

NEWSLETTER

July 2009



BJ Impact Factor On the Rise

ISI just released the 2008 impact factor for the *Biophysical Journal*. The new impact factor is 4.683 up from 4.627 and the five-year impact factor is 5.036. The Journal is ranked 9th out of 70 in the category of biophys-

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Undergraduate Student Membership

The Biophysical Society Council has approved membership rates for undergraduate students. Beginning with the 2010 membership cycle, undergraduate students may join the Society for a rate of \$25 per year. Undergraduate students will be eligible for that rate while continuing their undergraduate studies, for a maximum of four years. Students qualifying for the undergraduate rate may sponsor their own annual meeting abstracts and will have access to all student member benefits.

New CPOW Travel Awards

Four travel awards of \$500 each will be awarded each year to women post-doctoral fellows who are current members of the Society and attending the Annual Meeting. The award seeks to increase the number of women biophysicists and encourage their participation in the Annual Meeting. Awardees will be selected based on the scientific merit of the abstract submitted and a brief description provided at the time of submission.

Don't Forget to Vote!

Log on to the Society website www.biophysics.org to cast your vote for Society President and Council members. All votes must be cast by August 1.

Biophysical Society

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Biophysicist in **Profile** Luis Marky

Mentoring has been key throughout the career of Luis Marky, Professor in the College of Pharmacy of the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). He found his way into biophysics under the guidance of a mentor, has been honored for his mentorship of his students, and now promotes mentoring as vital to the success of young scientists.

Born in Piura, Peru, one of Marky's first mentors was his grandfather. Marky spent his twelfth and thirteenth summers in his grandfather's mechanic shop, learning to work the lathe and thinking that he was "bound to become a mechanical engineer." He filled his high school years with science and math courses, including physics, trigonometry and calculus, which he took during his year in Owego, NY, on an American Field Service Scholarship.

After his grandfather's death, Marky's parents pressed him to pursue medicine. He entered Cayetano Heredia University in Lima, and for the first two years was on course for medical school. This is where William Rieman, III, entered the picture and became a touchstone mentor for Marky. A Fulbright Scholar from Rutgers University, Reiman offered a course in Instrumental Analysis at his university. As one of two undergraduate students, with other students being engineering professors or researchers from Cayetano Heredia, Marky asked Rieman, "What is the single subject that allows understanding of everything else?" Rieman answered, "physical chemistry."

Though Marky continued in medical school track for two more years, he took extra courses in math and chemistry and took part in laboratory experiments involving human anatomy, physiology and pharmacology. His next semester required direct patient care, and Marky discovered that this was not to his liking as much as research. He withdrew from medical school and applied for graduate study in the USA.

He landed at Rutgers, where Rieman assisted him again by suggesting PhD advisors. Marky opted to work for Ulrich Strauss on the physical chemistry of polyelectrolytes. "Another excellent mentor and teacher, he was always available to answer questions and provide multiple suggestions and ideas about how to do excellent research," notes Marky.

His initial PhD project—on the interaction of pyrene with DNA, using absorption, circular dichroism, and fluorescence techniques—had to be abandoned; he needed DNA polymers with known sequences, but they were not available commercially in 1974. In the process, however, he learned a variety of optical techniques and how to do research on the binding of ligands/drugs to macromolecules. He redirected his research to investigating the interaction of cupric ions and other multivalent ions with synthetic polyacids. Marky elaborates, "These were the alkyl vinyl ether copolymers of maleic anhydride, where the alkyl change varied from one to ten carbons. The shorter alkyl chains behave like polyelectrolytes, the longer chains like polysoaps, and the middle polymers undergo a polysoap/polyelectrolyte transition as the pH is increased, resembling the unfolding of a globular protein."

During his research, he learned additional experimental techniques such as potentiometry and was exposed to calorimetry, dilatometry, and hydrodynamic techniques. As a teaching assistant, he further solidified his background in the physical sciences by teaching general and physical chemistry and physical/analytical lab. It confirmed for him the adage that "the best way to learn a subject is to teach it."

After completing his PhD, Marky stayed at Rutgers to do postdoctoral work with nucleic acids, and then worked as a research associate and assistant research professor until 1987. His next ten years were at New York University, and he has been at the University of Nebraska Medical Center since 1997.

