

2010 Election Slate

President-Elect



Ruth Nussinov



Jane Richardson

The Society's 2010 candidates for President-Elect are *Ruth Nussinov* of the National Cancer Institute and *Jane Richardson* of Duke University Medical Center.

Elizabeth Komives of the University of California, San Diego, and *Lukas Tamm* of the University of Virginia are the two candidates for Secretary.

Secretary



Elizabeth Komives

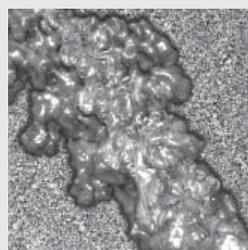


Lukas Tamm

Fourteen candidates are running for the seven open Council positions. They are: *James L. Cole*, *David Eliezer*, *Karen Fleming*, *Dorothy Hanck*, *Amy Harkins*, *Tzyh-Chang Hwang*; *Peter Hinterdorfer*, *Jianpeng Ma*, *Diomedes Logothetis*, *Marjorie Longo*, *Robit Pappu*, *Gail Robertson*, *Larry Tobacman*, and *Claudia Veigel*. Full biographical

sketches and candidate statements are available at www.biophysics.org.

All regular Society members whose 2010 dues were current by May 31 are eligible to vote. The ballot for the election of President-Elect, Secretary, and seven members of Council is available online. Eligible members may vote electronically by accessing the secure election site at www.biophysics.org by August 1, 2010, using their last name and member ID to log in.



Actin, the Cytoskeleton, and the Nucleus

Singapore
November 9-12, 2010

Abstract Deadline:
August 6

www.biophysics.org

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James L. Cole



David Eliezer



Karen Fleming



Dorothy Hanck



Amy Harkins



Tzyh-Chang Hwang



Peter Hinterdorfer



Jianpeng Ma



Diomedes Logothetis



Marjorie Longo



Robit Pappu



Gail Robertson



Larry Tobacman



Claudia Veigel

Biophysical Society

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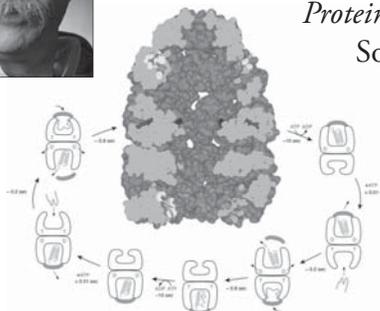
Ellen Weiss, Public Affairs

The Biophysical Society Newsletter (ISSN 0006-3495) is published twelve times per year, January-December, by the Biophysical Society, 11400 Rockville Pike, Suite 800, Rockville, Maryland 20852. Distributed to USA members and other countries at no cost. Canadian GST No. 898477062. Postmaster: Send address changes to Biophysical Society, 11400 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. Copyright © 2010 by the Biophysical Society. Printed in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Horwich to Be 2011 National Lecturer



Arthur Horwich, of the Yale University School of Medicine, has been named the 2011 National Lecturer. He will present the National Lecture, *Chaperoni-mediated Protein Folding*, at the Biophysical Society's 55th Annual Meeting, which will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, March 5-9, 2011. The lecture will be held on Monday, March 7.



Members in the News



Michael E. Fisher of the University of Maryland and Society member since 2000 was named, with co-awardee Richard Zare of Stanford University, the winner of the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in Basic Sciences.



Michelle M. Monasky of Ohio State University and Society member since 2006 was the first place winner of the Margaret T. Nishikawara Merit Scholarship Fund in Physiology. This award is given to two candidates annually.



D. Thirumalai of the University of Maryland and Society member since 2004 received a Humboldt Research Award in 2009.

Grants & Opportunities

Name: AAAS Mentor Awards

Objective: To honor individuals who during their careers demonstrate extraordinary leadership to increase the participation of under-represented groups in science and engineering fields and careers.

Who May Apply: The award is open to all regardless of nationality or citizenship. Nominees must be living at the time of their nomination.

Submission Deadline: July 31, 2010

Obituary

Jane Kellock Setlow died on March 4, 2010, at the age of 90 from complications of Alzheimer's disease. Setlow worked at Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, New York, as a senior research scientist in the Biology Division from 1974 until her full retirement in 2007 at the age of 87. Prior to Brookhaven National Laboratory, she worked in the Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Biology division from 1960-1974. Her research focused on DNA damage, DNA repair, and DNA recombination in yeast and bacteria, and she made a number of important contributions to the repair and recombination fields. During her long research career she published more than 125 papers and from 1979–2007 was the co-editor and then the editor of the long-running series of yearly books on Genetic Engineering published by Plenum Press.

