Future of Biophysics Burroughs Wellcome Fund Symposium

The second annual Future of Biophysics Burroughs Wellcome Fund Symposium will be held on Monday, March 7, 10:45 AM-12:45 PM.

The symposium, chaired by Jamie Williamson of the Scripps Research Institute and 2011 Program Committee Chair, highlights the work of rising young stars whose research is at the interface of the physical and life sciences. The 2011 speakers (pictured on right) are Thierry Emonet, Yale University; Lucy Forrest, Max Planck Institute for Biophysics, Germany; Laura Miller, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Davide Rueda, Wayne State University.

Funding for the symposium is provided by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, which has a long history of providing support to scientists early in their careers.

Call for Mini-Grant Proposals

Don’t forget! The deadline to apply for a mini-grant to host a networking event in 2011 is January 31, 2011. Members can receive up to $500 in funding to host a local social event for biophysicists to interact and network. Applications can be completed online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/networkingeventgrant.
Biophysics at ABRCMS

Several Minority Affairs Committee (MAC) members joined BPS staff, Ellen Weiss and Erica Retrosi, in spreading the word about biophysics and BPS student programs at the 10th Anniversary Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) in Charlotte, North Carolina. Rufus Ranatunga, Oakwood University, judged dozens of posters looking for those most deserving of the MAC-sponsored travel awards, which are given to help students cover travel costs to attend the BPS 55th Annual Meeting. BPS meeting attendees will see Jasmine Martich, Wesleyan University, and Daud Cole, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, presenting their posters in Baltimore next March! Barry Lentz, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, talked with students about the BPS Summer Course, of which he is the Director. Cole, a former Summer Course student himself, joined Lentz and more recent Summer Course alum Cheryl Lau, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, at the BPS booth, sharing facets of their Summer Course experience and their current research with curious students.

On the final evening of the conference, Ranatunga and Society staff presented eight ABRCMS poster awards sponsored by BPS at the awards ceremony.

Society staff also connected with program administrators at a variety of institutions, sharing information about BPS student opportunities and collecting details about opportunities at other institutions. The more connections of this kind BPS makes, the better the Society can serve as a comprehensive resource for students on the lookout for chances to help them grow as scientists.

Rufus Ranatunga, Daud Cole, and Erica Retrosi at ABRCMS.

BPS Summer Course in Biophysics

May 17-August 6, 2011
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Visit www.biophysics.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/Education/SummerCourse for more information.
Support Science in Schools: Give the Biophysics Award at a Science Fair

It’s almost science fair season! For the past two years, BPS has sponsored awards for students participating in regional and state science fairs local to Annual Meeting sites, with two objectives: to promote the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and math in US schools; and to spread the word about biophysics.

After successfully sponsoring Boston-area awards in 2009, San Francisco Bay-area science fair awards were added in 2010. In 2011, the Society will extend its sponsorship scope to include the Baltimore area in tandem with our 55th Annual Meeting. While we’re at it, we’ll include the Washington, DC area, surrounding Maryland counties, and northern Virginia.

Besides making of sponsorship at so many fairs manageable, a perk to giving awards at fairs local to the Annual Meeting is that all science fair participants and their teachers are invited to attend the Annual Meeting’s Undergraduate Student Symposium, where students can get a taste of biophysics specifically targeted to their level of learning.

All science fairs, not just those at which BPS is sponsoring an award, need scientists to act as judges! It’s a great way to support science in schools without giving a lot of your time. BPS is recruiting local members to volunteer to judge, and to give the Biophysics Award at the fairs listed below. Most fairs happen in March and April, or May at the state level. Already volunteering to judge at your local state or regional science fair and want to give the Biophysics Award? Contact Erica Retrosi (eretrosi@biophysics.org).

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<th>Baltimore/DC Metro Area</th>
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<td>Contra Costa County</td>
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<td>Prince George’s Area (Regional)</td>
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<td>DC Science &amp; Engineering Fair</td>
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Biophysicist in Profile

**Wonpil Im**

The only thing that Wonpil Im has ever done to ensure himself anything resembling a predictable future was to heed his uncle’s advice about job security by getting a degree in the sciences. His arrival at his current position as Assistant Professor and 2007 Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow in the Department of Molecular Biosciences at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, is the result of hard work, some networking, and an utterly fearless personality.

Im accordingly began his undergraduate career in the chemistry department of Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea. By his senior year, he had found his passion for computational chemistry in Youngdo Won’s lab, where he stayed to complete his MSc. As he began looking abroad for a suitable place to pursue his PhD, it became clear that his English scores were insufficient to admit him into any graduate program in the US. Won, believing his student deserved a chance, made a call to his friend Benoît Roux at the University of Montreal. Shortly thereafter, Im joined Roux’s lab, leaving both his interim job teaching science to private school students and his home in Seoul behind.