"Coming to UNMC has allowed me to apply my expertise to medical problems," says Marky. "At the moment I am researching the unfolding of non-canonical DNA structures: triplexes, G-quadruplexes, i-motifs and junctions, all formed intramolecularly—and their targeting reactions with complementary strands. This mimics the targeting of mRNA and can be applied in the control of gene expression." He confesses that he likes "toys" (instruments) and thinks that he has a very complete laboratory for measuring complete thermodynamic profiles for the conformational transitions of macromolecules and for the interaction of drugs with macromolecules.

Barry Gold, Professor and Chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, was a colleague of Marky's at UNMC and remains a collaborator. Gold says, "Luis has been a leader among scientists interested in understanding the thermodynamic driving forces associated with DNA and RNA stability... His work on the water

and cations associated with DNA, which often are not observed in crystal and NMR structures, is very detailed and creative. I wish he had been my physical chemistry teacher back in undergraduate school, because he has the ability to bring out the relevance of thermodynamics to chemistry and biology."

Marky has also become an excellent mentor, honored by UNMC in 2006 with an Outstanding Faculty Mentor of Graduate Students Award. Former advisee *Ana-Maria Soto*, now Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry of Towson University, attests that "he is always there for his students and is extremely generous with his time. For instance, I practiced my first seminar 10 times, and Luis sat through all my practices and helped me improve on every single one... He is also a

good friend."

Marky brought mentorship full circle in 1998, when he returned to his alma mater in Lima as a Fulbright Scholar to teach a course in biophysical chemistry and hold a seminar course that



Luis Marky (fourth from left) with pharmacy students and faculty.

included four scientists from the US. He continues to arrange for US students to work for four weeks in a Lima-based pharmacy clerkship—and gives each the opportunity to visit Machu Picchu before returning home.

Marky's advice to aspiring scientists: "Look for good mentors. The reason I am what I am is that I had a fantastic mentor. Then work hard, get results and publish those results."

Marky is married to Blanca, a neurologist whose sub-specialty is in clinical neurophysiology. His son Neal, a psychologist, is married and works in special education in two high schools in New Jersey.

Subgroups

Exocytosis-Endocytosis

R. Mark Wightman Bernard Katz Awardee

Professor *R. Mark Wightman* of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, was selected by the BPS Exocytosis & Endocytosis Subgroup to receive the Sir Bernard Katz Award



R. Mark Wrightman

for excellence in Exocytosis & Endocytosis research. Katz established the exocytotic nature of synaptic transmission and discovered the ligand-gated channel basis for the post-synaptic response. He is one of the founding fathers of biophysics and neuroscience. This award

recognizes scientists who have made significant contributions to the field.

Wightman is being honored for the development of cyclic voltametry and amperometry to detect single granule exocytosis. The approach revolutionized the study of the fusion event. Wightman and his research group demonstrated that electrodes of micrometer dimensions enable exploration of temporal and spatial domains previously inaccessible to electrochemistry. His parallel research in neurochemistry, again using microelectrodes, provided the first real-time view of neurotransmitter dynamics in various preparations ranging from single cultured cells to the brains of animals during behavior. At single cells and neurons, microelectrodes were used to measure and characterized single exocytotic events. He also has unraveled the complex electrochemical signals obtained from within the brain of awake, behaving rats to give an unprecedented view of dynamic chemical communication in the brain reward system. These studies have

uncovered the previously unrecognized, subsecond signaling by dopamine that accompanies seeking of both natural- and drug-based rewards. Importantly, Professor Wightman has freely shared his techniques with others, resulting in the rapid deployment of the technique to the community of biophysicists and enabling a wide range of discovery.

Wightman will deliver the keynote talk entitled Measuring Exocytosis at Single Cells and in Intact Tissue, at the Exocytosis & Endocytosis Subgroup Symposium in San Francisco on Saturday, February 20, 2010. The program will include talks by: Phyllis Hanson, Washington University, Lumenal Vesicle Formation in the Endocytic Pathway; Edwin S. Levitan, University of Pittsburgh, Motion and Capture of Granules in Synaptic Boutons; Thomas F. J. Martin, University of Wisconsin, Priming SNAREs for Ca2+Triggered Vesicle Exocytose; and Vadim Frolov, NICHD, Membrane Curvature and Fission by Dynamin: Mechanics, Dynamics and Partner.

We urge you to renew your membership in the Subgroup and to encourage students and colleagues to join. The subgroup provides probably the best annual forum to air advances in our field. Its continued success and support by the Biophysical Society depends on a diverse and committed membership.

