Massey Resigns as Vice President for NSF Job

Walter E. Massey has resigned his position as APS vice president having been nominated director of the National Science Foundation (see PHYSICS TODAY, October, page 55). If Congress confirms him, Massey will take office immediately, succeeding Erich Bloch.

APS leadership is grateful for Massey's service to the society and wishes him well in his position at NSF. Massey would have succeeded Nicolaas Bloembergen as APS president-elect in January 1991 and would have become president the following year. In accordance with the APS constitution, Massey's place in the presidential line will be assumed by Ernest M. Henley of the University of Washington, who was elected vice president in this fall's election (see News from APS in next month's issue of PHYSICS TODAY). A special election will be held in 1991 to select a new vice president for the slot vacated by Henley.

tough questions, however." Among other things, Brabec was asked to explain the x-ray absorption fine structure data that he had used in his work. "I understand this technique fairly well," Brabec said. "Of course it helped that the co-inventor of the XAFS technique, Dale Sayers, is a physics professor at North Carolina State. I had discussed these experiments with him and Professor Paesler."

In recommending Brabec, physics department head Richard Patty called him "one of the finest testaments to our mission to educate undergraduate majors." He described Brabec's academic record as "near perfect."

Another North Carolina State alumnus, Michael Fulbright, was a finalist for last year's Apker Award. Fulbright and Brabec attended the same high school in Raleigh—Enloe High School—and were pupils of the same physics teacher—Elizabeth Woolard.

The Apker Award was established in 1977 by an endowment from Jean Dickey Apker in memory of her husband, LeRoy Apker, a solid-state physicist. By tradition, the selection panel is chaired and vice chaired by past presidents of APS. This year's selection panel was chaired by Val Fitch of Princeton University, who was APS president in 1987 and 1988; the vice chairperson was James Krumhansl of Cornell, who was president in 1989.

The other finalists, their undergraduate institutions and their thesis topics were: Scott D. Stoller, Princeton University, "A Numerical Investigation of the Eigenvalues and Eigenfunctions of the Operator $D(d^2/dz^2) + ibz$"; Thomas J. Lenosky, Caltech, "Multiple-Pulse Sequences for Magnetic Resonance Imaging of Solids"; and Luis Chi Ho, Harvard University, "Ammonia Aperture Synthesis Observations of Molecular Cloud Complex in the Galactic Center." The three finalists each received $500.

Predictably, this year's winner and finalists have all gone on to graduate physics work. Brabec is now at Princeton, Stoller and Lenosky at Cornell and Ho at the University of California, Berkeley.

BALASUBRAMANIAN IS THE FIRST RAMAVATARAM FELLOW

APS has selected Gopalakrishnan Balasubramanian, a senior lecturer in physics at the American College, Madurai, as the first Kilambi Ramavataram Fellow. The Ramavataram Fund was established in 1983 through donations from family and friends of Ramavataram, an Indian-born teacher and researcher in nuclear and molecular physics (see PHYSICS TODAY, June 1984, page 51, and December 1984, page 85). The fund's aim is to improve undergraduate physics teaching in India by allowing Indian physics teachers to visit institutions in North America, to observe and study teaching methods. Ramavataram was a professor of physics at L'Université Laval in Quebec at the time of his death in 1977.

Balasubramanian arrived in the US in September and is now at the Johns Hopkins University, where he is participating in the Pew Charitable Trust undergraduate laboratory program. Next spring he will observe the Keller physics program at the University of Michigan.

The Pew Charitable Trust undergraduate laboratory program is a new program at Johns Hopkins in which undergraduates conduct year-long independent research projects involving one or several of five major pieces of research equipment, including a scanning electron microscope, a Cray minisupercomputer and a LEED–Auger surface analysis system. The equipment, purchased through funds from the Pew Charitable Trust, is dedicated exclusively to the undergraduates, with some access given to senior researchers who serve as mentors. Balasubramanian has been working with students using the Cray computer.

In the spring Balasubramanian will be a faculty member in the Keller physics program at the University of Michigan. The Keller program is an alternative to the school's standard physics sequence that allows students to work at their own pace through a series of study units. Calculus-based courses in electricity, magnetism and mechanics are offered. Undergraduates who have already taken the course serve as tutors, with supervision from graduate teaching assistants and faculty members, one of whom will be Balasubramanian.

The American Association of Physics Teachers has also offered to support Balasubramanian, by enabling him to participate in its meetings and by providing introductions to physics teachers.

Eligibility for the Ramavataram Fellowship is limited to undergraduate physics teachers in India with at least 10 years of experience who have demonstrated a commitment to improving physics teaching. The Indian Physics Association and the Indian Association of Physics Teachers compile a list of candidates, from which the APS Ramavataram Fund Committee selects a winner. Further information can be obtained from APS, 335 East 45 Street, New York NY 10017.

APS IS LOOKING INTO PROBLEMS WITH US VISAS

The APS subcommittee on international scientific affairs and committee on the international freedom of scientists would like to hear about any difficulties experienced by foreign colleagues when applying for US visas to accept temporary assignments or to attend conferences. Reports should include the visa applicant's country of origin, subfield and proposed destination and activity in the US, plus any rationale that was offered for the difficulty and by whom. They should be mailed to SISA/CIFS, APS, 335 East 45 Street, New York NY 10017. ■