Greetings fellow ISAAPT Members!

There are several important items to share with you in this month’s 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. I hope to see a great turnout for this event. The theme promises to make for some exciting presentations and discussions. Have you registered yet? Plan on contributing a 15-minute talk or a Take-5 presentation should you wish to share your ideas.

✩ Local Physics Alliance Zone Leaders Meeting

At the conclusion of the spring Section meeting at Carlinville, an informational meeting will be held for new and prospective Local Physics Alliance (LPA) zone leaders. This will be a one-hour discussion about LPAs. Short- and long-term goals and objectives of ISAAPT’s LPAs will be discussed. Resources for conducting initial LPA meetings, including a possible zone leaders' workshop to be held next summer, will be addressed. LPA leaders are being asked to commit one year of service to their local zones, now through the end of next school year. See the spring edition of the Illinois Physics Teacher to be mailed shortly for details. Ken Wester and Carl Wenning from ISU will lead this meeting.

✩ Workshop for New/Crossover Physics Teachers Successful

Ken Wester and Carl Wenning presented a workshop for 10 new and crossover high school physics teachers at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, on Saturday, February 27th. The workshop provided participants with new insights for teaching high school physics using reformed science teaching methods. A “levels of inquiry” framework for teaching high school physics was introduced and modeled. Oscillatory motion, and work and energy were themes for several lab activities. Participants also learned about whiteboarding, and resistance to inquiry instruction.

Participants received 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. A small amount of “make and take” was included. Participants received a $50 stipend thanks to LLCC’s Tech Prep program. The workshop, and a follow-on workshop in NEIU in Chicago on March 6th, was made possible by a $2,000 grant of support from the American Association of Physics Teachers. ISAAPT and CS AAPT shared equally in the grant.

Hosts for the event were Dave Sykes and Tom Snyder. Dave and Tom arranged for the refreshments, the midday meal, and the participant stipends. Thanks to these fine chaps for helping to present a memorable and useful event for new/crossover high school physics teachers.
National Task Force Releases Executive Summary on Physics Teacher Education

The National Task Force on Teacher Education in Physics released its report synopsis at the winter meeting of the AAPT in Washington, DC. According to the task force summary, except for a handful of isolated pockets of excellence, the national system of preparing physics teachers is largely inefficient, mostly incoherent, and massively unprepared to deal with the current and future needs of the nation's students. Physics departments, schools of education, university administrators, school systems, state agencies, the federal government, as well as business and foundations, have indispensable collaborative roles to play so that every high school student has the opportunity to learn physics with a qualified teacher.

This document provides a synopsis of the findings and recommendations of the National Task Force on Teacher Education in Physics. Check it out at the following URL:


National Institutes for Physics Teacher Educators (NIPTE) Advancing

Carl Wenning attended the AAPT meeting in Washington, DC, from February 13-17. During that time he was able to meet with two program officers from the National Science Foundation to speak about a planning grant for NIPTE. He was also able to meet again with members of the CeMaST Commission on NIPTE. When Carl arrived at the national meeting, he had a 5-page draft proposal for a $50,000 “special topics” meeting to pave the way for implementing NIPTE. At the end of the meeting, he walked away with 15-page proposal that he hopes will lead to funding of a 3-day meeting at the American Center for Physics in College Park, MD, in the not too distant future.

NIPTE, as you might recall, is a 5-year program in which summer institutes will be held for novice and inexperienced physics teacher educators, as well as more experienced educators who want to brush up on their knowledge of how best to prepare the next generation of high school physics teachers. If you are at all interested in the planning project or one of the five summer institutes should they be funded, please write Carl off list at wenning@phy.ilstu.edu

Physics Teacher Earns $450 Kids

ISAAP member Shane Hanson, a physics teacher at Olympia High School near Stanford, IL, took the plunge for Special Olympics as part of the 2010 Polar Plunge Bloomington. Shane Hanson earned $450 to support the Special Olympics event that takes place each summer on the campus of Illinois State University. Special Olympics is a terrific program for children with disabilities.

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 24th at Chicago State University. In addition, Ken Tobin is speaking at one of their Noyce Scholar Seminars on April 6th.
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 was attached to the February president’s message.

☆ 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/.

Again, I hope that you are now making plans to attend the Spring Section meeting. Don Reid has been working very hard to make this Green Physics meeting memorable. 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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