Roux proved to be a singular mentor. “He taught me many skills with great patience,” Im says. Initially, Im’s poor English required the pair to painstakingly pass notes between them until they understood each other. This plan proved effective: Im soon began absorbing elements of Roux’s expertise in continuum electrostatics and membrane simulation to even Roux’s satisfaction. “I had high expectations about Wonpil’s ability,” Roux says. “He surpassed those expectations many times.”

Today, Roux helps test the results obtained by Im’s pet project, CHARMM-GUI, an academic biomolecular simulation program with a web-based graphical user interface to help users create and test complex calculations. The program does everything from performing standard molecular dynamics and energy minimization to calculating chemical and conformational free energy and providing tools for analysis and manipulation of atomic coordinates and dynamics trajectories. Sunhwan Jo, a graduate student in Im’s lab, has been assisting with CHARMM-GUI development since his undergrad years. “I thought it was just building a simple web interface for PDB file conversion for simulation software,” says Jo, “but apparently, [Wonpil] had a bigger plan.” CHARMM-GUI’s goal is to allow accessibility worldwide so users can “generate various input files and molecular systems to facilitate and standardize the usage of common and advanced simulation techniques,” Im says. The interface has so far garnered more than 78,050 usages from around the globe.

Such levels of student assistance with hefty projects are not unprecedented in Im’s lab. “He is a very energetic and engaging mentor,” says Jo. Im’s students are inspired by his exuberance and his genuine interest in the work they do en route to their respective careers. “Once you have earned Wonpil’s trust he will be dedicated to making you the best scientist he possibly can,” says Philip Morris, one of Im’s undergraduate students. “He sees your potential

“In my work, developing the methods that do not exist and interpreting the results of such new methods are the most challenging tasks.”

--- Wonpil Im
and knows how to help you achieve it.” For Im, achievement is as easy as knowing what you want and taking steps to get it, while taking setbacks in stride. “I often tell my students, ‘If you are given a project, and the project ends without a single problem, then who is smart? You learn things most when you overcome challenges,’” Im says. “In my work, developing the methods that do not exist and interpreting the results of such new methods are the most challenging tasks.”

For Im, this particular philosophy applies to science as well as to life. His postdoc with Charles Brooks III, Warner-Lambert/Parke-Davis Professor of Chemistry and Professor of Biophysics at the University of Michigan, was ideal training ground for Im to meld his personal style with the fundamentals he learned from Roux. Im convinced Brooks to let him develop another GB model, and Brooks was glad he did. “Wonpil felt strongly that he could reformulate aspects of the model in a manner that kept the best qualities of existing models and provided advantages over some of them,” says Brooks. Brooks, Im, and postdoc Michael Lee developed and implemented the GBSW approach and collaborated with Michael Feig to generalize it to the treatment of membrane environments. “Wonpil is a very energetic and enthusiastic colleague,” says Feig, “always full of ideas and never discouraged to pursue a scientific question he set out to explore.”

While in Brooks’ lab, Im was deciding what uncharted scientific terrain he wanted to explore next. “I thought, I know I have many holes in my background and my English skills are poor, but it might be fun to see how far I can reach among many smart people in the field.” With that, he joined the University of Kansas, Lawrence faculty. Along with the CHARMM-GUI project, his lab also uses transmembrane (TM) modeling, standard molecular dynamics simulation, and novel free energy calculation to understand membrane protein structure and function by determining the delicate balance of forces governing TM helix-helix and helix-lipid interactions, especially TM-induced signaling of cytokine receptors and TM-induced immunoregulation/signaling, with collaborators Anthony Kossiakoff, Jose Villadangos, Satoshi Ishido, and Matthew Call. “Computational biophysics is certainly heading to larger scale simulations,” he says. “Yet, we are still lacking much fundamental understanding even on smaller scales. I would like to contribute to fundamental understanding of TM-induced signaling that involves two TM helices as a minimum functional unit.”

Though Im sticks with what he knows consistently enough to become an expert, he yearns to develop new projects as he is enlightened by his research. “I learn lots of new things from my work,” he says. “I do want to expand my research interest to challenging biophysical topics that I never worked on.” Many of these novelties he publishes, often in *Biophysical Journal*. He regularly attends BPS Annual Meetings, viewing them as an opportunity to share cutting-edge science—and to cut a rug. “As serious as Wonpil is about discussing science during the BPS Meeting poster sessions,” says Feig, “he is about the BPS Meeting dance. He always insists on going early and reserving a table near the dance floor to make sure he gets the most out of it.”

