



Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO

America COMPETES reauthorization, take 3

The American scientific and science education community was given a welcome sendoff for the Memorial Day weekend when the U.S. House of Representatives passed the America COMPETES reauthorization bill just before the holiday recess. After weeks of political theater and two failed attempts, HR 5116 passed by a margin of 112 votes: 262–150, with 17 Republicans voting in favor. Although the current bill received far less bipartisan support than the original 2007 COMPETES bill, the tally is still impressive given the current political climate. To gain a better understanding of the debate surrounding the bill and the measures that went into the final passage, read FYI #59: "[House Passes Reauthorization of America COMPETES Bill](#)." The process continues as the Senate writes its version of the bill, followed by reconciliation of the two versions and (hopefully) final passage before this session of Congress ends.

Many business groups and scientific and technical societies [endorsed the bill](#)—including AIP and several Member Societies—and several organizations lobbied Congress intensely to secure funding support for basic research programs under the auspices of the DOE Office of Science, NSF, and NIST. America COMPETES was a landmark bill of August 2007 that set such programs on a path to doubling authorized funding levels over 10 years. The 2010 reauthorization keeps that original plan mostly on track, calling for investments through the annual appropriation bills in science, innovation, and education that will enable the US research and development enterprise to remain competitive in an increasingly global economy.

These future investments in science will need shepherds, managers, and policy makers, of course—so AIP and its Member Societies are doing our part to cultivate them. Last week, the Society of Physics Students welcomed 11 new [summer interns](#) to the Washington DC metro area. They will work in areas ranging from outreach and education to scientific research, for AIP, SPS, APS, AAPT, NIST, NASA and the Materials Research Science and Engineering

Center. This year's program also includes the first AIP Mather Public Policy Interns, who will work for Congress and for Scientists and Engineers for America. The summer becomes a very productive period as these bright undergraduates work to make their personal mark within 10 short weeks. You'll be hearing more about them and their



2010 SPS Summer Interns

projects in the coming weeks.

AAPT has also just wrapped up the training camp for the 2010 U.S. Physics Team and announced the top performers who earned a spot to compete in the International Physics Olympiad next month in Croatia. (See the PRC article and Member Society Spotlight below for more details.) These budding scientists will no doubt help America compete well into the future.

PUBLISHING MATTERS

Helping OpenURL technology achieve its full potential

Last week [UKSG](#) and [NISO](#) (the National Information Standards Organization) recognized the American Institute of Physics for its leadership in journal publishing and reference linking technologies. AIP is one of the first organizations to publicly endorse the Phase I recommendations of the [KBART](#) (Knowledge Bases And Related Tools) Working Group, a joint initiative that is exploring data problems within the OpenURL supply chain. OpenURL is a technology for linking web users to library catalogue resources.

As explained in the June 1 press release, "KBART was set up following the 2007 publication of the UKSG research report [Link Resolvers and the Serials Supply Chain](#). Central to the efficient operation of the OpenURL is the knowledge base, which consists of data supplied by content providers including publishers. The report found that a lack of awareness of the OpenURLs capabilities and requirements is impacting the quality and timeliness of data provided to populate knowledge bases, and thus undermining the potential of the sophisticated OpenURL technology. UKSG partnered with NISO to commission the KBART Working Group to develop guidelines for best practice and provide educational materials." Congratulations to the Online Services team for helping AIP adopt these best practices. Senior Project Coordinator Julie Zhu has joined the KBART Working Group to develop Phase II of this effort.



PRC MATTERS

Austrian embassy delegates visit ACP

At the end of April, a delegation from the Austrian embassy—including University of Innsbruck physicist [Rudolf Grimm](#) (this year's Austrian Scientist of the Year and a fellow of APS), Caroline Adenberger (Deputy Director of [Science and Technology at the embassy](#)), and Philipp Marxgut (the Science Attaché)—visited the American Center for Physics. The visit was arranged through Paul Guinnessy, Manager of the [Physics Today website](#), after he was contacted by Adenberger.

At ACP the delegation met with Cathy O'Riordan (Vice President, Physics Resources Center), Kate Kirby (Executive Officer of APS), and *Physics Today* staff. A roundtable



discussion of Grimm's work in ultracold atoms and of the state of academia in Austria was followed by a tour of the APS offices and the Niels Bohr Library. The meeting has led Marxgut and Adenberger to contact their superiors about building stronger links between AIP and the Austrian government, particularly for student exchanges.

U.S. Physics Team visits Capitol Hill



The latest crop of U.S. Physics Team members took time out from their busy, physics-filled schedule on Wednesday to visit their congressional representatives at the US Capitol—and they found physics there, too.

AIP's government relations staff set up individual meetings between students and legislators from their home states. The students presented legislators with a kinetic yo-yo, which uses the principle of conservation of momentum and energy, and a message urging them to "keep up the momentum" for science and math education.

The whole team met with the three members of Congress who are also physicists: Vern Ehlers (R-MI), Rush D. Holt (D-NJ), and Bill Foster (D-IL). Ehlers, who plans to retire this year, entered a statement in the congressional record congratulating the students.

The Member Society Spotlight below provides more information.

MEMBER SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

2010 U.S. Physics Team

Excerpt from the [AAPT press release](#), dated May 24, 2010:

"They came from Iowa and Ohio, Oregon and Massachusetts. Five came from California, two from New Jersey, and one from Connecticut. Students from the Northeast, the Mid-Atlantic, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the Pacific coast are beginning ten days [May 22 – 31] of rigorous academic training, interactive learning, and friendship building as they prepare to test themselves on the world stage.



"They are the top twenty high school physics students in the United States, selected through an examination process that included such upper level skills as the Lagrangian Formula of Mechanics, Differential Calculus for Electricity and Magnetism, and Complex Variables, skills usually learned at the end of the undergraduate experience."

AAPT Executive Officer Warren Hein and AIP Executive Director and CEO Fred Dylla

welcomed the team to the University of Maryland, College Park campus, where they engaged in intensive training. At the end of the camp they were tested again, and five team members were selected to represent the United States in the International Physics Olympiad, July 17 – 25, 2010, in Zagreb, Croatia.

Learn more about the [team members](#), the [traveling team](#), and their dedicated [coaches](#) on the AAPT website. AIP and all 10 Member Societies lend support to this worthy program.

THIS WEEK AT AIP

Events at ACP (College Park, MD)

Monday, June 7

- SPS Executive Committee meeting

Friday, June 11

- Corporate Associates Advisory Committee Meeting
- AIP/APS Physics Leadership Summit

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

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