

the physics community

Physics departments huddle to gain ground in education

For the past four years some physics departments have been banding together as "regional associations," with the aim of better physics education. Many of these associations were set up to improve communications within their regions by becoming clearinghouses for new ideas and methods and forums for local problems. Newsletters and meetings are common to all groups, but some have additional programs on curricula development, faculty and student research and faculty instruction. Many associations receive some or major financial support from the National Science Foundation, but a few rely solely on membership dues. Here are some that have come to the attention of PHYSICS TODAY.

Pacific Northwest Association for College Physics (PNACP): Contact, James B. Gerhart, University of Washington. Geographically the largest (64 institutions in four states), PNACP is the most formally organized regional association with a 19-member board of directors overseeing all activities. Projects during 1970, which are typical of annual events, were a series of regional conferences on multidisciplinary science courses and a nine-week summer institute on materials for local introductory courses. A unique program is a review board that evaluates funding proposals made by member institutions. The association's long-range goal is to form a depository for physics teaching materials and research information and possibly to develop a science teaching center.

Regional Cooperative Physics Group (RCPG): Contact, R. M. Grant, Denison University. This group is an informal structure of 30 institutions in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Pennsylvania whose membership dues support its activities. As a result of its conference last year, RCPG is publishing a booklet on computer programs for class use. A future conference is planned on technology in physics education.

Kentucky Association of Physics Teachers (KAPT): Secretary-Treasurer, George K. Miner, Thomas More College. A section of the American Association of Physics Teachers, KAPT was formed in 1933 and presently has 580 members from high schools as well as colleges. It is now working with the statewide "Kentucky Science Improvement" project, which is concentrating on science and physical-science courses in the junior high school.

Consortium for the Advancement of Physics Education (CAPE): Director, C. E. Hathaway, Kansas State University. Here the physics department at Kansas State University is providing faculty and student services needed by six four-year colleges in the Kansas-Missouri region, although CAPE also emphasizes mutual assistance between college and university. Since its inception in 1969, CAPE has initiated student symposia, senior-research awards, summer research for students, open-shop facilities at KSU for member institutions, faculty symposia and summer research fellowships. It is also planning a program using desk-top computers in physics courses.

Virginia College Cooperative Committee (VCCC): Part-time director, Lee S. Anthony, Roanoke College. Membership includes all two-year and four-year colleges and universities in Virginia. Lack of financial support has limited activities, but VCCC does have an electronics and machine-shop facility that serves all member schools and has started an equipment-service program, which should be self-supporting after the present NSF grant expires.

Illinois State Physics Project (ISPP): Full-time coordinator, Ralph J. Miller, Greenville College. This group was formed by the AAPT Illinois section and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction solely for improving high-school physics teaching. Regular features are faculty summer institutes and in-service courses, and recently ISPP has started a public-relations program to increase physics enrollments. In the future it plans to deal with the preparation of high-school teachers and to consider a regional materials center.

Chesapeake Physics Association (CPA): Part-time director, Philip Connors, University of Maryland. Membership is drawn from the two-year and four-year colleges and universities in Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia. Funding from NSF supports a faculty-leave program that allows teachers to continue their studies while a replacement is at their institution. It also supports a summer research program, in which faculty members from small institutions spend the summer at larger universities or laboratories, and a consultants program.

Perlow and Hamermesh are new journal editors

The American Institute of Physics has named Gilbert J. Perlow as editor of the *Journal of Applied Physics* and *Applied Physics Letters* and Morton Hamermesh as editor of the *Journal of Mathematical Physics*. David Hess was also appointed as an associate editor.

Perlow succeeds Foster F. Rieke, who had been editor for a short time before his death on 7 June (PHYSICS TODAY, October, page 71). Rieke's appointment followed the retirement of Frank E. Myers from the position and from Argonne National Laboratory; Myers had been editor since 1964. Perlow is a senior physicist at Argonne National Laboratory, where he has been since 1953, and has served on the board of editors for *The Review of Scientific Instruments*. Hess, also with Argonne, and Lester Guttman, who continues as an associate editor, will work with Perlow.

Hamermesh, professor and head of the school of physics and astronomy at the University of Minnesota, was physics chairman at the State University of New York, Stony Brook, for the 1969-1970 academic year. He replaces EL-

liott Montroll, who had been editor since the journal's inception in 1960.

in brief

A Regional Center for Macromolecular Structure has been established at MIT to deduce the biological functions of proteins and nucleic acids by mapping their structure, using techniques of crystallization, x-ray diffraction and computer analysis. The center will serve researchers throughout New England and is directed by Edward Hazen, Jr and S. H. Kim.

The National Academy of Sciences is accepting applications from US scientists interested in a one-month to a year exchange program to the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania or Yugoslavia during the 1971-72 academic year. Applications should be sent by 23 Nov. to NAS, Office of the Foreign Secretary (USSR/EE). □