



## Biophysical Society 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting

Boston, Massachusetts  
February 28-March 4, 2009

Online registration is available at [www.biophysics.org](http://www.biophysics.org)

Onsite registration opens at 3:00 PM, Friday, February 27  
in the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center,  
415 Summer Street.

For all program information, including Friday satellite meetings, visit  
[www.biophysics.org](http://www.biophysics.org)

### Call for 2010 Awards Nominations

Nominations for the Society awards that will be presented at the 2010 Annual Meeting are due on April 1, 2009. For complete information, see page 10.

### New BJ Website Launched

*Biophysical Journal* began 2009 by launching a new cover design and a new website. Covers now display figures more prominently, and the website includes many new features. The new “Research Highlights” features Board-selected papers from each issue. To view the new website, visit <http://www.cell.com/biophysj/>



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### Newsletter News

Have you noticed changes in the Newsletter? Beginning with the January 2009 issue, the newsletter will be published monthly. Members are encouraged to submit ideas and comments to [newsletter@biophysics.org](mailto:newsletter@biophysics.org)

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# Treasurer's Report

## FYE 2008

In accordance with Society bylaws, the Society's finances undergo an audit at the end of each fiscal year, which runs from July 1-June 30. The fiscal year ending 2008 (FYE08) audit was conducted in August 2008 and presented to the Executive Board at its November 2008 meeting.

The full audit is available online at <http://www.biophysics.org/Portals/1/PDFs/Committees/FINAL%202008%20BPS%20AFS.pdf>

The audit showed that the Society ended the fiscal year with net operating revenues of \$572,888. This total includes \$229,930 in revenue from interest and dividends, but it also reflects growth in membership and meeting attendance, as well as efficient control of overall costs. BPS assets grew from \$4,741,302 in FYE 2007 to \$4,981,628 at the end of FYE 2008.

## Society Reserves

The Society has been following the fiscal policy of moving the majority (at least 50%) of each year's net operating revenues into reserves until those reserves achieve a 100% annual operating level. As has been the case in each of the last nine years, net funds from operations were again moved to reserves. While we had hoped to achieve the 100% level within one more year, it may take longer, given the recent stock market's performance. As the audit showed, excluding growth provided by operating revenue, the value of our reserves had decreased by 4% in FYE 2008, and the stock market since then has moved even lower.

## On the Horizon

During difficult economic times, members turn to their professional societies for greater support services. The Biophysical Society has recently updated its website ([www.biophysics.org](http://www.biophysics.org)) to help members learn about the Society's programs and more easily take advantage of the opportunities it offers. We have been working with Cell Press to make *Biophysical Journal* read by more people throughout the world and to offer members free online color and lower publication charges. The Society was able to provide financial aide to biophysicists affected by Hurricane Ike. More travel and poster awards were given to students and minorities than in any previous year. BPS supported several member-organized meetings outside the US. The public policy efforts helped expand the funding opportunities for those conducting research in biophysics. The upcoming Boston meeting has seen a record number of abstracts submitted, and will continue to be the greatest networking opportunity for anyone doing research in the field. And in response to a member survey, the Society is developing new programs to address needs expressed by the Society membership.

The Finance Committee and Executive Board will continue to closely monitor the Society's fiscal health to ensure that the programs and services so many members depend on will continue to grow.

# BPS Participates in HHMI Education Summit

*Kathleen Hall, Phil Nelson, and Ro Kampman* represented the Biophysical Society at a recent Howard Hughes Medical Institute summit on undergraduate education entitled *Vision and Change in Biology Undergraduate Education: Role of Disciplinary Societies*. Sixteen scientific societies were invited to participate in the two-day summit, which was supported by HHMI, AAAS, and NSF.

*Bruce Alberts*, current Editor-in-Chief of *Science*, gave the opening Plenary lecture in which he described the problems with how biology is taught at the undergraduate level and encouraged scientific societies to work together to foster systemic changes. At the end of two days, each participating society presented specific recommendations they would take back to their society and agreed to report back in

2009, when a follow-up meeting will be held.

