

Welcome to our new affiliates

It is a pleasant responsibility to welcome the American Meteorological Society, the International Association of Mathematical Physicists and the Materials Research Society as Affiliate Societies of the American Institute of Physics. With these latest additions, the number of AIP affiliates now stands at seventeen. Almost ten years ago, Fred Seitz expressed concern on this page (July 1974, page 80) about a trend away from the "strong spirit of inter-Society cooperation, which has been a dominant feature of American physics." Today the growing number of societies that have affiliated with or become full members of AIP (there are now nine Member Societies) is evidence of a renewed spirit of scientific comradery in the physics community.

Affiliation is the first step a Society can take along the road towards full membership in the AIP family. Of the three new affiliates, I am most familiar with the Materials Research Society. However, I believe the following account of the history and experiences that led MRS to become affiliated with AIP has much in common with the experiences of the other two Societies as well.

When, in the mid 1970s, I first became involved with the Materials Research Society, I spent many hours explaining to colleagues that MRS was not another of my "women's lib" activities. My professional research in structure-property relationships is central both to the MRS, a Society that addresses materials research in its interdisciplinary aspects, and to the APS, which recognizes that my research is part of basic condensed-matter physics.

MRS meetings have always taken place within walking distance of my laboratory at MIT, further encouraging my participation as well as that of colleagues at MIT, Harvard, Northeastern University, Boston University and other local institutions. Because of the large concentration in the Boston area of universities with strong materials programs, the MRS meetings have attracted a high level of graduate-student participation. MRS has explicitly encouraged graduate participation through graduate-student prizes and special travel awards.

Despite its obvious Boston roots, however, the MRS has increasingly involved broad national and international participation from the materials research community. The meetings consist of a collection of symposia in areas of current research interest to this community.

The need for such symposia can be measured by the dramatic growth of the MRS meeting attendance. The percentage growth has, in fact, even surpassed the impressive growth over the same period of the APS March Meeting, which emphasizes condensed-matter physics. What distinguishes the MRS meeting format is its greater emphasis on interdisciplinary topics and topics of broad industrial and societal interest. Thus, MRS and the APS Condensed Matter Physics Division

are complementary. Indeed, a number of MRS symposia have been cosponsored with APS. I believe this is a good model, benefiting both the materials research community and the participating Societies.

By becoming a member of the AIP family, MRS will be able to couple more effectively to APS, to the other AIP Member Societies and the larger physics community. An equally important consideration is the many AIP services that will become available to MRS as an Affiliate. These include a wide variety of critical functions such as centralized record-keeping on memberships, billing services and statistical studies of the profession. In particular, AIP provides an important means for communication between physicists through *PHYSICS TODAY*. Its excellent articles and new stories on all specialties in physics keep physicists informed of developments in all fields of physics and in the relationships of physics to society. Having the largest international circulation of any physics publication, *PHYSICS TODAY* is received by all members of all AIP Members Societies, members of the Society of Physics Students, members of Congress and important officials in the administration.

The Public Information Division of AIP serves as a valuable interface between the physics community and the public media. This division is prepared to operate press rooms for AIP Member and Affiliated Societies at their meetings. The division arranges for press releases reporting on new significant research results in physics for use by the public media. The new tv spots on physics, prepared by the division for news programs, have been very well received.

For several of the Member and Affiliated Societies, such as APS, AIP actually produces the Societies' journals through its large editorial and composition facility at Woodbury. AIP is able to produce journals of high quality at very low cost to library and member subscribers—a cost per page as much as an order of magnitude less than that charged by commercial technical journals.

Because of the large full-time professional staff at AIP, each of the Member and Affiliated Societies is able to carry on its affairs with a small permanent staff, often with only part-time efforts of senior scientists.

MRS has found a natural "home" within AIP. Many members of AIP Member Societies are actively engaged in "materials research" and recognize the centrality of the MRS program to their own areas of research. Similar things can be said about the interests the American Meteorological Society and the International Association of Mathematical Physics have in common with other AIP Societies. I look forward to a long and mutually beneficial association between AMS, IAMP, MRS and AIP.

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