AIP Matters

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Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO

The state of science funding

When the Obama administration released the fiscal year 2011 (FY 2011) budget earlier this month, the nation listened attentively to discern the administration's priorities within the current economic and political environment. With an uncertain economy, a growing deficit, and the ongoing cost of two wars, there is little room for new initiatives. The President's budget team had to target areas that could improve the prosperity, security, and well-being of the nation. Fortunately for our community, increased support for scientific research and education met those criteria.

John Holdren, assistant to the president for science and technology (S&T) and director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, assured the science community last Monday that the Obama administration will protect basic research funding and, in many areas, increase support of strategic research and development (R&D) programs to create quality jobs and maintain the United States' global position as a leader in frontier science. The administration's FY 2011 S&T budget request shows strong support for science and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education, as the key to strengthening the domestic economy through technological innovation.

The FY 2011 budget request keeps NSF, the DOE Office of Science, and NIST on track for the fifth year of a doubling path that was authorized by the America COMPETES Act, with an overall 6.6% increase for these three agencies, to $13.3 billion. The budget doubling effort is expected to reach its goal in 2017, with a $19.5 billion yearly investment. While the administration seeks cancellation of NASA's Constellation program to return humans to the Moon (and perhaps to Mars), it does provide $11 billion to NASA's R&D portfolio, with a significant amount toward climate-related research and space science. Other agencies received more modest gains. (See http://www.aip.org/fyi/ for details.) The S&T request would boost basic and applied research by 5.6% to $61.6 billion. Biomedical research, advanced materials and manufacturing methods, and a host of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies will all see increased funding, with the goal of bolstering US industry in market competitiveness.

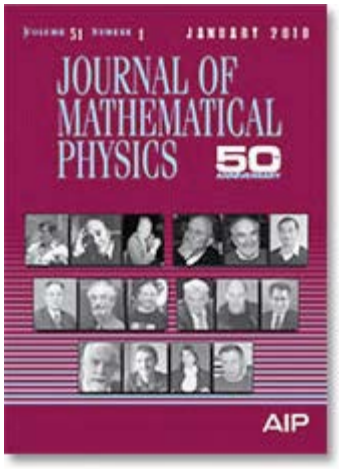
Education as a whole will receive an additional $3 billion—modest, but not insignificant, considering the administration's plan to freeze, with few exceptions, the total discretionary portion of the federal budget. The increase is geared toward primary and secondary education and reforming the No Child Left Behind policy. The

discretionary budget for STEM education allows for mostly slight increases in higher education programs, and a complete reorganization of the Department of Education's Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSP) to become the Effective Teaching and Learning: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program, with an impressive 66.2% increase to $300 million.

The President's FY 2011 budget is very generous to science and science education given the financial stress in both the public and the private sectors of the economy. Supporters for science and members of the scientific community, including those aligned with AIP Member and Affiliated Societies, need to show support for this science budget as it works its way through both houses of Congress later this year.

PUBLISHING MATTERS

Special issue commemorates *JMP*'s golden anniversary



January marked the 50th anniversary of AIP's *Journal of Mathematical Physics*. *JMP* was launched in 1960 largely through the efforts of its founding editor, Elliott W. Montroll, who served in that capacity for more than a decade. From the start, the journal published some of the best papers from outstanding mathematicians and physicists, and many of these papers are now considered classics. In 1960, *JMP* stood alone as the only journal in the field; a half century later there are dozens more. In 2008, Thomson Reuters recorded 11,976 citations of articles published in Journal of Mathematical Physics, making it the 5th most highly cited of the 46 journals tracked in mathematical physics.

To commemorate *JMP*'s anniversary, editor Bruno Nachtergaele of the University of California, Davis, dedicated a special issue to celebrate the progress in mathematical physics over the last half century. The introduction to the January 2010 issue places the invited papers in context, and an eye-catching cover features photographs of recipients of the Henri Poincaré Prize, which is awarded every three years by the International Association of Mathematical Physics. Available on *JMP*'s anniversary website are highly cited and important papers that helped shape the field over the past half century. The issue marks the culmination of a year of special activity for the journal, which included a strong presence at the International Congress on Mathematical Physics in Prague, in August 2009.

AIP joins the editors, staff, and editorial board in recognizing this milestone event and looks forward to more groundbreaking contributions from *JMP*'s outstanding author community.

PRC MATTERS

SPS' sweet spot

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) was recently recognized with

> And the The Social Media Sweet Spot Award for this week goes to...The Society of Physics Students or SPS

a Social Media Sweet Spot Award for being an "association with a prominent Facebook presence . . . an association truly engaging members on a Facebook page." The award was announced 26 minutes into the January 29th episode of the DelCor Social Media Sweet Spot, a weekly webcast that highlights activities relating to social media for associations.

SPS members started their main Facebook group several years ago, and the group now boasts 1,703 members. The SPS Fan Page on Facebook has more than 1,000 fans. In addition, there are groups for the SPS Council and SPS Interns, and one titled "I have a Bachelor's Degree in Physics," with 494 members.

Education communications coordinator Tracy Schwab, the primary steward of SPS's social media presence, says "Facebook has become an integral part of our overall communication strategy with our members, advisors, and elected leaders. It allows us to reach a much wider audience, including many students who may be part of a local SPS chapter but have not joined the national organization, or who attend an institution with no SPS chapter. This is especially true for international students, who make up more than one third of our Facebook audience." In addition to Facebook, SPS National interacts with students on Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and the Nucleus digital library.

AROUND AIP

Slimming down for spring?

Is getting back in shape on your list of New Year's resolutions? AIP's fitness centers can help you succeed—we provide the equipment; you work up the sweat. The conveniently located fitness centers in College Park and Melville have a wide variety of equipment, available from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. To obtain access, complete the "Fitness Waiver" form on the Employease Network under the Human Resources tab, and forward it to the Human Resources department. Allow up to one week for your building access card to be activated. Remember to check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.