The summit clearly demonstrated that all societies are creating resources and programs to address problems at the undergraduate level, but it also showed that there is little coordination among the societies and little evaluation of what is effective. As a first step, participants agreed to begin working together in three ways:

- Establish a working group to develop toolkits needed to support change in biology undergraduate education;
- All societies will work together to re-evaluate Ben (BioSciEdNet) and determine what is needed to create a truly useable educational portal that connects all undergraduate material; and
- Establish a forum where the societies can share and compare information on programs and resources they currently have and ones they develop in the future.

At the upcoming Annual Meeting, the Biophysical Society Board, Council, and Education Committee will discuss the detailed report and recommendations submitted by the BPS

## Members in the News



*David S. Eisenberg* of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Society member since 1979 was awarded the 2008 Harvey Prize in Human Health from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.



*Joachim Frank* (left) of Columbia University and Society member since 1992 and *Thomas A. Steitz* (right) of Yale University and Society member since 2003 were awarded the 2008 George E. Palade Gold Medal from Wayne State University.



*Art Horwich* of Yale University School of Medicine and Society member since 2001 received Columbia University's 2008 Louisa Gross Horwitz Award.



## Biophysicist in Profile

### Kalina Hristova

Kalina Hristova, 2007 recipient of the Biophysical Society's Margaret Oakley Dayhoff award, knew from a very early age that her future was in science. Not only were her parents scientists, but she also felt much more comfortable with science than with literature, art or other academic disciplines – and she excelled in it. “The thing is,” she says, “I’ve never changed my mind. I always encountered the right people. I’ve never had a bad advisor or bad colleague to turn me away from what I wanted to do, so I guess I’m very lucky.”

Now Associate professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the Whiting School of Engineering of Johns Hopkins University, Hristova says that her entry into the narrow field of membrane biophysics was “sort of by chance.” While working on her undergraduate and Masters Degree work in physics at The University of Sofia in her native Bulgaria, Hristova decided to focus on biophysics. Studying solid-state physics, she was assigned work with membranes – and has worked with membranes since.

Impressed with the work of Duke University's *David Needham*, Hristova came to the US to pursue her PhD in Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science at Duke. She then went to the University of California, Irvine, for postdoctoral work. Postdoc advisor, *Stephen White*, had a marked impact on her and the work she has done since.

“He’s really an amazing scientist,” Hristova notes about White, an award-winning researcher and teacher who still maintains his lab at UC Irvine. “Science drives him.

He loves doing it and pursues his interest with fervor.” She was intrigued by the “very interesting science” he was doing, approaching a very biological problem with physical chemical tools. He would try to disassemble a biological system and do “very elegant physical chemical measurements on it in a very quantitative, meticulous, clean way, so that the data will always be very beautiful.”

Hristova’s own scientific fervor comes alive when she talks about the difference that such care and precision can make. “Predictions!” she asserts. “You really need some very high quality physical chemistry work if you are to go beyond understanding in a qualitative way to making predictions.”

This is particularly true in her lab at Johns Hopkins University, where she and her team are studying mutations that alter membrane proteins and cause disease. The mutations do not change everything, but make incremental changes – causing modest variations in the interactions between proteins. Measurements that are not sufficiently careful and precise will not catch the difference, Hristova says. “But if you are doing careful physical chemistry measurements, then you can see the difference – and obviously that difference is enough to cause disease.” If a change in protein interactions can be detected, and if predictions can be made as to how the cellular outcome will be



(1-r) Kalina Hristova, Mikhail Mezlyakov (a research scientist), and Xue Han (graduate student, winner of a 2006 SRAA Award from the Biophysical Society)

different, then how a mutation causes disease can be understood.

As Hristova and her team move into more and more complex systems, they enter uncharted territory with unexpected challenges. “But I have really fearless students, so they will do it,” she remarks. It is very hard and challenging work; she notes that it is not clear if a simple physical chemical description will actually capture the behavior in cells, “but we are trying to find out.” She quickly acknowledges her students’ dedication and successes. In the last three years, two of her students received student research achievement awards in membrane structure and assembly from the Biophysical Society.