There will be a dinner after the symposium. We urge you to prepay so that we can assure enough seats. Tickets for dinner may also be available at the meeting. Josh Zimmerberg who arranged a great dinner last year in Boston is committed to arranging another one in San Francisco.

Subgroup Committee
Ronald W. Holz, Chair
Joshua Zimmerberg, Chair-Elect
Ruth Heidelberger, previous Chair
Amy Harkins
Edward L. Stuenkel

—Ron Holz, Chair

Intrinsically Disordered Proteins

Workshop

There will be a Telluride workshop on *Macromolecular Crowding* organized by *Huan-Xiang Zhou* (Florida State University) and *Allen Minton* (NIH) July 6-10, 2009. The workshop is devoted to the challenging and important problem of understanding crowding effects within cellular environments, which are essential for proper modeling of protein functions *in vivo*. Macromolecular crowding is of particular interest in the study of IDPs.

More information on this workshop can be found at: http://tellu003.secure.omnis.com/workshop_details.php?wid=121

Papers of Interest

Livernois AM, Hnatchuk DJ, Findlater EE, Graether SP. Obtaining highly purified intrinsically disordered protein by boiling-lysis and single step ion exchange. *Anal Biochem*. 2009 May 20. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 19464251

Hsu ST, Bertoncini CW, Dobson CM. Use of protonless NMR spectroscopy to alleviate the loss of information resulting from exchange-broadening. *J Am Chem Soc.* 2009 Jun 3;131(21):7222-3. PMID: 19432443

Bermel W, Bertini I, Csizmok V, Felli IC, Pierattelli R, Tompa P. H-start for exclusively heteronuclear NMR spectroscopy: the case of intrinsically disordered proteins. *J Magn Reson*. 2009 Jun;198(2):275-81. PMID: 19307141

— Trevor P. Creamer, Secretary/Treasurer

Members in the News



Cecilia Clementi of Rice University and Society member since 2002 received the 2009 Norman Hackerman Award in Chemical Research from the Welch Foundation.



George M. Whitesides of Harvard University and Society member since 2006 received the Dreyfus Prize in Chemical Sciences from the Camille & Henry Dreyfus Foundation.

Grants and Opportunities

Name: Recovery Act Limited Competition: Academic Research Enhancement Award

Objective: To stimulate research in educational institutions that provide baccalaureate or advanced degrees for a significant number of the Nation's research scientists, but that have not been major recipients of NIH support. These AREA grants create opportunities for scientists and institutions otherwise unlikely to participate extensively in NIH programs, to contribute to the Nation's biomedical and behavioral research effort

Who may apply: AREA grants are intended to support small-scale health-related research projects proposed by faculty members of eligible, domestic institutions.

Submission deadline: September 9, 2009 **Web link**: http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/

Academic Jobs in India

This is the first of a two-part article on academic opportunities in India. The article was prepared by Neelanjana Sengupta (n.sengupta@ncl.res.in), a member of the BPS Early Careers Committee. The second part will appear in the August newsletter.

India's contribution to modern science can be said to have begun in the nineteenth century when Jagadish C. Bose published his scientific papers on radio waves. This was followed by significant contributions by stalwarts such as the mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, the physicists C. V. Raman, Satyendranath Bose and Meghnad Saha, and the biophysicist G. N. Ramachandran. India has since continued its pursuit of scientific and technical excellence, establishing a number of universities, laboratories and research institutions across the country. The recent economic growth has opened up greater avenues for funding scientific research, which has prompted an expansion in the breadth of research and also the opening of a number of new institutes. As a result, India is fast becoming a very attractive destination for pursuing a career in science. This article, provides an overview of the research enterprise in India aimed primarily towards those pursuing a PhD degree and those involved in postdoctoral research, with intentions of pursuing a scientific career in India, and provides general guidelines for job applications to academic and research institutions within that country. Potential candidates should keep in mind that specific institutions and departments vary in their requirements, and therefore it is advisable to try and determine a match with the candidate's own profile.

Scientific institutions in India: a broad classification

Scientific research in India is mainly carried out in government-owned universities, insti-

tutes and national laboratories. While most of these places run independent programs, there may be a difference in the scope and focus of research activities. For example, while research does form a part of the core activities in universities, they tend to lay greater emphasis on teaching. On the other hand, certain laboratories, such as those under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), may focus on very specific areas of research. The following is an overview of major scientific institutions in the country. This is by no means a complete list, but rather a broad categorization meant to highlight the scope of a career for potential candidates.

