

APS Strategic Plan for Early Career Physicists

AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND NEXT STEPS

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APS Early Career Task Force (ECTF)

Formed in Fall 2012

Report Presented to APS Council April 2013

As part of the APS Strategic Plan, an Early Career Task Force was formed to examine how APS could serve physicists more effectively in the early stages of their careers.

Charge:

“identifying opportunities for APS to serve physicists more effectively in the early stages of their careers. Focusing on physicists in **graduate school, postdoctoral appointments and first professional jobs**, the Task Force should examine the needs of this cohort for **career information, job and internship postings, networking opportunities**, and suggest additional ways to foster this member segment’s **involvement with the APS**. The objective is to help early-career physicists take their place in the physics enterprise, to facilitate stronger connections of this group to the APS physics community, and to encourage greater engagement of these members as volunteers.”

Members:

- Cynthia Aku-Leh (ISCIENCES)
- Meghan Anzenc (CNA Insurance)
- Tom Baer (Stanford Photonics)
- Megan Comins (Cornell University)
- Brad Conrad (App. State University)
- Crystal Bailey (APS)
- Heather Galloway (Texas State University)
- Trish Letteiri (APS)
- Greg Meisner (GM)
- Jesus Pando (DePaul University)

Key Recommendations of ECTF

1) Formation of Local Chapters – “Local Links”

2) Redefine “Physicist” as a (Non-Academic) Career

- Promote and market new definition of physicists as anyone who works in a physics-related field (examples include ACS’ “Chemistry for Life”).
- Actively encourage students to pursue non-academic professional pathways.
- Increase and Retain Industrial Members.

3) Re-examine Roles at National and Local Meetings

- Increase Professional Development and Networking Opportunities.
- Engage Industry in Meaningful Ways at Meetings.
- Leverage Effort by Acting Locally (e.g. at APS Section Meetings).

Engagement with Early Career Physicists

- Career Related Events at Annual Meetings
 - Industrially-focused career panels and networking receptions (March 2013, March 2014)
 - Workshops on applying to and interviewing for non-academic jobs (“Putting Your Science to Work” with Peter Fiske, March 2011-2014)
 - Presentations that address career options for physics degree holders, targeted at Undergraduate students (“Building Your Undergraduate Career” workshop, March 2014, “Physics Careers, To the Bachelors Degree and Beyond”, March 2012, 2013)
- Career Related Events at Section and Unit Meetings
 - Presentations on self-assessment, networking building, and successful resume writing at the APS DAMOP 2013 Meeting
 - Special “pilot” job fair at the APS Southeast Section, centered on session tailored to representatives from local industries (SESAPS 2013 Meeting)
 - Career Panel at Committee on Concerns of Junior Scientists’ (CCJS) meeting at APS Division of Plasma Physics Meeting (APS DPP Meeting, 2012, 2013)
 - Resume “help desk” at 2013 APS DPP Meeting, run in conjunction with the Job Fair (APS DPP Meeting 2013)

- Distinguished Lectureship on the Applications of Physics (DLAP)
 - Award recognizes physicists in industrial and other non-academic careers for contribution to physics of a technical, industrial, or entrepreneurial nature.
 - Requires at least three lectures over a one year term, delivered at national conferences, APS Section Meetings, Dept. Colloquia, and other appropriate venues.
 - First winner has been appointed for the academic year 2013-2014 (Paul Grant, IBM). Next round of nominations opens in July 2014.

- APS Careers Website
 - Library of physicist profiles, representing a diversity of career and degree paths
 - Statistical information about physics employment and salaries, at all degree levels
 - APS Careers Webinars, which cover a very broad range of careers and professional development related topics, archived for on-demand viewing on the website
 - Access to the Industrial Speaker's list
 - Professional development guide, including video tutorials on resume writing, networking building

- **APS Job Board and Job Expos**
 - Job database shared with Physics Today, IEEE Computing, AVS, AAPT, and others.
 - Includes job posting from all partners' boards, representing a variety of sectors (about 25% are private sector, potentially permanent jobs).
 - On-site recruiting and interviewing tools for use at APS annual and division meetings (APS March Meeting, 2011-2014, APS DPP Meeting, 2011-2014).

- **Physics InSight Slideshow**
 - Free, downloadable slideshow designed for displays in hallways and common areas of physics departments and labs.
 - Highlights a diversity of physics career paths, as well as relevant employment and salary data.
 - Also includes information on special opportunities for students (e.g. internships, scholarships, and APS Meeting events), as well as interesting physics topics.

- Formation of Local Chapters – “Local Links”
 - Based off of Key Recommendation of the Early Career Task Force (ECTF), which was charged with examining how APS could serve physicists more effectively in the early stages of their careers.
 - Intended to build strong relationships locally (businesses, student, facilities, universities).
 - Centered on a geographic region (NOT a university campus!)
 - Student Driven, i.e. forward momentum maintained by shareholders.
 - Groups will meet informally, on a regular basis.

- ✓ APS is currently working with three pilot regions: Denver, Tampa Bay, and SF Bay Area to build the first “Local Links.”

- Inaugural Denver Local Link Reception was Wednesday, March 5.
- Inaugural Tampa Bay Local Link Reception will be Thursday, April 10.

What Has Worked Well

- Career Related Events at Annual and Division Meetings (esp. Industrial Sessions)
 - Industrial session at March 2014, March 2013 (over 200 attendees)
 - Peter Fiske’s Workshop on Career Planning, Networking, Resume Writing, etc.
 - Resume Help Desk at DPP Meetings
 - Undergraduate Career Workshops and Events
- APS Local Links (so far!)
 - Extremely enthusiastic response from organizers (includes students, national lab, industrial, and academic representatives).
 - Connections have been easier to establish than anticipated.
 - APS is developing a set of best practices to assist in development of new groups, and learning how we can use APS’ strengths to make the groups as effective as possible.

What Has Not Worked Well

- Events for Industrial Audiences at Section Meetings
 - Southeast Section Meeting session focused on partnerships between local facilities and industries
 - Low industrial participation.
 - Training the job seekers/poster presenters was difficult.
 - Not likely to repeat without a better draw for industry/better working relationship with local organizing group.
- “Old” Format for Job Expo at APS March Meetings
 - Separate Job Fair booths in Exhibit Hall
 - Attracted Few Employers
 - Large Overhead (booths, decoration, internet, printers, computers, etc.)
- Designing the APS Careers Website “By Committee”
 - Many good resources available; however content needs to be reorganized and new content added.
 - Need to take full advantage of new technologies, e.g. video tutorials.

Under Further Development

- “New” Format for Job Expo at APS March Meetings
 - Integrate Exhibit Hall and Job Expo event.
 - Offer free packages to all registered Exhibitors at the Meeting.
 - Have better communication with both the sales and HR teams of participating companies, to ensure that they have an optimal experience.
- APS Local Links
 - Continue working with existing chapters, and reaching out to new communities.
 - Continue collecting data and developing best practices.
- New Professional Development Guide for APS Careers Website
 - Develop content that addresses a wide variety of career options, and gives specific advice for physicists at a variety of stages.
 - Create resources that are engaging and interactive.

Thanks!

Questions, Comments, Queries?

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