One of the reasons Hristova likes teaching at Hopkins is its tradition of undergraduate involvement in research, particularly in the school of engineering. “They start as freshmen and mature here,” she notes. They co-author papers all along the way, then move on to graduate school or medical school. Hristova finds this rewarding and has no desire to move into an administrative position. “I just want to be close to the lab and close to teaching.”

*Edwin Li*, Hristova’s first postdoc student, came to Hristova’s lab in 2002 and never regretted the decision. With a degree in chemical engineering, biophysics was a completely new field for him. “Thanks to her, I not only quickly learned the concepts and principles in this field, but also came to appreciate it and be passionate about it. She truly enjoys her work – although it is more her ‘nature’ than her ‘work’ – and is always a source of counsel and motivation to those around her.” Li, who continues to work as an assistant research scientist in Hristova’s lab, considers her “perhaps the best mentor I’ve had,” noting that she takes care to ensure that the working environment is good for each of her students and postdocs.

Hristova’s interactions with students are not limited to science or teaching. She offers them opportunities for social networking and mutual support. They take regular breaks. “We

go out for coffee, we have cake for every birthday, and we like going for hot wings once in a while. When we go out, we don’t talk about work. They’re interesting people.”

She doesn’t try to get away from science much, though. Her husband Tihomir Hristova is a scientist (also at Hopkins), and their son Alex is a physics student at Harvard, so science is very much a part of their interactions. Hristova enjoys experiencing new places when



Kalina Hristova (second from right) with the Membrane Chix group at the Society Annual Meeting.

she travels to conferences, and sometimes her family travels together over the summer. At the same time, she is part of a group of women near her age who all study membranes – and have dubbed themselves “Membrane Chix” – whose support for each other is not only professional, but also personal.

Hristova regularly reviews grant proposals, most of the time for the National Science Foundation. She notes that one of the most common failures in grant proposals is that they do not communicate well exactly what work is being proposed. Asked what tips she might have for Biophysical Society members seeking grants, she replied, “Make sure the reviewers know what you’re talking about – as simple as possible, with short sentences, and to the point.”



# Annual Meeting Events

## Meet & Greet at the Opening Mixer

**Saturday, February 28, 5:00 PM–7:00 PM**

First time at the Annual Meeting? Looking to meet other attendees? Come to the Meet & Greet where members of the Early Careers Committee will be on hand to welcome first-time attendees, provide introductions to other newcomers, and help interested attendees arrange self-organized dinners at nearby restaurants.

## Graduate Institution Fair

**Sunday, March 1, 1:00 PM– 3:00 PM**

If you are interested in learning about some of the best graduate programs in biophysics, visit the Graduate Institution Fair. Representatives from colleges and universities throughout the world will be on-site to provide information about the opportunities awaiting at their respective graduate biophysics programs. Get to know these institutions and interact with representatives to find out more about graduate programs in biophysics.

## Undergraduate Student Symposium

**Sunday, March 1, 10:30 AM–1:00 PM**

College undergraduates wanting to learn more about research and career opportunities in biophysics will find what they are looking for at the Undergraduate Student Symposium, sponsored by the Education Committee. With a seminar on emerging issues in biophysics and the Emily M. Gray Award lecture, this Symposium is an excellent way to get acquainted with the field of biophysics. Afterwards, undergraduates can attend the Graduate Institution Fair, where they will be introduced to leading graduate programs.

## New Member Welcome Coffee

**Monday, March 2, 10:30 AM–11:30 AM**

All new Biophysical Society members are invited to participate in an informal gathering to meet members of the Society's council, executive board, and committees, find out about the Society's activities, get acquainted with other new members, and enjoy refreshments. Current members are encouraged to come meet the new members.

## Career Center

### Workshops

Organizational consultant and executive coach Monica J. Weil will lead career development workshops throughout the meeting and provide 1-on-1 resume critiques. The workshop schedule is listed below. Also, career resource publications will be available to all attendees in the Career Center. Come prepared with resumes, CVs, etc.

