

In seeking a job, new PhDs need more patience and flexibility

Physics may no longer be entirely outside the shadow of US unemployment. It is taking new recipients of physics PhDs longer to find jobs, and more of them are finding none, according to the latest Employment Survey of the AIP Manpower Statistics Division.

The present survey analyzes responses to questionnaires sent December 1982 to new graduates who had indicated the previous summer that they intended to find jobs. Out of 912 new PhD physicists, more than 400 responded to this follow-up survey. The survey finds that only 34% of 1982 PhDs found potentially permanent jobs in less than three months. During each of the two years previous, 46% of new PhDs found such jobs in that time. And as of last winter, six months after most had graduated, a few more PhDs were still unemployed than had been the

previous year. While new recipients of master's and bachelor's degrees found jobs last year at the rates their predecessors did, twice as many 1982 bachelors remained unemployed the winter after their graduations than did 1981 bachelors: Among 1982 bachelors, 8%, or 59 persons, remained unemployed.

The survey finds that the difference in rates of potentially permanent employment for theoretical and experimental physicists has moderated somewhat: Among 1982 doctorate recipients, 58% of experimentalists and 42% of theoretical physicists had potentially permanent jobs; among 1981 graduates, the proportions were 60% and 38%, respectively.

In examining the relation between employment and subfield, the survey reports that the percentages of PhD graduates who left their subfields for potentially permanent jobs rose to 46%

from 40% the year previous. In a new table, the survey displays the movement from subfield of dissertation to subfield of employment for 1982 PhD recipients. Of those in potentially permanent jobs, between one-quarter and one-half stayed in the same subfield. (The highest percentages were in plasmas and fluids, optics, and solid-state physics.) Of new postdocs, over 90% stayed in subfields of elementary particles, solid state, and astrophysics. The survey also reveals that 43% of all postdoc appointments were for a year or less, a rise from 28% the previous year. The rise was steepest in elementary-particle physics, where the percentage of these short postdocs doubled.

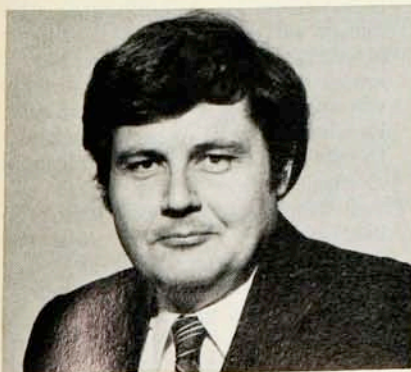
The survey is available, free, from its author, Susanne D. Ellis, Manpower Statistics Division, AIP, 335 East 45 Street, New York, NY 10017. (Request Publication No. R 282.6.)

Purdy is AAPM president-elect

The American Association of Physicists in Medicine has chosen James Purdy president-elect for 1984. Purdy will succeed the president for 1984, Edward S. Sternick, who is the director of the medical physics division of the Tufts-New England Medical Center and associate professor at Tufts.

Purdy was educated at Lamar University (BA in math-physics, 1967) and the University of Texas at Austin (MA in physics, 1969; PhD in nuclear physics,

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ics, 1971). After a postdoctoral appointment at the M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute, he joined the Washington University School of Medicine as an instructor in radiation physics. He is now professor and chief of radiation physics in the Division of Radiation Oncology there. His research has concerned clinical dosimetry, high-energy photon/electron beam dosimetry, electron beam arc therapy, compensating filter development, dose computation and quality assurance instrumentation.

Alexander P. Turner was elected to a three-year term as treasurer. He is the director of the department of radiological physics, Radiation Oncology Center, in Sacramento, California. Four new members-at-large of the AAPM Board were elected for three-year terms: Alfred Smith (cancer expert and acting chief of the Radiotherapy Development Branch of the Radiation Research Program, National Cancer Institute), Dale Starchman (professor of clinical radiation biophysics, Northeastern Ohio University Medical College), Jean St.

Germain (assistant attending physicist, Memorial Hospital, and assistant professor of clinical radiology, Cornell University Medical College) and Charles R. Wilson (associate professor of radiology, Medical College of Wisconsin-Milwaukee).

Newsletter helps joint physics education efforts

A new newsletter is disseminating information about joint efforts of high schools and colleges to improve high-school physics education.

The first issue arrived at hundreds of university and college physics departments in November. In it, college and university physicists describe programs at their schools. Among topics covered in the newsletter are: a cooperative of high schools organized by Eastern Carolina University that develops resources for demonstrations and provides visits by scientists, a physics olympics for high-school students at Youngstown State University in Ohio, an MS degree program for high-school physics teachers at Mar-