

we hear
that

AAPT names new head

Toufic M. Hakim, director of research and sponsored programs at Kean University in Union, New Jersey, has been named executive officer of the American Association of Physics Teachers, succeeding Bernard V. Khoury, who is retiring after 16 years at the organization's helm.

Hakim, a longtime administrator and educator who has worked extensively in fundraising and public relations, will begin his new post on 5 September. He told *PHYSICS TODAY* that his priorities will include boosting the society's educational and other services to members and nonmembers, growing its membership—which currently totals 10 000—and redoubling its efforts to bring physics to the outside world and the general public.

"We do a lot of meaningful programs," Hakim said, "and we are looking to enhance our position and services and to be able to articulate the positive changes that have been made to physics education over time."

Hakim noted the relative paucity of women and minorities working in physics, and he plans to develop strategies to increase those numbers, especially by working to boost interest and education in physics at earlier levels than high school or college. It is also important for AAPT to reach out to practicing physicists, he added.

"There is a movement in [physics] education reform across the board," Hakim said. "AAPT will participate in this dialogue."

He plans to publicize the society's services, resources, and message in various ways, including through blogs, podcasts, and online listservs. Hakim also hopes to focus efforts on fundrais-

ing to provide more support for members' professional development.

"It will be a collaborative effort," he said of his role and responsibilities as executive officer. "AAPT has always been a group of dedicated, passionate volunteers."

Hakim also wants to create stronger synergy between AAPT's national office and the society's 47 regional sections. "This objective is consistent with AAPT's agenda of national advocacy and support for physics education, and our commitment to membership development programs and services," he said.

Khoury, who announced his retirement last year, will remain on the AAPT staff as executive officer emeritus through the end of 2007 to facilitate Hakim's transition into his new post.

A recommendation by a national executive search firm and a six-member search committee—composed of two members of AAPT's board of directors and four past AAPT presidents—to hire

Hakim was unanimously approved by AAPT's executive board in April. Kenneth Heller, AAPT president, lauded the choice.

"[Hakim's] experience and persona fit our needs for the next AAPT executive officer," Heller said in a prepared statement. "His creativity and dynamic personality will maintain and enhance the range and effectiveness of AAPT programs and will

help the association become a more powerful presence in physics education. Dr. Hakim has demonstrated through his years of teaching and student research engagement that he cares deeply about student learning and physics development."

Hakim earned a PhD in physics in 1986 from the University of Delaware in Newark, where he also earned an MS in electrical engineering in 1987. He received a bachelor's degree in physics in 1979 from the Lebanese University in Beirut.

At Kean University, Hakim substantially increased research funding, energizing the university's research environment. He was also part of a national program to evaluate all undergraduate research projects funded by the National Science Foundation and served as president of the national Council on Undergraduate Research. Prior to working at Kean, Hakim served as senior academic adviser and assistant to the president of the College of New Jersey in Ewing.

During that time, he was a fellow of the American Council on Education.

Before his CNJ stint, Hakim was a professor of both physics and engineering at Jacksonville University in Florida. There he developed successful undergraduate research programs and an international studies department and was recognized by the university with its highest faculty award.

AAS to hand out DPS awards

Work in public outreach, lab techniques and instrument design, systems engineering, and the study of gas giants will be honored in October when the American Astronomical Society's division for planetary sciences hands out four awards during its 38th annual meeting, held this year in Pasadena, California.

The Carl Sagan Medal will go to **David Grinspoon**, curator of astrobiology in the space sciences department at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, "for his energetic and successful efforts to get the general public thinking about planets, and about our place in the solar system and wider universe." The citation also describes his two popular books, *Lonely Planets: The Natural Philosophy of Alien Life* (HarperCollins, 2003) and *Venus Revealed: A New Look Below the Clouds of Our Mysterious Twin Planet* (Perseus Books, 1998), as "detailed and thought-provoking treatments of serious subjects that describe scientific investigation in human and enticing terms."