“What stands out [about Im] is that he continues to grow,” says colleague Olaf Andersen, professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at Weill Cornell Medical College. “He seems to be intrepid, without making waves.” This ever-present growth as a scientist and as an individual stems from both the passion Im brings to his work and his continual reassessment of his level of contentment with it. “The very first reason why you want to [build a career in science] should be that you really like what you are doing, so that you have a mental power to overcome such difficulties, yet enjoy your research,” he says. “I do not see my limits yet, expecting much more scientific fun stuff in my lab.”
55th Annual Meeting
March 5–9, 2011

Public Affairs Activities

The Future of Biomedical Research

Sunday, March 6, 2:15 PM–3:30 PM

With a change in Congressional leadership and increasing pressure to cut domestic spending, it appears that federal funding for biomedical research will be tight in the next few years. While the NIH received a major boost of funding in the 2009 stimulus bill, those funds are scheduled to run out in 2011. Come to this session to learn how the NIH plans to handle this challenge, and to hear from the Foundation community on the role it plays in funding research.

Grant Writing Workshop: How (Not) to Write Your NIH Grant Proposal

Tuesday, March 8, 2:30–4:30 PM

Through mock study sections, veteran NIH officials will demonstrate what review panels look for when they read and assess proposals. They will also answer questions about the changes at NIH and how to communicate with funding agencies prior to submitting a proposal and after its review. This session is sponsored by the Public Affairs Committee and is appropriate for both experienced principal investigators and those applying for their first grant.

Future of Science Education in America

Tuesday, March 8, 1:00-2:30 PM

News report after news report tells us the U.S. is losing ground internationally as an innovator, its students are performing poorly on international science exams, and graduate programs cannot find US students for their programs. Come to this session to learn what the issues are and what groups are doing to change science education in America.
Be a BPS Blogger

Calling all 55th Annual Meeting attendees with something to say! BPS is still accepting applications from members of all scientific backgrounds who want to be BPS Bloggers.

BPS Bloggers will post at least once daily throughout the Meeting—about science and beyond. No laptop? No problem! A desktop in the BPS Meeting Office will be reserved for BPS Bloggers so they can post entries during regular Office hours. Share the Annual Meeting experience with your fellow attendees, both in the flesh and in cyberspace, through your blog posts on the BPS Annual Meeting Blog.

Interested? We want to hear from you! Send Erica Retrosi (eretrosi@biophysics.org) a link to your blog by January 14. No blog yet? Send a writing sample instead. Visit www.biophysics.org/2011meeting for more information.

Subgroup Meetings

Biopolymers Biophysics in vivo

The new subgroup Biopolymer Biophysics in vivo will hold its first subgroup session on March 5 with a stellar list of speakers. For complete details, see http://www.biophysics.org/2011meeting/Program/Subgroups/BiopolymerBiophysicsinvivo/tabid/2343/Default.aspx

We encourage everyone to join, attend the session, and also come and enjoy the subgroup dinner party taking place in the evening of March 5. Welcome!

—Pernilla Wittung-Stafshede and Margaret Cheung
Acting Subgroup Chairs

Nanoscale

Don’t forget to attend the Business Meeting of the newly formed subgroup on nanoscale biophysics, which will be held on March 5 at the Annual Meeting in Baltimore. The group will elect chairs and accept the proposed bylaws. Members can view the proposed bylaws by going to www.biophysics.org/MembershipSubgroup.

—Alberto Diaspro and Stanford Leuba,
Acting Subgroup Chairs

National Lecturer

Arthur L. Horwich
Yale University
Chaperonin–mediated Protein Folding
Monday, March 7
8:00–9:30 PM

2011 Exhibitors

For the current list of companies exhibiting at the 2011 Annual Meeting visit www.biophysics.org
Public Affairs

New Congress Brings New Leaders (for Science and Health Committees)

The chairs of key committees in the House of Representatives with jurisdiction over health and science policy and budgets changed when the new Congress convened on January 5. Among those changes are the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee and the House Science and Technology Committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee.

The new Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee is Hal Rogers (R-KY). Rogers previously served as chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that has jurisdiction over the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Democrats selected Norm Dicks (D-WA) to serve as ranking member. All annual federal spending bills come through the appropriations committee prior to reaching the House floor.

