

## Report of the Committee on Diversity for the Year Ending June 30, 1998

The Committee on Diversity met five times during the past year. Three of these meetings were held at the November 1997 Annual Meeting, twice as a committee and once in a joint meeting with the Chairs of the Standing Committees of Sigma Xi. In addition, the committee met twice by conference call, the first on November 16, 1997 and the second on April 28, 1998. During a very active year that ended on June 30, 1998, the Committee accomplished the following:

- a. developed a Committee on Diversity Mission Statement that outlines four specific goals for the Committee and the avenues by which these goals might be achieved. The Chair presented the statement in a report to the Long Range Planning Committee on January 16, 1998;
- b. helped develop a Committee on Diversity Web Page on which, among a variety of topics, appears the Sigma Xi Policy Statement on Diversity, the Committee's Mission Statement, a list of all of the workshops sponsored by the Committee at the Society's Annual Meetings, and a compilation of Science Resources relevant to diversity issues;
- c. organized for the November 1997 Annual Meeting a highly enlightening workshop entitled "Expanding Opportunities for Scientists with Disabilities." Dr. Larry Scadden from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and Dr. Todd Blumenkopf from Pfizer Inc., both active scientists, made presentations on technologies available to assist scientists with physical handicaps. Dr. Scadden is legally blind and Dr. Blumenkopf is paraplegic due to spina bifida;
- d. invited representatives from seventy-eight professional societies and the 1997 Presidential Mentor Awardees for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering to a reception held at the 1997 Annual Meeting. The objectives of the reception were to allow attendees to describe the activities of their societies in the area of diversity and to establish a network among the organizations so that resources and activities of common interest might be shared;
- e. met with the Sigma Xi Executive Director to discuss how plans for the November 1998 Committee on Diversity workshop on mentoring might be incorporated into the mentoring program being developed by the national headquarters;
- f. provided a list of minority and women scientists for appointment to the following Sigma Xi standing committees: Membership and Qualifications, Grants-in-Aid of Research, and Lectureships.

In addition, Ann Williams represented the Committee at a NSF meeting of FASEB Minority Affairs Chairs, and she and the Chair met with over 260 students and faculty at the 1998 NIH-sponsored National Minority Research Symposium. As a result of this latter meeting, more than 100 young scientists became members of Sigma Xi. Jeanne Trinko Mechler represented the Committee and the Society at a meeting of the Society of Women Engineers, and subsequently elected several new members from the engineering society. The Chair was invited and participated as a research review panelist for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and was a speaker at the inaugural meeting of the Women in Optics Working Group of the International Society of Optical Engineers.

### **Acknowledgement**

The Chair would like to take this opportunity to express her deep appreciation to Dr. Ann Williams and to the talented and highly-committed members of the Committee on Diversity, who bring a breadth and depth of knowledge and experience to the Committee and to Sigma Xi. It has been an honor and a joy to have been associated with them.

Peggie J. Hollingsworth, Chair, Committee on Diversity  
Alice J. Dan  
Robert P. Dottin  
Susan S. Kilham  
Thomas D. Landefeld  
Virginia V. Lyons  
Jeanne Trinko Mechler  
Sonia Ortega