

FOREWORD

SPS—The professional society for physics students and their mentors

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) has approximately 5,000 members in over 700 colleges and universities. An active SPS chapter provides the professional development opportunities that course work cannot teach, including the development of communication and professional networking skills, undergraduate research, and science literacy outreach to the local community. The SPS chapter can also be a physics department's most effective recruitment and retention tool. An active chapter helps transform students from being only takers of courses, into contributing members of a professional community. Visit the SPS web site: www.spsnational.org

ΣΠΣ—The physics honor society

Sigma Pi Sigma is the physics honor society, and is part of the SPS. Election to Sigma Pi Sigma is earned by outstanding academic achievement in physics and lasts for a lifetime. ΣΠΣ now has about 75,000 historical members and over 450 chapters. These alumni represent a wide diversity of callings, but all members share in common a record of accomplishment in physics. Sigma Pi Sigma exists to honor and encourage physics scholarship, to be of service to the various communities it may influence, and to be a fellowship of persons who have shared in the traditions and culture of physics. Visit the ΣΠΣ web site: www.sigmapisigma.org

Celebrate “A UNIVERSE OF WONDER” with SPS!

SPS is pleased to partner with and offer its unqualified support for the International Year of Astronomy in 2009 (IYA 2009). In keeping with the IYA theme – “The Universe, Yours to Discover” – SPS has chosen “A Universe of Wonder” for its theme in 2009. We believe this theme complements that of the IYA and offers SPS an opportunity to help advance not only astronomy and cosmology but also such diverse areas of physics such as quantum gravity, particle physics and string theory. These areas – and others – are playing a vital role in contributing to our understanding of the universe.

While physics and astronomy are related yet distinct, the fields share many of the same goals – none greater than educating the public about science and science policy issues. An informed electorate is a vital part of any democratic society and it is the duty of all scientists to help advance the dialog between citizens and their government whenever possible. The IYA 2009 offers us all the opportunity to lend our voices to the discussions of issues which impact us all and SPS can help by lending its voice to the chorus of others.

The events and activities that are planned for the IYA are meant to showcase astronomy and related issues for the general public. The numerous national and local events planned for the IYA 2009 share many of the same attributes as SPS activities. By involving SPS chapters around the country during IYA 2009 activities, we draw on the strengths of various members of the SPS that can help make the IYA 2009 successful in reaching a larger audience.

All too often we pass up the opportunity to participate in events that enrich us in many ways. Bound by the constraints of our daily lives, we miss participating in events that can truly change our world. Let us not pass up the challenge to be involved in the IYA 2009 activities that will enrich us all. (*Adapted from text from the 2008 SPS Council minutes.*)

“It’s on the Web”

As a physics teacher in my previous life, one of the most useful phrases that I learned to use is “*It’s on the web.*” I hope you will agree that as a chapter advisor, it will be great to use that phrase when asked by your SPS members “how do I join the national organization,” or “where is the scholarship application, the travel award notices, the research award instructions, the Sigma Pi Sigma ceremonial information, the directory of zones, chapters and advisors,” or even “what can I do with a career in physics?” The SPS website has all this and a lot more. Check it out!

www.spsnational.org

So, much of what was contained in “The Info Book” in the past is now conveniently located on the web, *including a real-time database that allows you to verify and/or update your chapter information contained in this book!* If you need a print version of the full directory, or of any of your favorite items that are no longer within these pages, just contact us and we will accommodate you. Let us know what you think, and please let us know how to make the information more convenient to use.

As Director, one of my priorities will be to enhance community within the individual organizations and between SPS and Sigma Pi Sigma. I invite all members, chapter advisors and Council Members to contact me at any time. Please do not hesitate to drop me a line before your next zone meeting, to let me know about your research or outreach event.

Gary White
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