In addition to her own research, in 1977 Jane Setlow became the first female president of the Biophysical Society, and she was a member of the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee for the National Institutes of Health from 1974 to 1978. She also chaired this committee from 1978 to 1980, when many of the regulations concerning the initial work on recombinant DNA were formulated.

Setlow received her Bachelors degree in Psychology from Swarthmore College in 1940, graduating Phi Beta Kappa on a full scholarship at the age of 20. While in college she was the captain of the field hockey team and starred on the basketball team. She worked and completed graduate school at Yale University, receiving her PhD in 1959. In 1996, she received a lifetime achievement award from her secondary school, the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Outside of science, Setlow sang in choral groups all her life. In addition, every summer from 1972 to 1987, she volunteered as a counselor for two weeks at Camp Greentop, a residential camp for disabled adults near Camp David in Maryland.

Jane Setlow is survived by her former husband Richard Setlow, of East Quogue, New York, and her four children: Peter of Farmington, Connecticut; Michael of Baltimore, Maryland; Kate O'Brien of Orange, Connecticut; and Charles, of Shoreham, New York, as well as six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Biophysicist in Profile

Ruth Heidelberger

If you were to pour determination, patience and integrity into a beaker, heat it over a love of science and add a touch of whimsy, you'd get Ruth Heidelberger. Currently Professor of Neurobiology & Anatomy at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, Heidelberger's career as a scientist began the summer before her last year of high school when she started working as a technician in *Paul C. Lauterbur's* lab at Stony Brook University. "I washed glassware and performed other simple tasks for chemist Paul Lauterbur, who was developing the NMR-based imaging-techniques that we now know as MRI," she says. "Paul gave everyone who wanted to work in his laboratory a chance, and in my case, this experience shaped my future."

Heidelberger, who received her BS, MD, and PhD from Stony Brook University, had planned on eventually attending an allied health professions school, but working with Lauterbur changed her mind. "The experience in Paul's laboratory, working with chemists, physicists, programmers and doctors, inspired me to bridge the gap between science and medicine." She finished up her BS in chemistry and continued in Stony Brook's MD/PhD program. The research portion of her training took

her to *Gary Matthews'* lab as his first graduate student. "Ruth was the kind of student we all dream of having," says Matthews, mentioning not only her well-rounded personality but her A+ grades. "[She] developed the preparation of giant-terminal bipolar neurons from goldfish retina that was a mainstay in my lab for many years."

This method turned out to be a mainstay for Heidelberger as well, transforming her first project, establishing the calcium-dependence of neurotransmitter release, in Nobel Prize-winning *Erwin Neher's* lab, where she scored a postdoc. "Using the retinal bipolar cell nerve terminal preparation that I had developed with Gary, we measured the calcium dependence of the rate of synaptic vesicle fusion and made important inferences based upon the results about the properties of the calcium sensor molecule responsible for driving release," she says. This proved to be both a scientific and a personal breakthrough for Heidelberger. "The high level of science and intellectual stimulation that I experienced in the Neher laboratory was so enticing, that I ultimately decided to forgo a medical residency, and I decided focus on a career as a full-time scientist."

Today, her research extends that of both Matthews' and Neher's labs. A cellular physiologist, her lab investigates the factors that regulate neurotransmitter release. The findings will lead to a deeper understanding of how we see and improve our knowledge of neuronal communication. "It's all about discovery and innovation," she says.



Heidelberger playing the fiddle in Göttingen, Germany, during her days as a postdoc.

A dedicated scientist, Heidelbergler lends a hardworking helping hand to her collaborators. “Ruth and I have worked on several projects related to synaptic exo- and endocytosis over the years,” says *David Sherry*, a housemate of Heidelbergler’s at Stony Brook. “She’s a terrific collaborator. She’s deeply and directly engaged in a project at all levels. Ruth also is completely committed to results of high quality, even if it means going the extra mile to get it right.” *Wallace Thoreson*, who has published a few papers alongside Heidelbergler, praises her attention to detail and solid conclusions. “I enjoy writing papers with Ruth,” he says. “In addition to being a fluid writer, I always learn a lot from her creative approach and breadth of knowledge.”

Heidelbergler’s approach is admired not only by her collaborators. “Her patience and readiness to answer my questions helped me build up my technical skills and confidence,” says *Proleta Datta*, one of Heidelbergler’s grad students. “Ruth is also a challenging mentor, in that she always guides you in the right direction, giving hints but encouraging you to work out the answers yourself. This not only gives me the thrill of discovering something myself but helps me build my confidence as a scientist.”