The House Science and Technology Committee chairman is Ralph Hall (R-TX). Hall has represented a northeast Texas district since 1980. Originally a Democrat, he changed parties in 2004. Hall has served on the committee for more than half of the time since it was established in 1958, and became its Ranking Member in January 2007. Democrats chose Eddie Bernice (D-TX) to be the ranking member. The committee has historically worked in a bipartisan collegial manner. Hall has expressed particular interests in manned space exploration and energy.

The Energy and Commerce Committee chairman is Fred Upton (R-MI). Upton has served on the Energy and Commerce Committee since 1991. As chairman he is particularly interested in repealing the health care legislation passed in 2010 and cutting spending. He has voted against legislation that permits stem cell funding in the past. The Energy and Commerce Committee has jurisdiction over the National Institutes of Health as well as the Department of Energy.

NIH Director Recommends New Integrative Institute

NIH Director Francis Collins released a statement on November 18 recommending the creation of a single institute at the NIH for substance use, abuse, and addiction research. Collins’ recommendation follows a recommendation made to him by the Scientific Management Review Board.

The new Institute would integrate the relevant research portfolios from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and other NIH Institutes and Centers.

Collins has asked NIH Principal Deputy Director Lawrence A. Tabak and National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Director Stephen I. Katz to pull together a task force of experts from within NIH to look across all of NIH’s 27 Institutes and Centers to determine where substance use, abuse, and addiction research programs currently exist and to make recommendations about what programs should be moved into the proposed new Institute. The task force is expected to produce a detailed plan in the summer of 2011. Until then, all existing substance use, abuse, and addiction research programs at NIH will continue status quo.

The Publications Committee of the Biophysical Society is calling for nominations for the position of Editor-in-Chief of the Society's flagship publication, *Biophysical Journal (BJ)*. *BJ* is the leading international journal for original research articles, letters, and mini-reviews in molecular, cellular, and systems biophysics. This appointment will begin July 1, 2012, and last for one five-year term. The Editor-in-Chief should have a broad understanding of biophysics. The Publications Committee is especially interested in attracting a diverse list of candidates that mirrors the Society membership in terms of background, and scientific interests. The successful candidate will need to be responsive, able to make timely decisions, and be firm when necessary. Confidential nominations should be made to the Publications Committee through the Society Office (www.surveymonkey.com/s/bjeic or by email at eic@biophysics.org). A CV of the candidate is helpful but not required for the nomination. The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2011.

The duties of the Editor-in-Chief are to:

1) Lead and mentor the Editorial Board of *BJ*, and in so doing, to carry out the fiscal and editorial policies established by the Society. This includes assigning and reviewing papers as needed, encouraging submissions, and providing input regarding new editorial features and material.
2) Work with the Society Office staff on the day-to-day editorial management of *BJ*.
3) Work with our publisher, Cell Press, on production matters of the *BJ*.
4) Meet with and report at least annually to the Biophysical Society Council, Executive Board, and Publications Committee.
5) Recruit and submit Editorial Board Member and Associate Editor nominations to the Publications Committee (Editorial Board terms are staggered, three-year terms, renewable once).
6) Work closely with the Publications Committee on strategic decisions affecting the *BJ*.

**About Biophysical Journal**

**Mission Statement**

Modern biophysics is a broad and rapidly advancing field encompassing the study of biological structures with a focus on mechanisms at the molecular, cellular, and systems level using the concepts and methods of physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering, and computational science. Research on a broad range of biological problems is unified when approached with this common set of intellectual tools. *Biophysical Journal* aims to publish the highest quality work representing this quantitative approach to biological science. Articles should be of sufficient impact to be of general interest to biophysicists, regardless of their research specialty.

**Biophysical Journal Quick Facts**

(January-December 2009)

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<th>Manuscripts submitted</th>
<th>Manuscripts accepted</th>
<th>Number of Associate Editors</th>
<th>Number of Editorial Board Members</th>
<th>Time to first decision</th>
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<td>736</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>82</td>
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**Biophysical Journal Editors-in-Chief**

| 1960-1963   | Frank Brink, Jr.     |
| 1964-1966   | J. Lawrence Oncley  |
| 1967-1969   | Fred M. Snell       |
| 1969-1973   | Max A. Lauffer      |
| 1973-1977   | Frederick A. Dodge  |
| 1977-1980   | V. Adrian Parsegian |
| 1980-1983   | John Gergely        |
| 1984-1987   | Eugene Ackerman     |
| 1988-1992   | Thomas E. Thompson  |
| 1993-1997   | Victor A. Bloomfield|
| 1997-2002   | Peter B. Moore      |
| 2002-2007   | Robert Callender    |
| 2007-Present| Edward Egelman      |
New Member Benefits for 2011

Being a Biophysical Society member just got better! Beginning in 2011, Society members enjoy the following new benefits:

**AIP Journals**

Members can subscribe to AIP journals, like *Physics Today* ($59), at a reduced rate.

