Council passes pro-ERA resolution

By a vote of 13 to 10 with two abstentions, the APS Council adopted the following resolution during its meeting in New York on 18 November:

"Whereas the Council of The American Physical Society supports the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment as one step in increasing equal opportunity for women in our society, including helping to increase the presently low proportion of women physicists;

"Whereas The American Physical Society will intensify its activities to assist and encourage women to study physics and to enter physics as a career:

"Be it therefore resolved that until the present Equal Rights Amendment is ratified, or the present period for the ratification lapses, whichever occurs first, the APS schedule general and divisional meetings, beyond those already scheduled, only in states which have ratified (and not rescinded—should Congress permit rescision) the Equal Rights Amendment."

The Council's resolution expresses its serious concern about all the circumstances in our national life that, taken together, result in an overwhelming underrepresentation of women in the profession of physics. A majority of the Council feel that passage of ERA will contribute in the long run to constructive changes in those circumstances, and the resolution expresses this view. Council has determined to intensify the Society's activities to encourage women to take up physics careers.

Regarding future meetings, the Council expressed its intention, between now and March 1982, to refrain from scheduling future general and divisional meetings in states that have not ratified ERA, unless ERA should be ratified prior to that date. This decision does not apply to the sectional meetings of the Society, which are regional in character, nor to topical conferences for which the APS does not in any case select locations. Since Congress has not made provision for past votes rescinding ERA, and has precluded this during the three-year period of extension, the Council will not preclude scheduling meetings in such states until the Courts clarify their status. It should be noted that virtually all of the general meetings and many of the divisional meetings of the Society for the period to March 1982 are already scheduled and will not be affected. Thus, no contractual relationships are altered by this decision.

The Council did not associate itself with any other organization in relation to the ERA issue, and has not voted to support any particular movement. It does, however, have the responsibility to plan future meetings in a manner that is faithful to the purpose of the Society and the needs and sensitivities of its members. The Council's action states the Council's policy and provides guidance to itself in future arrangements for meetings.

David Heckerman wins Apker memorial award

William A. Fowler (Caltech), chairman of the 1978 Selection Committee, announced that David E. Heckerman of UCLA had been chosen as the first winner of the Apker Award, a new APS prize that recognizes outstanding achievement in physics by an undergraduate student who demonstrates great potential for future scientific accomplishment. The award consists of $2000, a certificate citing the research and the school where the work was done, and a travel allowance for attendance at the APS Annual Meeting.

The Apker Award is the only national prize recognizing achievement in physics at the undergraduate level. It was established as a memorial to LeRoy Apker, a distinguished solid-state physicist, through an endowment donated to the Society by his widow, Jean Dickey Apker, who obtained her bachelor's degree from Ohio State University and her doctorate from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for her research on the self-diffusion of indium. For many years she worked with LeRoy in the General Electric Research Laboratory on photoemission and on the energy distribution of photoelectrons.

Heckerman, as part of his application, submitted a paper describing his original research on "Gravity-Capillary Waves in Narrow Channels and in Liquid He^4 Below the Lambda Point," done while he was an undergraduate at UCLA. He chose to remain at UCLA for graduate work, continuing in physics.

Heckerman will receive his award during the Ceremonial Session of the APS Annual Meeting in New York on Tuesday, 30 January. He is also scheduled to give an invited paper on his work during this meeting.

The Committee also made special mention of the work of the three other finalists in this competition—Elizabeth

David Heckerman, this year's Apker Award winner for his liquid-helium research, is congratulated by William Fowler, selection-committee chairman, as APS president Norman Ramsey looks on.