#### Saturday, February 28, 2009

1:00–5:00 PM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (twelve 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

#### Sunday, March 1, 2009

10:00 AM

Creating a Competitive Life Science Resume

11:30 AM

Interview Basics

1:30 PM

Your Job Search: A Sequential Process with Different Goals at Each Step of the Way

2:30–5:30 PM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (nine 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

#### Monday, March 2, 2009

9:00–10:00 AM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (three 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

10:00 AM

Your Job Search: A Sequential Process with Different Goals at Each Step of the Way

11:30 AM

The First 100 Days: How to Keep Your Dream Job from Turning into a Nightmare

2:00–6:00 PM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (twelve 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

#### Tuesday, March 3, 2009

9:00–10:00 AM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (three 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

10:00 AM

The Truth about References and Reference Checking

11:30 AM

Interview Basics

2:00–5:00 PM

1-on-1 Resume Critiques (nine 20-minute sessions by appointment only)

Registration is required for 1-on-1 Resume Critiques. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis at the Career Center beginning Saturday.

### Job Postings

#### Employers

Stop by to post your job opening! Over 150 candidates will have access to your job posting while at the meeting and your job will be posted on our online job board as well. Search resumes for a perfect fit and schedule an interview while you are on-site at the meeting.

#### Job Applicants

Looking for a job in biophysics? Stop by and upload your resume for employers to view both on-site and on the online job board. You may also apply for posted jobs.



# Public Affairs

## Holdren Named Science Adviser

President Barack Obama has chosen physicist *John Holdren* to be the assistant to the President for science and technology. Holdren, who served as an advisor to Obama during the campaign, will also be the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Holdren will also co-chair the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). PCAST was originally established by President George Bush in 1990 to provide the President advice from the private sector and academic community on technology, scientific research priorities, and math and science education. The other chairs will be *Eric*


*Lander*, biology professor and founding director of the Broad Institute at MIT and Harvard, and *Harold Varmus*, president of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City and NIH Director from 1993-1999.

Prior to accepting this position, Holdren led the technology and science program at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and was president and director of the Woods Hole Research Center in Massachusetts. Holdren is well known for his work on energy, climate change, and nuclear proliferation. He has been involved with policy as well as science, having served as President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2007.

Speaking of his science-related appointments during his weekly radio address on December 20, Obama said that he will be making decisions "based on science and facts rather than on ideology...It's about ensuring that facts and evidence are never twisted or obscured by politics or ideology. It's about listening to what our scientists have to say, even when it's inconvenient - especially when it's inconvenient. Because the highest purpose of science is the search for knowledge, truth and a greater understanding of the world around us. That will be my goal as President of the United States - and I could not have a better team to guide me in this work."

## BPS Advocates for NIH Funds in Stimulus

The Biophysical Society joined other scientific societies in writing to President-Elect Obama and asking him to include at least \$1.2 billion in NIH funding in any immediate economic stimulus effort. The letter also asked the President-Elect to "appoint a permanent NIH director who understands



Massachusetts, USA  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

### Department of Physics

**Faculty Position**

The Department of Physics invites applications for a tenure-track faculty position at the ASSISTANT professor level in experimental or theoretical biophysics. This position is part of a strategic plan to expand our department within a larger WPI Life Science research initiative focused in biophysics, green energy and regenerative biosciences. The position is part of a planned 'cluster hire' of five positions this year in this initiative. (For more information on this initiative visit: [www.wpi.edu/goto/lifesci](http://www.wpi.edu/goto/lifesci)). The ideal candidate will complement the department research focus in Biophysics and related Soft-Condensed Matter and the WPI Life Science initiative. The successful candidate will be expected to establish a vigorous, extramurally-funded research program in their area of expertise, as well as to provide strong teaching at the undergraduate and/or graduate level. Compensation, new laboratory space and resources for startup funding are competitive and commensurate with research experience and accomplishments.

