

handling systems that LIFE would need, NIF took 13 years to build.

Mike Dunne, who had headed LIFE, says that he will continue to manage a wide range of R&D projects addressing key technical risks in the development of inertial fusion energy. Topping the list of needs is a new type of laser—likely diode—that's capable of firing more than a dozen times each second. NIF's glass laser is capable of firing only one or two "shots" per day.

David Kramer

news notes

Graduate demographics in the US. How many women are earning advanced physics degrees? How many people are from underrepresented groups? How long is it taking people to earn their degrees? The makeup of US exiting-master's and PhD recipients over time, with an in-depth look at the classes of 2010, 2011, and 2012, are the subjects of two recent reports by the Statistical Research Center at the American Institute of Physics. An exiting master's is someone who leaves his or her physics department after

earning a master's degree—including those who continue studies in physics elsewhere or switch to another field.

In 2012 a new high of 1762 PhDs were awarded in physics. That number is up 4% from the previous year and 62% from a recent low in 2004. The median number of physics PhDs awarded by departments went from four to six in that period. On average, PhD recipients in the classes of 2010 and 2011 took 6.3 years to earn their degrees.

The average age of PhD recipients was 30.5 for the combined classes of 2010 and 2011; for the exiting master's recipients, it was 28.9. For both degrees, 10% of recipients were 35 or older.

For the years 2010–12, women made up 19% of PhD recipients and 23% of exiting-master's recipients. At both the PhD and master's levels, Hispanic Americans and African Americans continue to be underrepresented, although in less than 10 years the number of Hispanic Americans earning PhDs has shot up by 300%.

More details are available in the reports, *Trends in Physics PhDs* and *Trends in Exiting Physics Master's*, which can be downloaded at <http://www.aip.org/statistics/graduate>. TF ■

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