

Report of the Committee on Lectureships for the Year Ending June 30, 1999

Introduction

It is my pleasure to report to you that the Sigma Xi Lectureship Program continues to be one of our society's most successful endeavors, providing outstanding lecturers to chapters and through them to the broader community interested in science.

The Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturers

The Lecturers for 1998-99 consisted of 31 outstanding individuals from science, mathematics, engineering, medicine, and the history of science and technology. For 1999-2000 there will be 27 Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturers. In addition the American Meteorological Society nominates a lecturer and provides funding for additional subsidies on this topic.

Each year the Distinguished Lecturers are presented in the November-December issue of *American Scientist* and also sent in a mailing to chapter officers.

Your Lectureship Committee faces the task of achieving a "balanced" assemblage of lecturers. Many Sigma Xi members believe that balance includes scientific discipline, geography, gender, ethnicity, and related variables. These secondary criteria are added to our primary responsibility to offer as lecturers outstanding research scientists and engineers who can deliver a stimulating and effective lecture to an audience representing a broad range of disciplines.

Lectureship Subsidy Program

Sigma Xi provides modest subsidies for chapters to participate in the Sigma Xi Distinguished Lectureship Program. Because funds available for subsidies are not adequate to meet the demand the Committee on Lectureships gives priority to those chapters that can demonstrate the greatest benefit and the greatest need. This is determined from information supplied on subsidy applications and in reports from previously subsidized visits. A report of the visit of a lecturer to each chapter that receives a subsidy is required and reviewed by the Committee. For the 1998-99 season \$21,745 in subsidies were awarded to 50 Chapters.

Guide for Lecturers and Hosts

A pamphlet is available from Sigma Xi Headquarters that provides guidelines for both the Distinguished Lecturers and their host chapters. If you do not have a copy we encourage you to request one.

The Committee

The Committee meets each April to review subsidy applications and pick 16 or 17 new Distinguished Lecturers. Most lecturers serve for two years so the new group adds to the second-year veterans.

The Committee is very interested in your comments and suggestions. Please direct your comments to me directly or to Deborah Donati at ddonati@sigmaxi.org.

I express my sincere appreciation to those who served so ably on this Committee and to our headquarters staff member, Deborah Donati.

Sincerely,

William A. Lester, Jr. (Chemistry), Chair Rama Bansil (Physics) Heather McKillop (Anthropology) Josh Dranoff (Engineering) Patricia Sipe (Mathematics) John Watson (Biochemistry, Medicine)