

Director's Matters

By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director

Science and September 11th

Several months after the 9/11 attacks, the then director of the National Science Foundation, Rita Colwell, delivered a speech entitled "[Science: Before and After September 11.](#)" Colwell made many good points about science and its role in our nation's ability to both protect itself and succeed in the global world economy. Ten years later, her points are just as relevant. Just before last week's decadal anniversary of the attacks, AIP's [FYI science policy news bulletin](#) reprinted several excerpts from Colwell's speech to keep our community mindful of the lessons brought to light by this tragedy.

Science and technology are directly linked to national security. In Colwell's words, "Every discussion about airline safety, contamination by disease, failure of communication links, poisoning of food and drinking water, assessment of damaged infrastructure, and countless other concerns depends on our scientific and technical knowledge." I don't think any citizen or policy maker would challenge this statement. Several government agencies support the development of science and technology to protect the US and its citizens against acts of terrorism.

Colwell stressed the importance of scientific research and noted the interdependence of disciplines required for contemporary research: "Advances in physics, biology, chemistry—the core physical sciences—undergird all of the biomedical sciences on which we depend to understand disease, find cures, develop vaccines, and initiate preventive strategies. ...The alternative to not being at the forefront of science and technology is the alternative of being left behind. There is an ever-growing community of nations with equally capable workers." Ten years after 9/11 we observe the effects of globalization of science and industry with more clarity, and this constantly increasing global competition is the new "business as usual."

science, which is in turn dependent on the scientific literacy of our nation. "A citizenry literate about science and technology serves several goals. It gives the nation a workforce educated and trained to compete in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. It promotes good judgment as voters on both issues and candidates. ...I cannot stress enough the responsibility of the science community to help us meet that goal." A literate citizenry means both superior science education and an informed public who understands the connection between science and their quality of life.

Readers of this column know the importance I place on communicating science. During the last Assembly of Member and Affiliated Society Officers we dedicated the full morning to the topic of communicating science effectively. Our societies' programs approach this challenge from different angles: through advocacy, government relations, science news for the media, scholarly publishing, education, and a variety of outreach programs.

It is apparent that the entire scientific community must engage in the effort and make the message, so skillfully orated by Colwell, our own.

PUBLISHING MATTERS

David Baker joins the AIP Publisher's Office



AIP is pleased to welcome David Baker to the Publisher's Office as journal manager. Baker will work closely with our journal editors and the author/reviewer community to enhance editorial development. As a PhD physicist who has read, reviewed, and published in scholarly journals, Baker understands what users want and value from a publisher, and can use this knowledge to advance our content and processes to meet their needs.

Baker received his bachelor's degree in physics from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD, and his PhD from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. Since then, he has worked as a postdoctoral fellow at North Carolina State University and at Colorado School of Mines in Golden, CO. His research involved silicon processing and photolithography, silicon-based photovoltaic materials, novel silicon morphologies for hydrogen storage, and phase-change memory materials.

PHYSICS RESOURCES CENTER MATTERS

Keep up to date on the news from AIP

AIP

PHYSICS NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

AIP's recently launched summary of newsworthy journal research, [Physics News Highlights](#), is providing a successful platform to publicize the compelling science in AIP journals. Our most-recent issue included short features on:

- new, efficient yet untidy solar cell designs;
- using the "wonder material" graphene to tune the normally unruly terahertz band of the electromagnetic spectrum;
- a model of brain activity that may help doctors better understand Parkinson's disease; and
- an innovative way to use parabolic mirrors—not unlike a common backyard telescope—to directly power lasers.

These summaries, though primarily written for reporters, are tailored to be of interest to scientists and non-scientists alike. The current biweekly schedule seems to be hitting the "sweet spot"—keeping us front-and-center in the minds of journalists without overloading inboxes. Recently, one of our summaries was picked up by [ABC News science reporter Lee Dye](#) while others are routinely featured on various science news websites. You can read these summaries every other Monday on the [AIP News webpage](#), or simply follow us on Twitter [@AIPPhysicsNews](#) for the latest Physics News Highlights and our ongoing series of news releases.

COMING UP

Wednesday, September 21

- AIP Liaison Committee on Underrepresented Minorities meeting (Austin, TX)

Thursday – Sunday, September 22 – 25

- SPS Council and Executive Committee meetings (College Park, MD)



Monday, September 26

- AIP Executive Committee meeting (College Park, MD)

Wednesday, September 28

- ACP personnel lunchtime social, 12–1 pm. Take some time to connect with others in the building; join us for bingo. Bring your lunch, and we'll dress up the meal with light refreshments. (College Park, MD)

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

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