This confidence-building characteristic persists in Heidelbergler’s indispensable presence on the Biophysical Society’s Committee for Professional Opportunities for Women (CPOW). “From serving on CPOW, I have become much more aware about current issues facing women in science and about productive ways to increase the presence of women in science,” she says.

Heidelbergler also actively participates in the exocytosis/endocytosis subgroup, even serving terms on the executive board and as Chair. “The subgroup meeting is a great opportunity to talk with other scientists in my field and learn about some of the most interesting and recent

advances in the field,” she says, adding that this is also true for the Annual Meeting as a whole. “The Annual Meeting is my favorite meeting,” she says. “Excellent science is presented there that is simply interesting in its own right.”

While her early exposure to science was facilitated by her father, a meteorologist, Heidelbergler’s volunteering bone comes from her mom. “My mom is the one who got us interested in the arts and in helping people through volunteer work,” she says. Heidelbergler is an accomplished fiddler, preferring to play Irish folk music. “There was always the possibility that I would run away and join a band,” she says. While not about to forgo precious time with her husband and five-year-old son, Matthew, she harmonizes her musical interests with her already full life by fiddling for the odd dance or festival and singing in the church choir. “Ruth is a great role model to all women in science,” says Datta. “She is an excellent example to prove that one can be an exceptional scientist, have a family and [have] a life.”

“I consider myself lucky in that I have had three scientific advisors that I greatly admire and respect,” Heidelbergler says. “Each was an excellent mentor and a thorough and rigorous investigator. They also taught me that science is not about winning or beating the competition, but about knowledge and understanding.” Now a mentor herself, Heidelbergler exemplifies these values through science. “It’s about loving what you do and wanting to do it in the best possible way,” she says. She plans on doing just that for a long time to come.



Heidelbergler with her son, Matthew.

Careers

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

Notes on Negotiating the Grad Student-to-Postdoc Transition

The Early Careers Committee again held their ever-popular transitions panel at the 2010 Annual Meeting to a roomful of wide-eyed grad students preparing for the shift to postdoc-hood. Committee Chair *Tharin Blumenschein*, of East Anglia University, guided seasoned faculty *Richard K.P. Benniger* (Vanderbilt University), *Jan Lipfert* (Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands) *Yael Yaniv* (NIH), and industry guest *Edith Arnold* (Stanford University) as they took questions from the audience. They answered anything from how to switch fields entirely to the most important question you never asked your potential PI. The message? Choose a goal and go for it.

Not Your Typical Research

A lab is made up of more than just the PI, so check out the lab as a whole. Before the interview, do your homework. Find out how many members of the lab go on to get faculty positions, learn the lab's publication rates—even contact the lab's alums to get the scoop about their experiences there. The information you dig up will speak for itself, and should say something to you: if the number of postdocs who end up with faculty positions as a direct result of their time in that lab is low, don't think you'll be the exception. Steer clear and look for a lab with a better postdoc-to-faculty track record.

Your investigation might turn up some useful data on another important aspect of the lab: the culture. Every lab has one, and you should use each interview you attend to get a sense of

it. Ask the PI detailed questions about his or her overall view of the lab. As you listen to the answers, think about how you function best and what strengths you would bring to each lab environment. Be open to the fresh possibilities each unique lab culture presents: new collaborators, new projects, new skills to add to your growing repertoire. If you're interested in a European lab but your only lab experience is all-American, consider going for it. The funding system might take some getting used to and you might lose touch with some of your contacts from the States, but keep in mind the conferences you have the opportunity to attend and the papers you'll publish. It's all part of deciding what works for you. To help figure out whether the lab will be a good fit, use the interview. While you're sitting there sweating it, remember that it's also your chance to put them in the hot seat. Ask detailed questions, and ask a lot of them.

The Truth about Switching It Up

Going from academia to industry may be easy, but coming back again is a high hurdle to leap. Connections with former academic colleagues become hard to maintain. You'll go from being a jack-of-all-trades to an expert of one. Getting back into the regular paper-publishing groove can be difficult. That being said, it depends on your field. It might just be a challenge you're ready to accept.

Switching fields within academia or industry is smoother. You already have tried-and-true methods; the trick is to apply them to another field. Patiently give yourself time to acquire any skills you don't have. If you're taking your computational grad training to an experimental field, embrace the learning curve. You can best pick up the skills by doing your own work, and a PI willing to give you the space to develop your own project helps the transition.