1) The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs), and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc)

These special institutes are entitled to grant degrees under acts of the Indian parliament. They have stringent selection procedures and attract the best students from all over India, and even some from abroad. There were five IITs (Kharagpur, Chennai, Mumbai, Kanpur and Delhi), until the establishment of two more in 1994 and 2001 (Guwahati and Roorkee); seven more (Bhubaneswar, Gandhinagar, Hyderabad, Patna, Punjab and Rajasthan) have been added in 2008. The five IISERs (Kolkata, Pune, Mohali, Bhopal and Trivandrum) were established in 2008 with the aim of imparting the best education in basic sciences to Indians starting from their undergraduate years. More IISERs are expected to come up in the future. The IISc (Bangalore) ranks among the best institutions in the world for carrying out cutting edge scientific and technical research. The IITs and the IISc have departments in almost every area of basic, applied and engineering sciences, while the IISER faculty (primarily from the basic sciences) is not sub-divided between individual departments. Teaching, both at the undergraduate and the graduate level, is one of the key responsibilities of the academic faculty within these institutes.

2) Universities

Major universities in India are owned by the union or the state governments, the former usually referred to as central universities. Universities focus mostly on undergraduate education, and hence teaching is the core responsibility in these institutions. Fundamental research activity, however, is often pursued. In general, central universities (about 20 in number currently; about 15 more to be added soon) tend to be better funded and lay greater emphasis on research. However, there are a number of state universities that carry out excellent research in various disciplines. Some of the well known universities in India are the Jawaharlal Nehru University (central), the University of Hyderabad (central), Delhi University (central), the Banaras Hindu University (central), the University of Pune (state), the University of Madras (state), and the University of Kolkata (state).

3) Research institutions under other government bodies

There are a number of bodies of the union government which govern the functioning of various research institutions. Examples are the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). Each laboratory under these bodies conducts independent research programs. However, with the exception of laboratories under the DAE (which now grant degrees through the Homi Bhaba National Institute, or the HBNI), PhD students studying at these institutions receive their degrees from the associated university. Following a brief overview of the laboratories run by these organizations.

• Laboratories under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

The CSIR, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Science and Technology, is aimed at providing a strong science and technology base for strategic and social sectors, as well as for the industry. The council has 38 laboratories

under its wing, each with specialized focus on a specific area. The research carried out amongst the laboratories is diverse, ranging from the physical, chemical and biological sciences, to mechanical and aerospace engineering, to geophysical and oceanographic research. Some of the well known laboratories under the council are the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB), the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), and the National Physical Laboratory (NPL).

• Laboratories under the Department of Biotechnology (DBT)

There are eight autonomous laboratories under the DBT involved in basic and applied biological research. Some laboratories under this family are the National Institute of Immunology (NII), the National Centre for Cell Sciences (NCCS) and the National Brain Research Centre (NBRC).

Laboratories under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)

There are about 10 laboratories under the DAE umbrella, including the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), the Bhaba Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the Institute of Physics (IOP), the Institute of Mathematical Science (IMSc), the Harish-Chandra Research Institute (HRI) and the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP). Many of the DAE institutes (such as TIFR, BARC and SINP) conduct research in multidisciplinary areas. For example, the three schools under the world-renowned TIFR (School of Natural Sciences, School of Mathematical Sciences, and School of Technology and Computer Science) carry out cutting edge research in frontier areas of physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics and computer science. While the main campus is in Mumbai, TIFR has specialized wings in Bangalore (National Centre for Biological Sciences, or NCBS) and Pune (National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, or NCRA), which operate as independent research units.

Public Affairs

President Submits 2010 Budget to Congress

On May 7, *President Obama* sent his budget request for Fiscal Year 2010 Budget to Congress. While the President has proposed a 7.7% increase to the National Science Foundation budget, his requests for the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Energy Office of Science are significantly lower, 1.3% and 2.1% respectively.

National Institutes of Health

The President's FY 2010 Budget proposes \$30.8 billion, a 1.5% increase above the 2009 enacted level. Under this proposal, the Office of the Director's budget would be cut from \$1.247 billion to \$1.183 billion, \$64 million below fiscal year 2009 funding level. The Budget does not include funding for the NIH Director's Bridge Awards, which funds research projects of new and prominent researchers unable to receive funding in the first round of grant awards. Acting NIH Director Raynard Kington explained at a May 21st hearing in front of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies that the funding for these short term grants was no longer needed due to the \$8.4 billion NIH received to support research in stimulus funding.