WPI is a nationally ranked, selective university with a student population of 4,450, including 1,300 full-time and part-time graduate students. The Department of Physics offers both undergraduate and graduate (Ph.D.) degrees. Worcester, New England's second largest city, offers ready access to diverse economic, cultural and recreational resources of the region. Further information about WPI and the department can be accessed at <http://www.wpi.edu>.

Interested candidates should send pdf-formatted applications including a curriculum vitae, a description of research plans, a statement of teaching philosophy, and a list of five references (with full contact information) to: **Professor Germano Iannacchione, Head, Department of Physics at [lifesciences@wpi.edu](mailto:lifesciences@wpi.edu)**. The cover letter should address how the research aligns with the cluster hire focus areas above. **Review of applications will be conducted on a rolling basis and continue until the position is filled.**

To enrich education through diversity, WPI is an affirmative action, EOE

the complexity and breadth of NIH's mission and who can help deploy scientific research investments wisely for maximum economic and health benefit.”

Obama called on Congress to have a stimulus bill ready for his signature on January 20. Obama met with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) on his first day in

Washington as President-Elect to discuss the package. Both Reid and Pelosi indicated that meeting the January 20th deadline was very unlikely. They hoped to have something completed before Congress breaks in mid- February. Regardless of the timeline, the stimulus bill is expected to be very large and to include money for science.

## Volunteer at Your Local Science Fair!

In an effort to increase the Biophysical Society's outreach to K-12 education and to promote biophysics, the Board is asking members to volunteer at their local and state high school science fairs. In conjunction with the Society's annual meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, the Society is making a special effort to support science fairs in that area and will be sponsoring an award at each fair listed below. Please consider judging—the commitment is only a few hours and means the world to budding scientists and their teachers. To volunteer, please contact the fair coordinator directly of the Fair in which you are interested in working.

If you are not in the Boston area, check the local school district's website to find out about judging opportunities, or contact the Head of Science Curriculum for the district. If you need help tracking down information, please contact Ellen Weiss in the Society office.

<b>Name and Location of Science Fair</b>	<b>Date of Science Fair Judging</b>	<b>Contact Person to Volunteer</b>
Boston Public Regional Science Fair at Northeastern University	March 7, 2009 (8:30AM-12:00PM)	Maryann Benda naillady@hotmail.com
Worcester Regional Science and Engineering Fair at Worcester Polytechnic Institute	March 13, 2009 (8AM-2PM)	Nancy G. Degon chair@wrsef.org
MA Science and Engineering High School Fair at MIT, Cambridge	May 1, 2009 (all day)	Bronwen Beaudoin bbeaudoin@scifair.com

# How the Society Works

## Society Award Nominations

### April 1 Nomination Deadline

Through its awards programs, the Biophysical Society honors its members and recognizes excellence in biophysics. The nine Society awards are open to all Society members. Nominations are evaluated and awardees are selected by the Biophysical Society Awards Committee.

### Nominating Is Easy!

#### Step 1:

Nominate a colleague by completing an application form and submitting required supporting documents. The application form can be downloaded from the website <http://www.biophysics.org/Awards/SocietyAwards/AnatraceMembraneProteinAward/tabid/482/Default.aspx> Required supporting documents include:

- Nomination letter explaining the qualifications and contributions in the field of Biophysics of the nominee.
- A short, two-page CV.
- At least two letters of support.

#### Step 2:

All applications and supporting material are sent to each member of the Awards Committee, which then meets to discuss all applications.

#### Step 3:

The Awards Committee makes its selection and all nominees and nominators are notified of the results.

#### Step 4:

Awardees are honored during special events at the Annual Meeting.

# Subgroups

## Bioenergetics

The program for the Bioenergetics subgroup symposia on February 28 during the 2009 Biophysical Society Annual Meeting in Boston is can be found on the subgroup website and in the Annual Meeting Program. The morning session is entitled *Role of Lipid in Bioenergetic Function*, co-chaired by *Shelagh Ferguson-Miller*, Michigan State University, and *William Cramer*, Purdue University, while the afternoon session is entitled *Integration of Ion Transport and Metabolism in Mitochondria*, co-chaired by *Tatiana Rostovtseva*, National Institutes of Health, NICHD, and *John Lemasters*, Medical University of South Carolina. The annual subgroup business meeting will immediately follow the afternoon symposium and the day will be concluded with the annual subgroup dinner. Please spread the word among your colleagues concerning our exciting program for this year's meeting and encourage their attendance.

