

binger. "The crown jewel is the 45-tesla hybrid in Tallahassee. It's the world's largest both physically and in terms of peak field." As examples of key research findings at the lab, Boebinger points to using ion cyclotron resonance to accurately weigh heavy molecules—of interest, for example, to the petroleum and pharmaceutical industries—and, with the University



Boebinger



Crow

of Florida's Evelyn F. and William McKnight Brain Institute, visualizing paramagnetic probes in living cells for gene therapy studies.

The strengths of the magnet lab's Tallahassee branch at Florida State University are nuclear magnetic resonance and continuous field electromagnets. Its smaller outpost on UF's Gainesville campus offers magnetic resonance imaging and ultra low-temperature capabilities. The third branch of the lab is a pulsed magnetic field facility at LANL, where Boebinger had been since 1998, most recently as deputy director of the materials science and technology division.

Crow, who is stepping down after 12 years in the top job to shift his focus from management to research and teaching, says, "I think Greg will do an absolutely outstanding job."

Toni Feder

News Notes

Colwell leaves NSF. Microbiologist Rita Colwell resigned as director of NSF in February, several months short of the official end of her six-year appointment to the position. Colwell, appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1998, said she was stepping down to become chair of *the* Canon Life Sciences, a subsidiary of Canon USA Inc.

In a statement, Colwell said she was grateful to have led NSF "through two administrations and major transformational changes." She noted that NSF's budget has increased 68% under her leadership and that "our programs have



Colwell

helped US science and engineering evolve into the flexible, robust, and diverse endeavors that they must become to keep America preeminent at the frontier of research and education." She said that she championed the increases in research grant amounts, which rose from an average \$90 000 in 1998 to \$142 000 now.

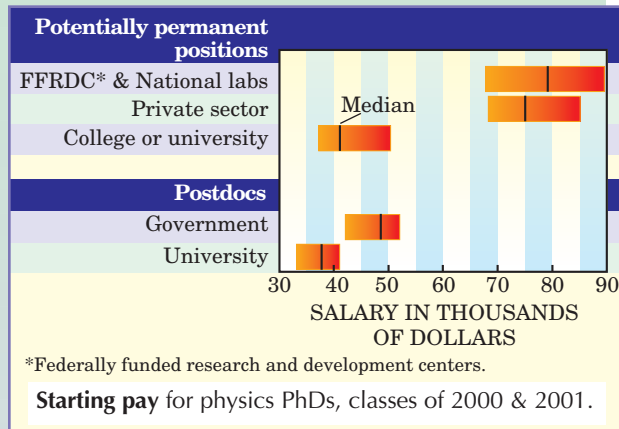
Colwell will also serve as Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, and on the faculty of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland. NIST Director Arden Beament will serve as the acting director of NSF until Colwell's replacement is named.

JLD

US Physics Job Market Holds Steady

Employment patterns for physics and astronomy degree recipients in the US shifted little for the classes of 2000 and 2001, according to the latest report from the American Institute of Physics on recent graduates at all degree levels.

US universities conferred 1157 PhDs in physics in 2001, the seventh straight year of decline since a recent peak of 1481 in 1994. The number of astronomy PhDs granted each year has fluctuated around 120 over the same period; it was 101 in 2001. In 2000 and 2001 combined, 54% of physics PhD recipients were US citizens and 13% were women. The median time to earn a physics PhD was six years. The following employment statistics do not include the 5% of US citizens and 18% of noncitizens among the new physics PhDs who found work outside the US.



Starting salaries were up and unemployment was down for physics PhDs in the classes of 2000 and 2001. Nearly equal numbers took postdocs as took potentially permanent positions. That represents a slight shift to more postdocs, which in the past "has frequently coincided with weaker economic conditions," the report notes. Unemployment was 2%, down from more than 5% in the mid-1990s.

University-based postdocs earned a median starting salary of \$38 000 in physics and \$40 000 in astronomy, while postdocs in national labs took home \$48 000. In potentially permanent positions in the private sector, new physics PhDs pulled in \$75 000.

Physics masters who entered the job market earned a median initial income of \$55 000. The number of new physics bachelors increased in 2002, which continued the reversal of a long decline (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, July 2002, page 28). About half went directly to graduate school. The median starting salary of those who entered the workforce ranged from \$30 000 for high-school teaching to \$44 000 in private-sector jobs related to computers and engineering. Of those who went straight to work, 86% planned to continue their studies later.

