

year James Madison University decided to eliminate its physics department, only to reverse that decision several months later (see PHYSICS TODAY, March 1995, page 81, and October 1995, page 57).

Just before Thanksgiving the University of Rochester announced it would drop its PhD program in mathematics and cut the math faculty from 21 to 10. According to Joseph Neisendorfer, head of the math department, representatives of the American Mathematical Society have since met with university leaders and a number of prominent physicists have also protested the action. So far the administration has refused to budge.

As an aid to departments that find themselves similarly threatened, several City College physicists compiled the following suggestions:

▷ Try to make the administration realize that there are always fluctuations in the economic and political climate. A good department takes a long time to build, but it can be fractured in a very short time if radical measures are implemented.

▷ Unity within the department is essential. A coherent and well-thought-out response to challenges must be presented. All attempts at creating rifts between old and young, researchers and teachers, tenured and nontenured must be combatted. The full intellectual power of the faculty can be focused as a united front on repelling threats to the department.

▷ Publicity is a potent persuader: Inform other physicists about what is going on and invite colleagues at other institutions to write letters of support. This puts the administration under public scrutiny and causes it to think carefully about the wisdom of its proposed actions.

▷ Make sure that the data, qualitative and quantitative, being fed to administrative committees and to the upper echelons of the university are correct. Data can often be incorrect or presented in ways that prove to be misleading.

JEAN KUMAGAI

Few Changes So Far in National Labs' Physics Workforce

Over one-fifth of all PhD physicists who work in physics in the US do so at a national lab. But the uncertain future of the Department of Energy and of research funding generally has raised questions about the continuation of the national labs as a major employer of physicists.

In a study of the physics workforce

at 29 federally funded research and development centers, conducted by the American Institute of Physics last year, about 4500 PhD physicists were reported to be doing physics at the national labs, with 3450 of them holding permanent positions, 600 having postdoctoral appointments and the remainder being visiting scientists or otherwise temporary employees. The figures for 1994 and projections for 1996 were similar to last year's, the study found.

So far the budget and personnel cuts have disproportionately affected support staff and early retirements, explained Jean M. Curtin, who conducted the study with Christine Cassagnau. "In the future we expect they will hit the population we're looking at—PhD physicists." Indeed, when respondents were asked to comment on the short-term future of their labs or units, "the majority... indicated that the most they could hope for is to maintain the status quo," the study report stated.

The gross turnover of permanent PhD physicists was 4.3 percent in 1994, with 150 positions to fill and about 50 slots that the labs were not permitted to fill; a turnover rate of 4.6% was expected in 1995. The retirement rate was 4.3% in both 1993 and 1994, with about half of the retirees accepting offers of early retirement. Although a retirement rate of 3.7% was projected for both 1995 and 1996, the study report cautioned that the actual rate may be higher.

"The purpose of the study is to give us baseline data, so that we'll be able to see any changes in the future," Curtin said. AIP plans to continue the study biennially. Only those PhD physicists whose work involves physics—about 70% of all PhD physicists at the national labs—were included in the data, which were based on telephone interviews conducted between February and April 1995 with managers at the labs.

Copies of the 1995 *National Laboratory Workforce Report* are free. Contact: Christine Cassagnau, American Institute of Physics, Education and Employment Statistics Division, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, Maryland 20740-3843; phone 301-209-3071, fax 301-209-0843.

Bertsch Replaces Pines as RMP Editor

For the past 65 years *Reviews of Modern Physics* has offered scholarly review articles on a wide range of topics. For one-third of those years David Pines of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign served as the journal's editor. This fall he turned the

reins over to George F. Bertsch of the University of Washington.

As editor Pines introduced the "Perspective" article, written by researchers at the forefront of a field and sometimes incorporating recent unpublished results. Pines also broadened the coverage to include applications of physics, mathematical physics, complex systems and most recently, quantum optics. Eight associate editors were added during Pines's tenure, and the length of the journal itself roughly tripled, to about 300 pages per issue.

Bertsch, the new editor, previously served as an associate editor of *RMP* and as a nuclear physics editor of *Physics Letters B*. He earned his PhD in physics from Princeton University in 1965 and remained on the faculty there until 1971, when he joined Michigan State University. Three years ago he became a professor of physics at the University of Washington and a senior fellow at the Institute for Nuclear Theory there. His research has focused on the application of many-particle quantum theory to nuclei and other systems, especially collective nuclear excitations and heavy ion collisions. He also does work in fields other than nuclear physics and has published in four of the five sections of the *Physical Review*.

As editor of *RMP*, Bertsch says he would like to see more articles that present developing areas of physics and that are accessible to graduate students. He plans to start a new section of the journal to publish occasional lecture notes from advanced-topic summer schools.

Clardy is Elected Vice President of ACA

Jon C. Clardy is the newly elected vice president of the American Crystallographic Association. On 1 January he succeeded Carol P. Huber, who is now ACA's president.

Clardy, the Horace White Professor of Chemistry at Cornell University, holds a BS in chemistry from Yale University and PhD in chemistry from Harvard University. Prior to joining Cornell in 1978, he was a professor of chemistry at Iowa State University. Clardy's research involves isolating and determining the structure of biologically active metabolites and understanding how these molecules interact with their biological targets.

In other results of the ACA elections, George Ferguson, a professor of chemistry at the University of Guelph in Ontario, was chosen to be the Canadian representative to ACA.