

Witherell Is Tapped to Head Fermilab

On 1 July, Michael Witherell will become director of the Department of Energy's Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in Batavia, Illinois. He will succeed John Peoples, who announced last summer that he would step down after a decade in the top job.

Witherell will be moving to Fermilab from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he has been a professor of physics since 1981. Before that, he was on the faculty at Princeton University. He holds a 1968 bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a 1973 PhD from the University of Wisconsin—Madison.

Recently, Witherell has been involved in building the BaBar experiment at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC), which this year will start taking data that scientists hope will explain the asymmetry of matter and antimatter. He also chairs the High Energy Physics Advisory Panel, the body that advises the Federal government on scientific priorities in the field.

At Fermilab, Witherell's biggest challenge will be to plan future directions for high-energy physics, and in particular, the successor to CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC), which is slated to begin operating in 2005. Proton-antiproton collisions will resume next year at Fermilab's Tevatron, with a new accelerator, the Main Injector, upping the number of such collisions by an order of magnitude to $2 \times 10^{32} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$ and also increasing their energy. "We will look for hints of supersymmetry, and of the Higgs boson," says Witherell. "The central question is, What breaks electroweak symmetry?" New discoveries with the Tevatron, he says, "could really change our planning for the field."

"The next machine needs to be something the whole high-energy physics community buys into," continues Witherell. Possibilities include a linear electron collider, a muon collider or a very large hadron collider. "We need to reach a consensus that includes Fermilab and SLAC—that will be up to Jonathan Dorfan [SLAC's incoming head] and me—as well as interested physicists in Japan and Europe." The US is the natural place to build the next high-energy physics

machine, Witherell adds.

Peoples plans to stay on at Fermilab, where he will continue to serve as project manager for the Sloan Digital Sky Survey partnership (see PHYSICS TODAY, February 1998, page 61). Perhaps the biggest scientific event during Peoples's tenure as director was the discovery of the top quark. Early on, Peoples also oversaw the shutdown of the Superconducting Supercollider. And he played a key role in getting the US involved in the LHC: "I helped to get the labs to work together instead of fighting like mad." **TONI FEDER**

Harris Is ASA's President-Elect

The Acoustical Society of America has a new president-elect: She is Katherine S. Harris of the City University of New York. Harris began her term in March, and will succeed to the presidency next year.

Harris holds a PhD in experimental psychology from Harvard University, and since 1954 she has worked at Haskins Laboratories in New Haven, Connecticut, where she is currently a senior scientist. In 1970, she also accepted a professorship at the CUNY Graduate Center's Center for Research in Speech and Hearing Sciences.

Harris's research on human speech

has included studies of speech production and perception.

In other results of the ASA elections, Gilles A. Daigle was chosen vice president-elect. Daigle is a senior research officer at the National Research Council of Canada's Institute for Microstructural Sciences in Ottawa. Two newly elected members of the ASA executive council are Christy K. Holland (University of Cincinnati College of Medicine) and William A. Yost (Loyola University Chicago's Parly Hearing Institute).

PHYSICS TODAY would like to take this opportunity to report results from the previous two ASA elections. (Regrettably, we did not do so earlier.) Last year, Patricia K. Kuhl of the University of Washington was chosen ASA's president-elect; she is now serving as president. Kuhl



HARRIS



WITHERELL



KUHL

ITP Holds Forum on Black Holes for High School Teachers

High school teachers gravitate toward Caltech physicist Kip Thorne (left) during a break in a one-day educational forum about black holes, held on 6 February at the Institute of Theoretical Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). The forum drew more than a hundred teachers from all over the country who wanted to learn more about a topic that fires the imagination of their students, and to hear about it from some of the top researchers. On hand to lecture, in addition to Thorne, were Stephen Hawking (University of Cambridge), Roger Blandford (Caltech) and Joe Polchinski (UCSB). All four had agreed to stay over on a Saturday following a conference on black holes they had attended that week, also at the institute. Jim Lochner showed some classroom demonstrations based on educational materials he helped develop at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. He also handed out resource materials created at NASA/GSFC and the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

The Forum was the institute's first effort at such an outreach program, and it received funding from NASA to pay the expenses of most of the out-of-state attendees. The teachers said they especially appreciated the opportunity to rub shoulders with working scientists. They also noted that their own eager anticipation at spending time with such researchers as Thorne and Hawking, both known for their popular trade books, had been matched by that of their students.

BARBARA GOSS LEVI