A last minute reminder: the Gordon Research Conference on *Protons and Membrane Reactions* is taking place February 22-26 in Ventura, California, and will be chaired by *Peter Brzezinski*, Goteborg University. Please see <http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2009&program=protons> for further details about this conference.

— *Lawrence Prochaska*, Chair

## Exocytosis and Endocytosis

The Exocytosis and Endocytosis Subgroup's annual meeting will begin at 1:00 PM on Saturday, February 28, 2009. This year's themes encompass mechanisms of membrane fusion, synaptic proteins, and ribbon synapses. The full program can be found on the subgroup website. Seats are still available for the gala dinner that follows the annual meeting. If you

wish to attend the dinner and have not already signed-up, please contact Chair-Elect and Treasurer, *Ronald W. Holz* ([holz@umich.edu](mailto:holz@umich.edu)).

— *Ruth Heidelberg*, Chair

## Intrinsically Disordered Proteins

### Coming of age...

The IDP Subgroup came into existence in 2006 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual IDP Subgroup Symposium was held in Baltimore in 2007 (remember those crab cakes!). The symposium was attended by an overflow crowd of over 150 scientists interested in the new subgroup on the block. In 2008 in Long Beach, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium attracted an audience of approximately 250 scientists. This year in Boston we expect an even larger crowd drawn by talks on the theme, *The Ever Expanding Roles of IDPs in Biological Systems*, by speakers from North America, Europe and Israel. The high level of interest in IDPs at the Biophysical Society parallels a steady increase in publications and international activities related to disordered proteins. For additional information visit the IDP page on the website.

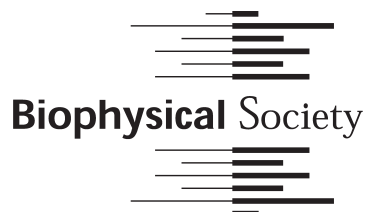
### Get Involved

Now that we are well established the IDP Subgroup members and officers have developed organizational issues for IDP Subgroup members and officers to consider in 2009 and beyond.

Join the IDP Subgroup and come to the business meeting (10:00 AM) and learn what's going on; come to the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual symposium (1:00 PM); and come to dinner after the symposium (7:30 PM) on February 28.

Study IDPs: They're everywhere and they're hot!

--- *Richard Kriwacki*, Subgroup Chair



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Biophysical Society Newsletter—February 2009

## Upcoming Events

May 26 – 28, 2009

*BIOMED 2009 — Eighth International Conference on Modelling in Medicine and Biology*  
Royal Mare Village, Crete, Greece  
<http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2009/index.html>

June 20 – 25, 2009

*Self-assembly of Guanosine derivatives: from Biological Systems to Nanotechnological Applications.*  
Obergurgl, Austria  
<http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=5248>

June 20 – 26, 2009

*ICORR 2009—2009 IEEE 11th International Conference on Rehabilitation Robotics: Reaching Users & the Community*  
Kyoto, Japan  
<http://www.icorr2009.org/>

June 28 – July 3, 2009

*ESF-EMBO Symposia—Biological surfaces and interfaces*  
Sant Feliu de Guixols, Spain  
[http://www.embo.org/about\\_embo/calendar.php](http://www.embo.org/about_embo/calendar.php)

July 1 – 4, 2009

*RADAM 2009—Radiation Damage in Biomolecular Systems*  
Frankfurt am Main, Germany  
<http://fias.uni-frankfurt.de/radam2009>

July 11 – 15, 2009

*EBSA 2009—7th European Biophysics Conference*  
Genoa, Italy  
<http://www.ebsa2009.org/>

Please visit <http://www.biophysics.org/> for a complete list of upcoming events.