

APS Forum on Graduate Student Affairs March Meeting 2008 Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 2 (4/8/2008)

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Introduction

Welcome to the second issue of the FGSA e-newsletter for 2008. We have two news items regarding the FGSA's executive committee. First, we have a report from the 2008 APS unit convocation. We also have a list of our new FGSA officers from the elections.

Following these two news items we have a list of FGSA-sponsored events at the upcoming April meeting. There will be a panel discussion on careers for physicists outside of academia and national labs held on April 12th, as well as a session on political careers for scientists held on April 13th. Both sessions should be of interest to students considering alternatives to academic-track careers and/or nearing completion of their degrees. The third FGSA sponsored session relates to programs to prepare teaching assistants, and will be of interest to both beginning and senior graduate students. Last but not least is an announcement for the FGSA Student Lounge, which will provide refreshments Saturday through Monday. Be sure to check it out!

APS Unit convocation 2008

APS Unit convocation is an annual meeting held at the APS main office and brings APS officers together to discuss the structure and functionality of APS. It also provides a unique platform for officers to interact with APS staff. This year Judy Franz (Executive Officer) started the meeting by welcoming all participants on behalf of APS President. She thanked all members and the staff for very successful year 2007. She also praised graduate students for taking an active part in various APS activities. Amy Flatten (Director, International Affairs) thanked FGSA for having an international officer and also for organizing a successful CAM 07. FGSA received very strong support from other units, forums and topical groups of APS. All participants advocated the institution of an official student representative position in all APS units and divisions (some of them already have). Michael Lubell (Director of Public Affairs) spoke about congressional visits and lobbying. He encouraged all APS members to take engage in serious lobbying efforts to ensure increased science funding. He suggested all participants to go though the book Political Brain by Drew Westen.

FGSA Elections

The votes have been counted (finally!), and we have a number of new officers joining the FGSA Executive Board. Congratulations to Kendall Mahn (Chair-Elect), Chunlei Xia (Treasurer), Ivelisse

Cabrera (International Student Affairs Officer), Amber Stuver (APS Councilor), and Brad Conrad and Rebekah Schiller (Members-at-Large).

Session on Nontraditional Careers for Physicists, April 12th

If you will be attending the April meeting, be sure to attend the FGSA sponsored panel discussion on non-traditional careers for physicists (Session E4). The session will be held at the Hyatt Regency Promenade B on Saturday, April 12 from 3:30-5:20pm. Don Engel, a Senior Science Policy Fellow with APS will begin the session with a discussion of scientific careers in public policy. Robert Garisto, Associate Editor for Physical Review Letters, will follow with a discussion of his experiences transitioning from work as a theoretical particle physicist to an editor for PRL. At 4pm, David Morgenstern of Monsanto will give his talk entitled "What I've Learned and unlearned as a Physical Scientist in the Life Sciences" about various aspects of his work in the industrial sector. Stan Lawton of Boeing will talk about work for physicists at Boeing, and his career in the aerospace industry.

FGSA Session "Equipping Scientists to Run for Political Office", April 13th

FGSA and FPS (Forum on Physics and Society) are sponsoring a session to discuss various issues surrounding scientists becoming involved in politics, especially in running for political office. Session M6 begins at 3:30pm on Sunday, April 13 and will be held at Promenade D of the Hyatt Regency. Speakers include Francis Slakey of APS, Philip W. Hammer of the Franklin Institute, Marshall Berman of the New Mexico State Board of Education, Lesley Stone (Scientists and Engineers for America), and Michael Fortner (State Representative, 9th-IL and of Northern Illinois University).

Preparing Teaching Assistants to Teach, April 15th

FGSA and Fed will be sponsoring a session to discuss programs to prepare teaching assistants to teach. Since being a TA is a common theme to most graduate students, FGSA members may find this session interesting and useful in their careers. This session (session X4) will be held in Promenade B of the Hyatt Regency on Tuesday April 15 beginning at 1:30pm. Steven Pollock (U of Colorado – Boulder) begins the discussion with his talk entitled "Preparing Undergrads to Teach (Well): The Colorado Learning Assistant Model." Mackenzie Stetzer (U Washington) follows with a talk entitled "Professional development of graduate TAs: The role of physics education research." The final speaker of the session will be Kenneth Heller (U of Minnesota) with his talk "Preparing and Sustaining Teaching Assistants." Beginning graduate students may find the session of interest if they are currently or will be appointed as TAs. Senior graduate students may also find useful material in the session for their future careers advising and supervising TAs.

April Meeting Student Lounge

Have a little down time? Stop by the APS Student Lounge to connect with fellow students. Society literature and refreshments will be available. Be sure to get your pass for the lounge at the Friday night Graduate Student Event or at the APS Membership Booth. The Lounge will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday through Monday.