

THE INSTITUTE

Van Zandt Williams named as new director of AIP

The appointment of Van Zandt Williams as director of the American Institute of Physics was approved in January by the Institute's Governing Board. Dr. Williams, whose appointment will become effective on April 1, 1965, is a 48-year-old physicist with an extensive background of experience as a scientist and administrator in the field of optical research and instrumentation. He is currently the president elect of the Optical Society of America. Since October 1, 1964, when Elmer Hutchisson retired after having served for more than seven years as the Institute's director, Ralph A. Sawyer has been in charge of the administrative affairs of the organization. Dr. Sawyer, who is also chairman of the AIP Governing Board, agreed at that time to serve as acting director on an interim basis until a successor to Dr. Hutchisson could be appointed.

Dr. Williams is at present a consultant to the Perkin-Elmer Corporation in Norwalk, Conn., and has been associated with that firm for more than sixteen years. He was born in Providence, R.I., in 1916, graduated from Brown University in 1937, and received his PhD in physics from Princeton University in 1941. He then joined the Stamford Research Laboratories of the American Cyanamid Corporation, where he was employed from 1941 to 1943 as a group leader in charge of infrared spectroscopy, and from 1943 to 1948 as assistant director of the Physics Division.

He joined Perkin-Elmer in 1948 as director of instrument development and sales. He later became vice president and director of sales and research, and for a time he was general manager of the company's Instrument Division. He was elected executive vice president in 1957, and three years later he became vice president in charge of technical development, with responsibility for the company's entire research and development effort. Dr. Williams stepped down from this administrative post last year, but he has



Van Zandt Williams

continued his association with Perkin-Elmer as a consultant.

A fellow of the Optical Society, Dr. Williams has served on its Board of Directors and has been active in its affairs. Three years ago he headed an OSA study which pointed up a lack of adequate numbers of trained optics personnel and recommended an action program in optics designed to stimulate research and education in the field. Dr. Williams was named by the Society to lead the program and to coordinate the activities of its task forces, which are variously concerned with graduate research, undergraduate education, and the training of opticians and technicians. That program is in progress.

Documentation Project

The recent renewal of a National Science Foundation grant has insured the continuity of the American Institute of Physics Documentation Research Project for two additional years. Under the leadership of Hugh C. Wolfe and Mrs. Pauline Atherton, the project aims to improve existing journal indexes and other retrieval tools.

An important step in the development of a retrieval system has been a

new technique which is being tested by the project staff. For the past two years, authors of papers in several AIP journals have been receiving Aid-to-Indexing forms while their manuscripts are being processed for publication. When an author of a paper is notified of receipt or acceptance of his manuscript, he is asked to fill out the Aid-to-Indexing form, describing the experimental or theoretical work he is reporting, the property of the material or object of the study, and the method he used. Now, following these two years of experimentation, with an eighty percent response from journal authors, the editors and indexers for six AIP journals indicate that the information obtained has been useful in amplifying the title, evaluating the abstract, indicating the type of research reported, and choosing the subject index entries in the annual or volume index.

Recently, Dr. Rita Lerner, a research associate in chemical physics at Columbia University, joined the project to work on the improvement of the index for *The Journal of Chemical Physics*, *The Review of Scientific Instruments*, and other journals. From the Aid-to-Indexing forms for papers which appeared in *JCP*, she is constructing an indexing language for concepts which identify the property-object-method categories. In this way, concepts in papers and in search requests can be analyzed and transformed into the index language in a systematic way, and matched, if identical. During the next few months, an index for papers in Volume 41 of *JCP* will be developed according to this technique. The new index will then be compared with the existing journal index and with requests for lists of references from chemical physicists. Further details concerning the Aid-to-Indexing project are contained in a report, AIP/DRP 64-2, which is available upon request from the Documentation Research Project at AIP.