

Greetings fellow ISAAPT Members!

There are several important items to share with you in the February president's message:

### ☆ **Spring Section Meeting Fast Approaching**

The ISAAPT's spring Section meeting at Blackburn College in Carlinville will be held Friday/Saturday March 26/27. Host **Don Reid** is working hard to make this meeting successful. The meeting features a theme of **Green Physics**, and includes the annual Student Research Symposium. Visit the **Green Physics** hyperlink at <http://isaapt.org/s10/isaapt.html> to learn program details.

### ☆ **Two Workshops for New/Crossover Physics Teachers**

A **free** workshop designed for *new and crossover* high school physics teachers will be held at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. In order to qualify for this workshop, you should have less than 5 years of physics teaching experience and/or be teaching outside your content major and teaching physics at least every other year. This program, sponsored by the ISAAPT, will provide participants with new insights for teaching high school physics using reformed science teaching methods. A "levels of inquiry" framework for teaching high school physics will be introduced and modeled.

Participants will receive the AAPT book *Teaching Physics for the First Time* by Mader and Winn (a \$35 value), a number of printed resources, access to online resources including comPADRE.org, refreshments, and a complimentary luncheon courtesy of Lincoln Land Community College. Participants will also receive a stipend on the order of \$30, thanks to LLCC's Tech Prep program. The workshop is being made possible by a generous grant of support from the American Association of Physics Teachers. A small amount of "make and take" will be included.

Onsite check in begins at 9:30 a.m., with the formal program running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Five hours of continuing professional development units (CPDUs) will be associated with this workshop and provided by the Illinois Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers (ISAAPT). Advance registration is required in order to attend this workshop. Participation will be limited to the first 20 qualifying teachers. Additional information, including the registration form and contact information for the workshop's coordinators, can be found at <http://www.phy.ilstu.edu/isaapt-workshop.shtml>. After you register online, please send an email to [wenning@phy.ilstu.edu](mailto:wenning@phy.ilstu.edu) asking for confirmation. Several physics teachers have recently noted that Internet firewalls at their schools have kept them from registering successfully.

The Chicago Section of the AAPT is holding their new and crossover high school physics teachers workshop on March 6<sup>th</sup> at Northeastern Illinois University. The workshop is intended for teachers who have been teaching physics for 5 years or less and/or those who are teaching physics outside their content major. The workshop will focus on teaching physics via inquiry, but will be somewhat different from that offered by the ISAAPT. Participants will receive a copy of the book *Teaching Physics for the First Time* and an introduction to the <http://www.comPADRE.org> web site.

This workshop is being sponsored by the Chicago Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers, and supported by both the American Association of Physics Teachers and Northeastern Illinois University. PTRA instructor Tom Senior will be leading the workshop. Additional workshop information, as well as the online registration form, are available at <http://webs.csu.edu/~msabella/aaptworkshop/>. Registration will close as soon as 20 qualified applicants are identified. Click on the link below to register for the workshop. *Registration closes on February 23rd, so register early.*

### ☆ Working with ISTA on Matters of Mutual Importance

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, I had a meeting with **Gwen Pollock**, current president of the Illinois Science Teacher Association (ISTA). Also in attendance was **Ken Wester** from ISU. During that meeting we discussed how the leadership of these organizations might work together for the mutual benefit of our members. Among the following possibilities discussed were the following:

- Participating in efforts to review new science teaching certification standards for Illinois.
- Funding an expanded LPA initiative to include our colleagues in chemistry and earth & space science.
- Working with the ISAAPT's Local Physics Alliances (LPAs) and the ISTA to eventually include small zone-led workshops in inquiry for middle school science teachers and, ultimately, for elementary school teachers. This also might expand into more substantial workshops for middle and elementary school science teachers at the annual ISTA convention.

Ken and I are now working on funding for a full-day workshop for zone leaders to take place next summer, probably early August. If funding can be secured, it is likely that representative from the funding organization will take part. The long-term goal will be to establish networks among university, college, and K-12 science teachers for the benefit of all who they teach.

### ☆ ISAAPT Listserv for High School Physics Teachers Established

Thanks to the hard work of our LPA zone leaders and other members of the ISAAPT, an email database with listserv has been established for in-service high school physics teachers within the Section's region. This listserv will be used by the Section to get word out about ISAAPT meetings and other professional development activities. Thanks to the efforts of **Doug Brandt, Brian Davies, Andy Morrison, Dave Sykes, Tom Snider, Chris LaRoche**, and my office workers here at ISU, we now have email access to 250+ high school physics teachers in the region outside of the Chicago Section's boundary.

### ☆ Local Physics Alliance Zones Update

Progress is steadily being made to develop 12 local physics alliances (LPAs) across the state of Illinois. It is expected that the first zone meetings will begin next autumn. These initial meetings will follow on the heels of a zone leaders' workshop to be held in a central location later this summer. Efforts are continuing to find additional zone leaders in Zone III (Joliet) and Zone XII (Carbondale). Most recently three additional individuals offered to serve as leaders/co-leaders in their respective zones.

The Spring meeting of the ISAAPT will feature a 1-hour informational meeting for new/prospective zone leaders on Saturday afternoon following the close of the Section's spring meeting at Blackburn College in Carlinville. **Ken Wester** at Illinois State University gained lots of experience in running local physics alliances in Mississippi before he came here, and he'll be leading this meeting along with me.

I am asking for a one-year commitment by zone leaders to the LPAs, just enough time to get them started. These initial zone leaders will – if possible – attend the one-day summer workshop here at ISU in early August and then arrange, host, and conduct two meetings per semester for a total of four over the course of the school year. They will also manage the recruitment of members for their local alliance.