For the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, the President has requested \$2.024 billion, a \$26 million increase over the 2009 funding level. The 2010 Budget also includes \$313 million for the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB), a \$4 million increase over FY 2009.

The President has stated that one of his top priorities for NIH is cancer research and he plans to double the budget for cancer research by 2016. As a result, the National Cancer Institute would receive the largest increase of the NIH Institutes and Centers in the President's proposed budget with a budget of \$5.15 billion, \$181 million over last year. Other institutes also outline how additional dollars will support cancer related research. For example, in the document explaining how dollars would be spend at NIGMS under the President's proposed budget, the Institute states that it would increase cancer research funding 4.4%.

At the May 21 Senate hearing, *Chairman Harkin (D-IA)* expressed concern that most of the President's requested increase for NIH is slated to be spent on cancer research or autism research, another Presidential priority. Harkin noted that there are many other diseases that deserve attention, and that the Congress may not agree with the Presidential priorities.

National Science Foundation

The proposed 2010 Budget for the National Science Foundation (NSF) is \$7.0 billion, 7.7% above FY 2009 funding level. With this level of funding for fiscal year 2010, NSF will stay on track of doubling the budget over 10 years as stated in the COMPETES Act. In regards to NSF's Graduate Research Fellowships (GRF), the President requests GRF receive \$122 million. The FY 2010 budget proposal includes \$55 million, same funding level as last year, for the Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and \$58.2 million, \$2.8 million decrease from FY 2009, for the Math and Science Partnerships Program. The latter two programs received significant funding in the stimulus package.

NSF's research and related activities budget for FY 2010 would see an increase of \$550 million, totaling \$5.73 billion to be distributed among the six disciplinary directorates, three offices and other programs. The President's Budget proposes the Biological Sciences Directorate (BIO) receive an 11.8% increase.

Another priority for the President is offering programs to invite many American students to enter STEM fields, in particular clean energy. In his request, the President proposes creating a collaborative initiative between NSF and Department of Energy (DOE) called RE-ENER-GYSE (Regaining our ENERGY Science and Engineering Edge). The Budget request for RE-ENERGYSE is \$115 million.

Department of Energy

The President proposed DOE's FY 2010 budget total \$10.7 billion, an increase of \$119 million over last year. The President is committed to honoring the COMPETES ACT, doubling of the DOE's budget over ten years and the increases in the 2010 Budget align with that goal. The Office of Science budget request is \$4.9 billion, 3.5 % increase over the 2009 funded level. The Budget request for DOE's fiscal year 2010 will support approximately 25,000 Ph.Ds, graduate students, undergraduates, engineers, and technicians across 300 or more universities and all 17 DOE laboratories.

According to *Patricia Dehmer*, Deputy Director for Science Programs of the Office of Science, under the 2010 Budget Proposal, Basic Energy Sciences would receive a significant increase in budget funding, \$113 million over the last year, totaling \$1.685 billion. However, Science Laboratories Infrastructure would see a cut of \$11.78 million, totaling \$133 million for FY 2010. The 2010 Budget requests \$20.678 million for the Workforce Development for Teachers and Scientists to support undergraduate research internships, minority faculty researchers, secondary educators, and middle and highs school annual regional and national science competitions.

While the President provides a proposed federal budget each year, it is up to Congress to pass and appropriate the annual funds. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are currently hearing testimony from

federal agency officials, as well as outside organizations, and will be creating their versions of the budget over the summer and fall.

Rumor: Francis Collins May Head NIH

According to a May 26 article, published by *Bloomberg News*, *Francis Collins* is near the end of the screening process to be the next director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The scientific community knows Collins as the lead scientist of the Human Genome Project in his role as the director of NIH's National Human Genome Research Institute from 1993-2008.

According to the *Bloomberg News*, both Collins and the White House have remained silent and refused to comment on the rumor.

Addressing VISA Delays

In June, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* reported conversations with State Department representatives regarding the Department's new strategies to address visa delays for foreign students and science researchers.

David Donahue, the deputy assistant secretary of state for consular services at the State Department confirmed that the Department has increased personnel and modified procedures to expedite the visa process. It is his belief that the delays were due to staff shortages and the influx of visa applications.

According to *Andy Laine*, representative of the State Department, the goal is to have each case go through a two-week process. The changes to the procedures and hiring of additional staff took effect the last week of May.

