

FUTURE FACES OF PHYSICS



In keeping with its commitment to help physics students transform themselves into contributing members of the professional community, the SPS National Council recently adopted “Future Faces of Physics” as the theme for the 2007-2008 academic year. With this theme, the council aims to raise visibility and focus on issues of student diversity in physics.

The representation of women in physics is dramatically lower than in other scientific disciplines, and the representation of minorities remains very low when compared to the general population distribution. Students from the nation’s poorest families have a much lower rate of college attendance and graduation, and first generation college attendees rarely earn degrees in any field of science.

Just as diversity is key to ensuring a species survival through times of change, diversity is key to maintaining a cutting-edge science program in a changing world. According to a recent National Academies Report, *Beyond Bias and Barriers*,

To maintain its scientific and engineering leadership amid increasing economic and educational globalization, the United States must aggressively pursue the innovative capacity of all of its people—women and men...It is essential that our academic institutions promote the educational and professional success of all people without regard for sex, race, or ethnicity.

What will physics look like ten years from now? Twenty years from now? One thing is certain – the more diverse the physicists and their perspectives, the more creative, exciting, and successful the field.

Join us in encouraging diversity in the future faces of physics!

- Host a *Future Faces of Physics* session at your zone or chapter meeting (email Kendra Rand at krand@aip.org for more information).
- Hold a joint event with a minority group on campus.
- Present a demo show or science lesson to students from underrepresented groups.
- Check out *Touch the Universe* by Noreen Grice from your library and find out what it’s like to see the universe with your fingers.
- Organize a panel discussion on diversity issues in science.
- Evaluate how well your SPS group reflects the larger student population distribution at your school.
- Decorate the physics lounge to appeal to all types of students.
- Invite scientists from underrepresented groups to give talks at SPS meetings.