Dale P. Cruikshank will receive the Gerard P. Kuiper Prize for "his pioneering work in the application of infrared spectroscopy to solar system bodies, his development of laboratory techniques that have become tools for interpreting the observations, and his leadership in the design of instruments for remote sensing observations from deep space planetary exploration probes." Cruikshank is a research scientist in the astrophysics branch of the NASA Ames Research Center at Moffett Field in California.

The Harold Masursky Award will be handed to **Gentry Lee**, chief engineer for the planetary flight systems directorate at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory at Caltech. He is receiving the award "for his fundamental contributions to systems engineering in the complex world of robotic planetary missions, including the Mars rovers, Deep Impact, Cassini, Stardust, and Genesis, and for imparting this knowl-

RALPH GREENE



Hakim

edge to a generation of young engineers at the early stages of their careers.”

Tristan Guillot will accept the Harold C. Urey Prize for his “fundamental contributions in the study of the interior structure of gas giant planets, their formation process, and their atmospheres under extreme environments. His accomplishments include detailed models of the internal structure of Jupiter and Saturn and studies of the late emergence of gas giants.” Guillot is a researcher for CNRS at l’Observatoire de la Côte d’Azur in Nice, France.

COURTESY INAMORI FOUNDATION



Akaike

Akaike, professor emeritus in the statistical science department and the Graduate University for Advanced Studies at the Institute of Statistical Mathematics in Tokyo, won in the basic-sciences category “for his contribu-

tions to statistical science and modeling through his development of the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).” The AIC is a criterion for the selection of statistical models; since Akaike formulated it in the 1970s, it has become important in the development of the information and statistical sciences, wrote the foundation. The AIC is built into commercial statistical software packages and is widely used in gene analysis, image compression technologies, and vehicle stability-control technologies. It is increasingly important in understanding and forecasting phenomena in economic-related fields, including finance and insurance; safety-related fields ranging from pharmaceuticals to food and transportation; natural phenomena such as weather, natural disasters, and the environment; and the management of huge systems.

See www.pt.ims.ca/9467-31

Kyoto Prize winners are announced

Among the recipients of this year’s 22nd annual Kyoto Prize are the developer of the Fluorescence Activated Cell Sorter (FACS) and the creator of a statistical-model selection criterion that is finding applications ranging from weather forecasting to image compression.

Leonard A. Herzenberg and **Hiro-tugu Akaike** will collect their awards during a November ceremony in Kyoto, Japan. They will also receive a diploma, a 20-karat Kyoto Prize medal, and a cash gift of ¥50 million (approximately \$446 000), according to the Inamori Foundation of Japan, which sponsors the prize. The Kyoto Prize is Japan’s highest private award for lifetime achievement, presented to individuals and groups worldwide who have contributed significantly to humankind’s betterment.

in brief

The discovery that a mysterious dark energy is driving an ever-faster expansion of the universe captured the \$1 million Shaw Prize in astronomy for three researchers. **Saul Perlmutter**, professor of physics at the University of California, Berkeley, and senior scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; **Adam G. Riess**, astronomer at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, and professor of physics and astronomy at Johns Hopkins University, also in Baltimore; and **Brian P. Schmidt**, Australian Research Council Federation Fellow of Mt. Stromlo Observatory at the Australian National University in Canberra, were awarded the prize “for discovering that the expansion rate of the universe is accelerating, implying in the simplest interpretation that the energy density of space is non-vanishing even in the absence of any matter and radiation.” The prize will be awarded during a September ceremony in Hong Kong. Created in 2002, the Shaw Prize is administered by the Shaw Prize Foundation in Hong Kong.

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Herzenberg

FACS, a flow cytometer that has had a profound impact on medical science, diagnostics and the field of regenerative medicine.” FACS has made it possible to rapidly count and sort cells with specific attributes, and isolate and analyze DNA, RNA, and protein from a single cell in a viable condition, out of an estimated 60 trillion cells in the human body.