These and other data are presented in the *Initial Employment Report: Physics and Astronomy Degree Recipients of 2000 & 2001*. The report may be downloaded from the Web at <http://www.aip.org/statistics/trends/emptrends.htm>. Single copies may be obtained free of charge from AIP, Statistical Research Center, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740; e-mail stats@aip.org.

Toni Feder

National lab contracts extended.

Open bidding on the management contracts for several of the Department of Energy's national laboratories will be delayed for a year or more so the bidding process can "proceed in an orderly manner" and to allow "maximum opportunity for bidder participation," according to Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham. While announcing the delays, Abraham reaffirmed his belief that "a competitive environment is generally desirable for the effective and efficient operation of our labs."

The delays most immediately affect the University of California's management contract at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. The contract, which was set to expire 30 January, was extended 12 months. The university's

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management contract for Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico was not extended, and a new contract will be awarded by 30 September 2005, after competitive bidding. The timetable has not been set for bidding on the contract for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the third DOE lab managed by UC. Security and financial scandals at Los Alamos triggered the DOE action to open bidding on that contract, and Congress followed with a requirement that several other lab contracts be opened to competition.

The UC regents haven't officially decided that the university will compete for the contracts, which date back to the founding of the labs, but school officials have indicated they will fight hard to keep them. Contract extensions of a year or more were also granted to DOE's six other national laboratories.

JLD

LBLN director steps down. Charles Shank, director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory for the past 15 years, announced he is leaving the position and returning to a faculty post at the University of California, Berkeley. Shank, 60, the longest-serving Department of Energy national lab director, said he felt he had "accomplished what I've come here to do," and noted that "any institution needs new leadership after 15 years."

University of California President Robert Dynes said in a prepared

statement that Shank "has made a major contribution to the cause of scientific advancement in this country." In addition to overseeing a lab that is a major center for x-ray science with the Advanced Light Source x-ray synchrotron, Shank said he takes "great satisfaction" from having been a member of the Joint Genome Institute, which is a collaboration between Brookhaven, Lawrence Livermore, and Los Alamos national laboratories.

Dynes said Shank will play an important role in the university's effort to keep the lab's management contract when it is put up for bid by DOE at the end of 2005. Dynes said he is launching "an immediate nationwide search for a new laboratory director."

JLD

CERN stamp. Switzerland has issued

a postage stamp honoring the 50th birthday of CERN, the particle and nuclear physics laboratory on the Swiss-French border. The stamp, for overseas letters, marks the start of a series of events celebrating the lab's first half-century. A recap of the scientific milestones and a schedule of events planned in CERN's 20 member states is available on the Web at <http://info.web.cern.ch/info/ES/CERN50>. A commemorative monthly calendar can also be downloaded from



WEB WATCH

<http://www.cs.umd.edu/~oleary/faculty/whole.html>

Five years ago, the paucity of women in computer science departments prompted the University of Maryland's Diana O'Leary to write a set of thought-provoking discussion points entitled **Accessibility of Computer Science: A Reflection for Faculty Members**. Perhaps not surprisingly, most of O'Leary's points apply with equal validity to physics departments.

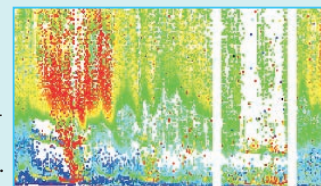
<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/6/4/index-e.html>



In 1965, the National Library of Canada established the Theses Canada program to archive all the academic theses produced in that country. Now, as part of the program, many of those theses have been made available online in their entirety through the **Theses Canada Portal**.

<http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/stp/IONO/Dynasonde>

Ionosondes send radio pulses up into space and measure the strength, frequency, and travel time of the pulses that bounce back from the ionosphere. NOAA's **Dynasonde** project uses ionosondes to monitor the dynamics of the ionosphere. On the project's Web site are interactive graphics that chart the ionosphere's current state.



To suggest topics or sites for Web Watch, please visit <http://www.physicstoday.org/suggestwebwatch.html>.

Compiled and edited by Charles Day