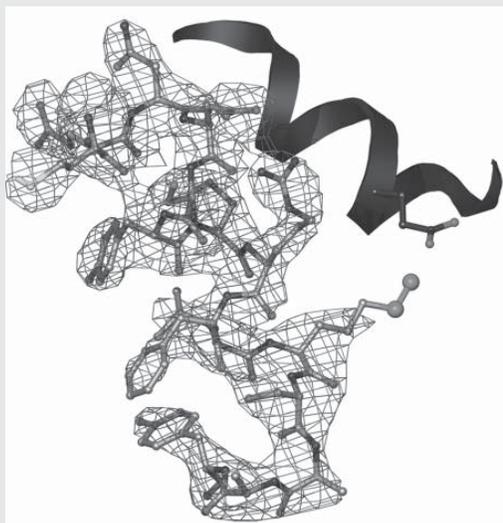
To Pursue or Not to Pursue a Postdoc?

As you outline your goal, ask yourself: is a postdoc the right course for me? The question may seem obvious, but the answer plays a significant role in structuring your career path. Like anything else in life, the postdoc closes some doors but can open others. If you're aiming for an academic career, a postdoc position only makes sense. If your goal is more industry-centered, you may want to skip it. For most industry jobs, a PhD suffices. On the other hand, a postdoc can help you develop skills attractive to an industry career. Examine the big picture before pursuing a postdoc—and keep your career goal in mind when you do.

Do What You Love and Love What You Do

Choosing a goal is half the battle. Once you have a clear objective, go for it! Articulate the general idea of your vision to prospective labs or industry employers. Don't describe it too minutely—you don't want to narrow your field of possible funding. Even interviewing with "half-baked ideas" about your objective is ok, as long as you can describe where you want to go with them. Instead of focusing on what you don't know, be confident in the knowledge and skills you do have. Find a place to do the work you want to do, and remember how much you love it—you'll be better at doing something you love anyway.

2010 Summer Course in Biophysics



The Biophysical Society 2010 *Summer Course in Biophysics: Case Studies in the Life of Physics* began its third year on May 19, at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Eleven students from diverse backgrounds were selected for this intense 11-week course, set up to emulate graduate school-level curriculum and demand. Minority Affairs Committee members *Luis Marky* (MAC Chair), *Ibrahim Cisse*, *Barry R. Lentz*, and *Wilma Olson* participated in reviewing the applications.



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Volume 39 • June 2010 • Online & In Print • <http://biophys.annualreviews.org>

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Public Affairs

Bridging the Sciences Program Launches

The NIH and NSF jointly announced two new research grant programs to bridge the sciences: New Biomedical Frontiers at the Interface of the Life and Physical Sciences and Transforming Biomedicine at the Interface of the Life and Physical Sciences (R01) PAR-10-141. The former focuses on basic research and the latter on clinical and translational research.

These two new programs, in addition to the EUREKA high-risk high-reward grants program that NIH rolled out two years ago, are part of the Bridging the Sciences Demonstration Program, which the Biophysical Society advocated for along with other members of the Bridging the Sciences Coalition. The purpose of that program, and the Coalition's advocacy, was to provide a dedicated source of funding to cross-disciplinary and upstream research that often falls between the cracks of the basic research funded at NSF and DOE and the biomedical research funded at NIH. Breakthroughs such as x-ray crystallography, CAT scans, and magnetic resonance imaging have had an enormous and important effect on biology. These discoveries were funded by sources, such as the Bell Labs, which are no longer in existence. Thus, it is very difficult for researchers to work on similar breakthrough technologies today.

The program announcements for New Biomedical Frontiers at the Interface of the Life and Physical Sciences and Transforming Biomedicine at the Interface of the Life and Physical Sciences indicate that many of the specific items the coalition advocated for were included in the programs. Both programs will provide grants of varying sizes and lengths to accommodate a variety of research, encourage young

investigators with novel ideas to apply, and will be reviewed by special review panels that include reviewers from the physical, mathematical, and computational sciences. Applications will be accepted once a year in May through 2012.

For more information on the programs, visit <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-10-142.html> and <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-10-141.html>.

House Bill Would Codify Obama's Stem Cell Policy

On the one-year anniversary of President Obama's reversal of limits on embryonic stem cell research, Representatives Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Mike Castle (R-DE) introduced legislation (H.R. 4808) that would amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for human embryonic stem cell research. The bill would codify President Obama's Executive Order issued March 9, 2009, which permits federal funding of research conducted with human embryonic stem cell lines.

