the study’s author.

Read more.

Member Society Spotlight

AAS's 227th Meeting

The American Astronomical Society met in Kissimmee, FL, from January 4-8, saluting the New Year with sun and excitement.

Read more.

Coming Up

January 19

• Brown bag lunch, 12 pm. CEO Robert G.W. Brown will deliver a talk, “Fighting Terrorism with Physics” (College Park)

January 27

• Connect, Communicate, Celebrate. For all AIP staff; lunch included. 11 am-1 pm, Conference Room A (College Park)

January 28-29

• AIP Board of Directors meeting (College Park)

February 10

• AIPP Board of Managers meeting (New York, NY)