If you are at all interested in leading/co-leading your zone, please contact me off list at [wenning@phy.ilstu.edu](mailto:wenning@phy.ilstu.edu).

## ☆ Physics Teacher Doing it for the Kids

Shane Hanson, a physics teacher at Olympia High School near Stanford, IL, is taking the plunge for charity. Shane is taking part in the 2010 Polar Plunge Bloomington to raise money for Special Olympics Illinois. Won't you support this very worthy effort? If you are willing, please make a donation by visiting Shane's Firstgiving page at: <http://www.firstgiving.com/shanehanson>. You can donate online with a credit card. All donations are secure and sent directly to Special Olympics Illinois by Firstgiving, who will email you a printable record of your donation.

Special Olympics is a terrific program for children with diverse disabilities. Each summer I see their program here on the ISU campus. It's one of the most amazing campus events that I encounter each year. I have met many participants who are beaming with pride after the program. Won't you help Shane "do it" for the kids? He has promised not to have a heart attack or otherwise drown.

## ☆ Grant Proposals Move Forward

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Ken Wester** and I submitted a grant proposal to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for \$325,000 to begin a three-year-long Modeling institute in Chicago. Illinois State University (ISU) proposes to collaborate with Chicago Public Schools District 299 (CPS) to provide an intensive and sustained professional development program for new/crossover high school science teachers and their principals. *Chicago ITQ Science Project II* will promote the Modeling Method of Instruction.

In addition to a 4-week summer workshop, *Project II* will require all participants to take two online graduate-level courses during each year of participation. Summer workshops will each carry 6 semester hours of tuition-free graduate credit; follow-up courses during autumn and spring will each carry 3 hours of tuition-free graduate credit. Over the course of three years up to 72 teachers will complete up to 36 semester hours of science-related coursework – enough to "highly qualify" any science teacher. A non-credit course for participants' principals will be provided that deals with inquiry-oriented instruction as well as performance assessment and mentoring of teachers using Modeling.

Participation in the project is restricted to teachers working in high need urban, suburban, or rural schools. While the focus is on Chicago's urban teachers, non-CPS teachers may participate so long as their school meets the grant's high needs requirements. Unfortunately, this non-residential grant will not provide for mileage or housing of the participants. Still, teacher stipends are large enough to offset these expenses. If you are interesting in finding out more about *Chicago ITQ Science Project II*, contact Carl Wenning at [wenning@phy.ilstu.edu](mailto:wenning@phy.ilstu.edu) within the next few days.

A second grant for a 'special topics' conference is also moving forward. Work by the *CeMaST Commission on National Institutes for Physics Teacher Educators* (NIPTE) at ISU during January has prepared the groundwork. Approximately \$50,000 in NSF funding is being sought to hold a preparatory meeting at the AAPT offices in College Park, MD, in the not too distant future. NIPTE will be a 5-year effort to better prepare physics teacher educators across the nation with five national workshops.

NIPTE and the associated planning meeting deal with the challenge of preparing high school physics teachers at post-secondary institutions. Given the preliminary work of the *CeMaST Commission* and the *National Task Force*, the framework for addressing these problems has been clearly identified. The approaches to developing and presenting NIPTE are innovative, well developed, and realistic. The potential for increased physics teacher candidate learning is significant. The project will be informed by both research and the real-world experiences of successful physics teacher educators. The wider project clearly will take into consideration the backgrounds, preparation, and experiences of participating teachers. The project will be led by some of the most experienced and successful physics teacher educators in the nation. The AAPT, and numerous teacher education faculty in universities and in-service physics teachers in high schools, support this project.

This project will contribute significantly to the preparation of secondary-level physics teachers. It will help them obtain a substantially more comprehensive and in-depth education relevant to their chosen careers as high school teachers. Physics teaching candidates from NIPTE-related institutions will be much more capable of teaching in a wide variety of ways that align with the current science education reform movement. This will positively impact the quality and quality of student learning. Participating NIPTE institutions will institutionalize practices following recommendations of NIPTE that help to ensure these changes. NIPTE will not impose a “one size fits all” model of physics teacher preparation, but will allow participating institutions to develop their programs to develop in light of their unique institutional situations.

If you are a physics teacher educator and would like to find out more about this project, contact Carl Wenning at [wenning@phy.ilstu.edu](mailto:wenning@phy.ilstu.edu) within the next few days.

### ☆ Chicago Section News

The Chicago Section of the AAPT is bringing in Eric Mazur and Nadya Mason for their Section meeting to be held on April 24<sup>th</sup> at Chicago State University. In addition, Ken Tobin is speaking at one of their Noyce Scholar Seminars on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Details about these talks can be found at the following two websites: <http://webs.csu.edu/~noycesch/> and <http://webs.csu.edu/~msabella/csaapt/>. A descriptive flier with descriptions of all three presentations is attached.

### ☆ President's Messages Archived

The ISAAPT is now posting the monthly President's Messages on the ISAAPT website. Check out current and past issues at <http://isaapt.org/>.

I hope that you are now making plans to attend the Spring Section meeting. Don Reid has been working very hard to make this a meeting of great merit. With such a “hot” topic (pun intended), we are all likely to benefit from our attendance at the program. Check it out at <http://isaapt.org/s10/isaapt.html> today.

If you have anything to contribute to next month's president's message, don't hesitate to contact me. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at Blackburn College in Carlinville.

Carl

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