There has been a backlog on visa renewal or request of visa applications. Researchers that have left the United States to visit their home country encountered re-entry problems were stranded, or delayed for months before receiving approval to return into the country. Members of the scientific community hope this issue will be addressed with the new approaches taken by the Department because foreign students and researchers make up the breadth of scientific disciplines and play a vital role in the nation's competitiveness.

John Holdren, OSTP Director, assisted in the development of the procedural changes and said, "It is more important than ever that we remove unnecessary impediments to collaborative innovation and technical advancement."

The Biophysical Society signed an interorganizational statement encouraging the State Department to improve the visa process to cut down on delays.

Biophysical Society Sponsors Boston Area Science Fairs Awards

In conjunction with the Biophysical Society's 53rd Annual Meeting held in Boston in March 2009, the Society sponsored a Biophysical Society award at four local high school science fairs near Boston. The judges of each fair chose a winner whose research project was related to biophysics. Each recipient received a certificate and monetary award.

Nicole Colantonio is the recipient of the Biophysical Society award at the Braintree High School Science Fair. The title of her science fair project was *Catalyzing a Chemical Reaction*. The Braintree Tree High School Fair was held on February 12, 2009.



Michelle Howard, pictured left, received the Society's award at the Boston Public Regional Science Fair on March 7, 2009. The title of her project was Feeding Africa (II) Enhanced Root Growth in Millet Using NAA and AVG. She is tenth-grade student at Boston Latin High.

Ryan Foisy and Mitchell Culler received the Society's award at the Worcester Regional Science and Engineering Fair on March 13, 2009 for their project, The Effects of Cell Phone Emissions on Drosophilia. Both students attend Hopkinton High and are in the 11th grade.

On May 2, 2009, the Massachusetts State Science and Engineering Fair named *Cali Warner*, ninth grade student at Dartmouth High, the recipient of the Society's award. The title of her science fair project was *Temperature Affect Seed Germination and Growth*.

The Society plans to continue offering awards in the Boston area in 2010 and to expand to include science fairs near the site of the 2010 Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California.

VISA Tips

The Biophysical Society 2010 Annual Meeting has been registered with the US State Department. This ensures that US Consulates throughout the world know that it is a legitimate meeting for which scientists will request visas.

For up to date information on visa requirements and application process, visit the US Department of State website http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html to determine if you need a visa.

- Effective January 12, 2009, a valid ESTA approval is required for all Visa Waiver Program (VWP) to travel to the United States. The US Department of Homeland Security, Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA), which can be accessed at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/esta/ is a free, automated system used to determine the eligibility of visitors to travel to the United States under the VWP. It collects the same information as the paper I-94W form that VWP travelers fill out en route to the United States. ESTA applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel. An ESTA authorization generally will be valid for up to two years. Authorizations will be valid for multiple entries into the United States. DHS recommends that travelers submit an ESTA application as soon as they begin making travel plans.
- Once you have determined that you need a visa, contact the US Embassy Consular Section in your country to find out much time is needed for processing, but always allow at least four months.
- Apply early, at least four months before your travel.
- Register for the Annual Meeting and request a personal letter of invitation.
- Include your complete itinerary with your application and the purpose of your trip.
- Provide the letter of invitation and, if presenting a poster, a copy of the abstract and presentation information.
- Provide information about your scientific position and status.
- Applicants need to demonstrate their intent to return to the country of origin and proof of ties to their home country or permanent residency (bank account, work contracts, etc.).

Problems?

If you experience delays or problems with your visa process, notify the BPS Office and complete the National Academies of Sciences International Visitors Office questionnaire at http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/biso/visas/PGA_048017

They will provide you with additional information to help the processing.



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Biophysical Society Newsletter—July 2009

Upcoming Events

September 6–13, 2009

EMBO Conference—The Physics of Cells

Dubrovnik, Croatia

http://www.conference-service.com/cfs09-04/welcome.cgi

September 19–November 1, 2009 10th International Summer School on Biophysics Rovinj, Croatia http://www.irb.hr/biophysics October 17–19, 2009 2nd Conference on BioMedical Engineering and Informatics Tianjin, China http://www.tjut.edu.cn/cisp-bmei2009

October 26–30, 2009 Physical Principles of Protein Behavior in the Cell Dresden, Saxony, Germany http://www.mpipks-dresden.mpg.de/~phppbc09/