In Representative DeGette's press release, the Congresswoman said the Stem Cell Research Advancement Act would "ensure a lasting ethical framework overseeing stem cell research at the National Institutes of Health." The bill would require NIH to maintain guidelines on all human stem cell research and review those guidelines at least every three years, ban the use of federal funding for human cloning under the NIH guidelines, and require a biennial report to Congress on stem cell research.

In his own press release, Representative Castle stated, "Congress must act to ensure that an over-arching ethical framework is signed into law."

The bill will be considered by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, where Rep. DeGette is the Vice Chair.

Healthcare Legislation Includes NIH Provisions

On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law. While the debate and news focused on health insurance coverage, costs, and availability, the bill also included two items that impact NIH and the research community.

- The legislation establishes a Cures Acceleration Network (CAN) at NIH that aims to move promising science through the “Valley of Death.” Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA) introduced the Cures Acceleration Network Act of 2009 as an amendment to the Senate health care bill. CAN, which seeks to cut the time between discovery and development of drugs and therapies through new grant-making mechanisms at NIH, will be housed within the Office of the Director of NIH and will be overseen by a Board of 24 members. CAN will also work with the FDA to coordinate approval requirements with the goal of expediting the development and approval of products.

The legislation designates the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) at the NIH as an Institute, and requires the NCHMD Director to plan, coordinate, and review and evaluate research and other activities conducted or supported by the institutes and centers.

The Biophysical Society will continue to monitor the development of these programs and make the information available to members.

PCAST Releases Nanotechnology Report

The President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) has released a report to the president and Congress on its assessment of the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI), which coordinates Federal research and development activities involving the manipulation of matter at scales smaller than 100 billionths of meter. The report concludes that NNI—which provided \$12 billion in investments by 25 Federal agencies over the past decade—has had a “catalytic and substantial impact” on the growth of US nanotechnology innovation and should be continued. The report also makes several recommendations for changes in federal programs and policies, including recommendations for NIH, with the goal of assuring continued US dominance in nanotechnology research and development. The recommendations are intended to help move nanotechnology findings and applications to market.

Read the full report on the PCAST website at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/pcast-nano-report.pdf>.

Subgroups

Intrinsically Disordered Proteins

Election of New Officers, Program Chairs, and Council Members: The annual business meeting of the IDP subgroup was held in San Francisco on February 20, 2010. The first order of business was induction of new officers, the election of officers and program chairs for 2011, and the election of a new council member. The resulting current roster of officers, council members, and program chairs is:

Subgroup Chair

David Eliezer (2010-2011)

Elisar Barabar (2011-2012)

Subgroup Secretary-Treasurer

Gary Daughdrill (2010-2011)

Jianhan Chen (2011-2012)

Council Members

Sonia Longhi (2008-2011)

Mark Ruff (2009-2012)

Reinhard Schweitzer-Stenner (2010-2013)

Program Chairs for 2011 IDP Subgroup Symposium

Trevor Creamer

Yaakov Levy

Collin Stultz

Gordon Conference on Intrinsically Disordered Proteins: Registration is open for the first Gordon Conference on Intrinsically Disordered Proteins. The conference will be held at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, on July 11-16, 2010. The program and registration details can be found at: <http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2010&program=intrinsic>

—*Gary W. Daughdrill*, Secretary-Treasurer

55th Annual Meeting
Baltimore, Maryland
March 5–9, 2011

Abstract Deadline
October 4

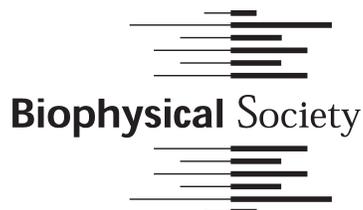
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Biophysical Society Newsletter—June 2010

Upcoming Events

July 7–10, 2010

Summer School in Biophysics AT UT/ORNL

Knoxville, TN

<http://www.csm.ornl.gov/workshops/biophysics10>

August 1–6, 2010

Stereochemistry

Newport, RI

<http://www.grc.org>

August 30–September 3, 2010

The Physics of Evolution

San Diego, California

<http://ctbp.ucsd.edu/workshops/index.php?id=29>

October 3–8, 2010

Emergent Properties of the Cytoskeleton:

Molecules to Cells

Sant Feliu de Guixols, Spain

<http://www.esf.org/conferences/10326>

October 20–22, 2010

8th International Meeting on RNases

Naples, Italy

<http://www.8thrnasemeeting.com>

December 11–15, 2010

50th Anniversary American Society for Cell Biology

Annual Meeting

Philadelphia, PA

<http://www.ascb.org/meetings>

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