



Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO

Honorary membership in Sigma Pi Sigma

The scientific community has several ways to recognize noteworthy individuals within its ranks, from the Nobel Prize and other prestigious awards to special distinctions. Many AIP Member and Affiliated Societies name as "Fellows" their most distinguished members. AIP has a diverse set of [awards and fellowships](#) as well. However, I want to draw your attention to another organization run under the auspices of AIP's Society of Physics Students: [Sigma Pi Sigma](#), the physics honor society.

Being inducted into Sigma Pi Sigma is one of the first national recognitions a budding physicist can achieve. Each year the highest-performing, physics students across the country are accepted into the society through local chapter induction ceremonies. Sigma Pi Sigma currently has 540 chapters; more than 1,000 new inductees were honored this year, joining 75,000 lifetime members of the society. Most new undergraduate inductees receive a year's membership in one of AIP's Member Societies as part of their affiliation with Sigma Pi Sigma—a very effective way in which AIP brings new faces to the Member Societies on a regular basis.

Sigma Pi Sigma reserves its highest class of membership—honorary membership—for those distinguished physicists and related scientists who have made valuable contributions to the field at the national level. Those who receive this honor join the [august company](#) of those who have forged the frontiers of physics and physics in society, such as Jocelyn Bell Burnell, the discoverer of pulsars; Nobel laureates William Phillips, Leon Lederman, and Carl Wieman; former AIP Governing Board Chair Mildred Dresselhaus; and current Chair Louis Lanzerotti.

This year Sigma Pi Sigma celebrated its newest honorary member, astronomer Vera C. Rubin, "for her masterful documentation of the stellar rotation curves of galaxies, with their profound implications for the sources of gravity in galaxies or gravity itself, her mentorship of women and men in science, her dedicated study of the history of women astronomers, and her generous spirit of support to undergraduate physicists and astronomers everywhere."

The award presentation occurred earlier this year at a reception for undergraduates at the 2010 APS/AAPT



Vera Rubin holds her certificate of honorary membership in Sigma Pi Sigma.

Joint Meeting in Washington, DC. Rubin mesmerized the audience with a talk about her life's work. She



Rubin with SPS students, sharing fine food, rich fellowship, and serious discussion of opportunities for students in the physics profession.

characteristically remarked that she had served as a member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and pointed out to the Pope the paucity of female members of the academy.

[Read more](#) about Rubin's remarkable career and contributions to science.

PUBLISHING MATTERS

AIP journals highlighted at the ACS 2010 Fall Meeting



The Journal of Chemical Physics (*JCP*) booth at the [American Chemical Society's 2010 Fall Meeting & Exposition](#) (August 22–26 in Boston, MA) presented an opportunity for authors to learn more about some of the journal's latest features. Readers now have access to author profiles and [JCP spotlight collections](#), which offer perspectives on high-interest topics in the field. Visitors to the booth were invited to enter to win an iPad. The [Journal of Renewable and Sustainable Energy](#) also had a presence at the meeting's Green Pavilion.

Several *JCP* authors were invited to participate in a roundtable discussion to give feedback on the many changes the journal has seen over the past year. Over refreshments, *JCP* Editor Marsha Lester led a lively discussion about how researchers access content.



Marketing & Exhibits Coordinator Kimberly Schwalb scans a visitor's badge at the *JCP* booth, entering him into the iPad raffle.

PHYSICS RESOURCES CENTER MATTERS

AIP's GradschoolShopper.com gets a facelift



At the meeting of the Chinese Physical Society in Beijing last week, AIP's GradschoolShopper.com opened its doors to Chinese academic departments. Over the past few months, several groups at AIP had upgraded the aesthetics, content, and functionality of the website to prepare for its unveiling in China. During the meeting, John Haynes, VP, Publishing, briefly introduced the site, which serves both prospective graduate students looking for their ideal fit and graduate program administrators looking for comparative information on other programs—to benchmark their offerings against those of other departments. GradschoolShopper.com contains information on degrees offered, tuition costs, admissions deadlines and requirements, financial aid, degree requirements, faculty, and more, from more than 225 graduate programs in physics, astronomy, and related fields from around the United States.

NBL&A receives major archival accessions from Member Societies



Library staff reviewing AGU records on site.

Identifying and preserving historically valuable AIP and Member Society records is part of the mission of the Niels Bohr Library and Archives. So far this year, NBL&A has acquired 202 linear feet of historical records from the American Astronomical Society, the American Geophysical Union, and the American Physical Society, along with smaller accessions from some of the other Member Societies. The AGU accession—the largest at 134 linear feet—represents the library's first acquisition of AGU records. In contrast, the NBL&A's collections of APS and AAS records date from each society's founding in 1899; the new acquisitions bring the library's holdings of their collections into the 21st century.

Once the library staff has inventoried, cataloged, and prepared detailed finding aids for the collections, they become available for research use. The library's AIP and Member Society records are unique resources that document the professionalization and specialization of American physics and allied sciences, the work of many outstanding scientists, and a plethora of issues and subjects; these resources that are regularly used by society staff and outside researchers.



A researcher reading Member Society records.

For information [contact the library](#). To keep up with the latest in NBL&A news, [connect with the library on facebook](#).

AROUND AIP

September is National Preparedness Month

Take a few minutes this week to talk with your family about emergencies at home—who to call, where to go, what to do, etc. A few things to think about:

- Memorize key phone numbers for when you don't have your contact list or phone with you. Have your family choose someone you all know who can keep and relay important information in case you are separated and can't reach one another in an emergency.
- Always keep your wallet, keys, and cell phone in reach. If there's an emergency



in the middle of the night, you can grab and go.

Visit www.ready.gov for more information.

THIS WEEK AT AIP

Events at the Publishing Center (Melville, NY)

Thursday, September 23

- Brown bag lunch presentation titled "Identity Theft," 12:30 – 1:15 pm (conference rooms B and C). A representative from the Suffolk County Police Department will speak; Q & A to follow.

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

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