

Report of the Committee on Diversity for the Year Ending June 30, 2000

Fiscal Year 2000 was something of a transitional year for the Committee on Diversity. Long-time staff liaison, Ann Williams, left the Society early in the fiscal year and staff illnesses and transition resulted in a somewhat low level of activity during the winter of 2000. However, the committee had a productive conference-call meeting in June 2000 and has plans for a retreat/planning meeting early in 2001.

Committee Business

Wiley Award: Preliminary discussions with Battelle/Pacific Labs on possible sponsorship of an award in honor of former Sigma Xi president, the late Bill Wiley, indicated that they were still supportive. Staff will work with the committee to identify funders for this award.

Minority Affairs Web site: Despite unlikely funding from NIH, the committee continues to support a proposal from committee member R. Dottin, in conjunction with Sigma Xi, to develop a minority affairs and information Web site as part of the Hunter College/Just/Garcia Hill Web site.

Gertrude Elion Grants: The Glaxo Foundation continues to work on the details of a grant to provide graduate fellowships to promising young female scientists to attend graduate school. The committee will participate in administering the grant if it is awarded to Sigma Xi.

Demographic data: The committee considered demographic data based on an analysis of the Sigma Xi membership database:

- For FY1999, Sigma Xi had 80,292 members.
- Of those members: 20% are emeritus, 11% student, 5% Life.
- Of 30,434 who report birth date, the mean age is 51 years old.
- Of 33,605 who report gender, 25% are female.
- Of 27,275 who report ethnicity: 89% describe themselves as either Caucasian or White/Non-hispanic, 7% Asian, 1% African-American, 2% Hispanic, ½% Native American, and the remainder spread across about 15 nationalities.

Goals for the Coming Years

The committee will meet during the winter of 2001 to discuss a variety of issues and future plans.

Sources of Funding: The committee will work with staff to identify potential sources of funding for diversity activities. The winter 2001 meeting of the committee will focus on defining a variety of programs, including some that are potentially fundable.

Mentoring Program: After a lapse in attention due to staff transitions, the committee is ready to proceed with further definition and implementation of the mentoring program for young faculty from under-represented groups. An early survey identified approximately 175 potential mentors and 88 individuals interested in having a mentor.

Attending other Societies' Conferences: The committee identified a short list of conferences at which Sigma Xi should be represented. The conferences are sponsored by organizations that represent underrepresented groups in science and engineering and include: Society of Women Engineers (SWE); Nat'l Org. of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCCHE); Nat'l Technical Association (NTA); Nat'l Society of Black Engineers (NSBE); SACNAS; MAES Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists; SHPE (Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers); NAFEO (Nat'l Assoc for Equal Opportunities in Higher Ed); AISES (Amer Indian Science & Engineering Society); Nat'l Minority Research Symposium (NMRS).

Members of the Committee

Susan S. Kilham, Drexel University, Chair
John Fernando Alderete, University of Texas, San Antonio
Benjamin E. Cuker, Hampton University
Carol P. Daniels, US Environmental Protection Agency
Robert P. Dottin, Hunter College
Thomas D. Landefeld, California State University at Dominguez Hills
Jeanne Trinko Mechler, IBM
Sonia Ortega, National Science Foundation

Acknowledgements

The Chair would like to take this opportunity to express her deep appreciation to the members of the committee and to the staff that have supported us throughout the year, and especially to

Tom Landefeld who is leaving the committee after many years of dedicated service.