**Faculty1000**

Members can benefit from a reduced personal subscription to *Faculty of 1000*. In 2010 the reduced annual personal subscription is $99 (full annual personal subscription is $350).

**Science Fair Awards**

Members may give out a Biophysics Award at a regional or state science fair if they volunteer to judge at the fair. (see page 3 for full article)

**Networking Event Mini-Grants**

Members may apply to win a mini-grant for $500 to plan a local social networking event (see page 11 for details)

**Discounts on Products**

In 2011, members will receive a 5% discount on orders placed with Brookhaven, Ion Optix, Jasco, and Nanion. Look for the discount codes on the back of your membership card.

For details on how to take advantage of these benefits, visit http://www.biophysics.org/MembershipSubgroups/Benefits

Society Survey Winners Announced

The Society received an excellent response to the Membership Surveys that were sent out in October with a 12% response rate. One survey was sent to former members and the second survey was sent to current members.

Those who completed the former member survey were eligible to win a free year’s membership for 2011. *Toshikazu Majima* of AIST: Photonics Research Institute won that prize.

Upon completion of the Current Member Survey, *Alexander Gaiduk* of Leiden University, Loins, won $100, which he chose to apply to his membership dues.

Thanks to all members who participated in the survey. The information provided is key to improving current and future membership benefits.

Members In The News

*Peter Laggner* of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and Society member since 1997 is the managing director of HECUS X-Ray Systems GmbH, which has won the RUSNANOPRIZE 2010.
Biophysical Society in Asia

The Biophysical Society this fall co-sponsored two very successful international thematic meetings. Each was attended by approximately 250 scientists representing over 30 countries, with a high participation by students.

In addition to a rich scientific program, the meeting in Beijing, China, on *New Horizons in Calcium Signaling*, which was co-sponsored with the Biophysical Society of China, provided attendees with the opportunity to meet and interact with the leaders of the scientific and biophysical communities in China. Eight young investigators received travel awards to attend the meeting (see sidebar for list of names).

The November meeting in Singapore on *Actin, the Cytoskeleton, and the Nucleus*, was co-sponsored with the MechanoBiology Institute. The meeting brought together biochemists, cell biologists, and biophysicists for four days jam-packed with science. One survey respondent encapsulated everyone’s assessment: “the knowledge exchanged at this meeting was fantastic!”

The Biophysical Society has undertaken sponsorship of international thematic meetings in response to the needs and requests of its international membership, which continues to grow and is now over 34%.

Biophysical Society members may submit suggestions for 2012 thematic meeting topics until January 21, 2011 at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LYQTNV2

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New Horizons in Calcium Signaling Young Investigator Travel Awardees

- **Liangyi Chen**
  Institute of Molecular Medicine
  Peking University, China

- **Xiaoli Zhao**
  University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

- **Pan-Pan Hou**
  Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China

- **Petronnel Tuluc**
  University of Innsbruck, Austria

- **Satoshi Manita**
  RIKEN, Brain Science Institute, Japan

- **Kaiyu Zheng**
  University College, London, UK

- **Natalia Torres**
  University of Utah

- **Zheng Liu**
  Wadsworth Center, New York State Department of Health
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**May**

**May 2–3, 2011**
LIPID MAPS Annual Meeting 2011: Lipidomics Impact on Cell Biology, Cancer, and Metabolic Diseases
*La Jolla, California*

**May 10–18, 2011**
International School of Biophysics: Channels and Transporters
*Erice, Sicily*
www.physiology.vcu.edu/erice/

**June**

**June 19–24, 2011**
7th International Conference on Biological Physics (ICBP)
*San Francisco, California*
http://icbp2011.ucsd.edu

**June 27–29, 2011**
Advances in the Cellular and Molecular Biology of Angiogenesis
*Birmingham, United Kingdom*
www.biochemistry/conferences

**July**

**July 10–15, 2011**
Molecular Membrane Biology
*Andover, New Hampshire*
www.grc.org

**July 24–29, 2011**
17th International Symposium on Flavins and Flavoproteins
*Berkeley, California*
http://smiller.ucsf.edu/ff2011

**August**

**August 22–26, 2011**
Synthetic Biology: Design and Engineering Through Understanding
*Keele, United Kingdom*
www.biochemistry.org/Conferences/

**August 23–27, 2011**
8th European Biophysics Congress
*Budapest, Hungary*
www.ebsa2011.org/?nic=topics

*Please visit www.biophysics.org for a complete list of upcoming events.*