



Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO

The international publishing community's role in shaping policy

In this column I occasionally discuss the business of scholarly publishing and public policy developments related to it, because journal publishing is the primary means by which scientists communicate their work. Publishing is an international business. A majority of the authors of AIP journal articles live outside of the US; two-thirds of our subscribing institutions are international. For the last several years, a small conference has been organized in Berlin, called [Academic Publishing in Europe](#) (APE). I have found this conference to be an excellent forum for discussing the issues and policies that affect the publishing business worldwide.

For this year's conference, held January 11–12, I was asked to summarize the publishing policy situation in the US. The timing of this keynote address was quite appropriate, as I was able to (1) comment on various communities' reactions to the Scholarly Publishing Roundtable report, released one year ago this month; (2) report that many of the roundtable's recommendations were incorporated in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, signed by President Obama on January 4; and (3) communicate that many federal science agencies and scientific institutions have held forums on the accessibility and preservation of data generated by federally funded research. (For one example, see *FYI #128: [National Science Board Task Force on Data Policies Discusses Public Access.](#)*)



Fred Dylla delivers a talk entitled "[U.S. Policy on Public Access: post Scholarly Publishing Roundtable](#)" at the 2011 APE conference in Berlin, Germany.

I stressed that the roundtable recommendations were not accepted universally. Many issues remain unresolved concerning public access to scholarly publications and the proper role of the government and the non-government stakeholders in developing and implementing related public policy. Many did agree that the roundtable's inclusivity of all stakeholder groups and its deliberative process were essential ingredients for progress that ought to be continued.

Key tenets of the COMPETES statutes on public access (Section 103 of the [bill](#)) require the president's science advisor to set up a working group that includes representatives from the key stakeholders (including publishers), to develop public access policies. In the interest of making steady progress towards this end, I advocated for scholarly publishers to present a series of relevant and pragmatic proposals to the US government. Those proposals should leverage the government resources (critical in this budgetary climate), offer means of improving access to publications for all underserved communities, and advance universally valued services

such as interoperability among publishing platforms, and the preservation and archiving of digital documents.

Scientific publishers can and should provide input and resources for the development and implementation of policies related to public access and data resulting from government-funded research. With most governments in the world facing significant pressures to curb spending, our government stakeholders should welcome the offer for help.

Fred

PHYSICS RESOURCES CENTER MATTERS

Introducing the SPS Digital Poster Gallery



The Society of Physics Students unveiled its new [Digital Poster Gallery](#) at the 2011 AAPT Winter Meeting. The new tool enables interested parties to review posters in advance of the meeting, and it provides a record of a student's participation in the meeting long after the meeting is over. Abstracts accompany the visual presentation of each poster. The gallery was made possible in part by the [Newport Corporation](#), which makes lasers and optical research supplies. Special thanks go out to AAPT for supporting student sessions and for involvement at the meetings.

MEMBER SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

Teach and inspire



The promise of useful discussions about physics education—and warm temperatures—drew more than 750 physics educators and students from around the country to Jacksonville, FL, for the [2011 AAPT Winter Meeting](#). Several AIP staff attended to connect with this important segment of our community.





Gary White (right) gave a popular spandex demonstration during the SPS reception. At the far left is AAPT's new Executive Officer, Beth Cunningham.



Kendra Redmond (second from left) runs the rolling experiment, part of the SEES outreach event. Photo courtesy of AAPT.

Education staff—Jack Hehn, Gary White, Kendra Redmond, and Lydia Quijada—were busy managing SPS's presence (manifested in oral sessions, a poster session, an exhibit booth, and the SPS student reception) and assisting with the Students Exploring Engineering and Science (SEES) outreach event, which brought in 70 local eighth graders. Five SPS members were recognized during an undergraduate awards session for their

outstanding presentations. Gary White delivered a presentation about [introducing students to statistical mechanics](#). Former SPS intern Travis Barnett of Angelo State University, and Sam Cohen and Adam Moyer of Grove City College served as SPS reporters. Their reports will provide undergraduate perspectives on the meeting and will soon be available on the SPS website.



AAPT's exhibit floor bustling with activity. Photo courtesy of AAPT.



Physics Today's Jeff Bebee (right) promoted *Computing in Science and Engineering* magazine. Of the Member Societies, AAPT has the most subscribers to *CiSE*.

The Statistical Research Center's Susan White [presented data](#) from the SRC high-school data surveys. White provided information about the number of students taking

physics, the types of physics classes they take, academic credentials of high-school physics teachers, and whether one needs to have taken physics in high school to succeed in physics later in life. Rachel Ivie participated on a panel discussing the state of women in physics.

As discussed in [last week's AIP Matters](#), Fred Dylla and Greg Good (History Center) gave talks on Ernest Rutherford. Both presentations can be accessed through [AIP's home page](#). Fred joined Robert Harington (Publishing Partnerships) at the AAPT board meeting to discuss our societies' interactions.



AIP staff were particularly enthusiastic about two special events presented by AAPT— [Susan Frontczak's performance](#) as Marie Curie (right), and the Symposium on Physics Education, which focused on federal education policy.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

Tuesday, January 25

- Lunchtime physics brown-bag talk, 12 p.m. Manager of the APS Minority Bridge Program, Peter Muhoro, will present “Off-Grid Electricity Access and its Impact on Micro-Enterprises: Evidence from Rural Uganda.” (College Park)

Friday, January 28

- Interviews for the 2011-2012 [AIP State Department Science Fellowship](#).

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

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