

Report of the Committee on Regions for the Year ending June 30, 2001

As has been its tradition, the Committee on Regions, composed of the Regional Directors and invited Associate Regional Directors of Sigma Xi, met immediately before and after the Society's 2000 forum and annual meeting. The meetings took place on Thursday, 9 November 2000, and Sunday, 12 November 2000, at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque Hotel in Albuquerque, New Mexico. During the meeting, the Directors discussed a variety of topics of concern, or potential concern, to the Society and its chapters. A summary of those discussions is included below.

- **Proposed Bylaw Change and International Committee Expansion Efforts**

In preparation for discussions in the Regional Assemblies of Delegates, the Directors reviewed and discussed the proposed Bylaw change that would extend the deadline for submission of chapter resolutions from 90 to 150 days prior to the annual meeting. The Committee also reviewed the Society's current efforts to expand the number of international chapters with support from the Packard Foundation. Of particular interest to the Directors, and to the Society's chapters, the Committee reviewed the proposed reduced dues structure for members outside the United States and Canada and how this proposal might benefit the Society and international members. The sense of the Directors was that delegates to the Regional Assemblies of Delegates would be interested in a review of the Society's recent international efforts.

- **Committee Goals for November 2000**

The Committee reviewed its progress on the 5 goals that it had established for itself during the Society's November 1999 forum and annual meeting. In reviewing one of these goals, the Committee instructed the Society's Deputy Executive Director to contact each newly elected Director, Associate Director, and Committee Chair and inform them that the Society's President will send letters to three administrative officials at their institutions (providing they supply the names and addresses of these individuals) informing these officials of their election within Sigma Xi.

- **Revitalizing Chapters with the Committee on Qualifications and Membership**

The Committee then discussed the Society's efforts to revitalize chapters with Dr. Ceri, Northwest Regional Director and member of the Committee on Qualifications and Membership. These discussions enabled the Committee to ascertain what actions the Committee on Qualifications and Membership were undertaking to revitalize chapters and what the Directors might do to assist these efforts, or to work with the Committee on Qualifications and Membership to revitalize chapters in Sigma Xi.

- **January 2001 Retreat of the Board of Directors**

At its meeting on 8 November 2000, the Board of Directors agreed to hold a retreat of the Board in January 2001 to identify appropriate niches for Sigma Xi and its chapters and members in the future. In preparation for this retreat, the Committee discussed a wide variety of issues and topics that might be included in the retreat program and asked that the following receive consideration from the organizers of the retreat: the need to follow-up on any plans developed during the retreat; the need to examine programs in view of the benefit to chapters and members and the interrelationships between programs and membership; the need to make Sigma Xi the organization that energizes legislative and public support for science, which will attract scientists to become members of the Society; the need to obtain recognition for the Society's awards and activities within the entire scientific community; and Sigma Xi's role as an interdisciplinary Society.

The Retreat was a significant event, perhaps pivotal in the near-term future development of the Society. The Regions Committee joint Chairs' report is abridged, following.

- **Relationships between Constituencies and Regions**

During its second session on 12 November, the Committee discussed at some length the interrelationships between the newly formed constituency groups and the existing geographic regions. The discussions focused on how the two groups might interact and their relationships with the standing committees of the Society and the Board of Directors. Several models were proposed for the interaction between all these groups. The Committee eventually decided that it would be advisable for the Constituency Directors to seek their own committee, rather than join the Committee on Regions.

- **Communication between Directors and Associate Directors**

After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed that the Directors would receive information about Societal issues and activities and would forward information to their Associate Directors, as they deemed necessary.

- **Committee Representation and Membership**

The Committee recommended that Dr. Geller be nominated to serve on the Society's Executive Committee for a two-year term, effective 1 July 2001, and that Dr. Geller also be appointed to serve as Chair of the Committee for the year beginning 1 July 2001.

The year ending 30 June 2001 was the final year in which some regions retained two Directors in a geographic region. Beginning 1 July 2001, each geographic region will have one Director per region in

accordance with the Society's transition to its new governance structure. Ê This year, Drs. Campbell, Manduca, and Pita concluded their terms on the Committee.Ê Beginning 1 July 2001, Drs. Chancey and Baur will join the Committee on Regions.

Finally, this year also concludes my term as a member of the Committee, and as Chair of the Committee for the year ending 30 June 2001.Ê I personally thank the Directors for the opportunity to work with them during the last six years and for their patience and understanding during my term as Chair of the Committee.Ê I have enjoyed my tenure on the Committee and look forward to continued interaction with the Directors in the future.

Zack Jacobson (Northeast Region), Chair
Regional Directors:
Richard LoPinto, David Campbell – Mid-Atlantic
Cathryn A. Manduca – North Central
Zachary Jacobson, Chris Lange – Northeast
Howard Ceri – Northwest
Art Geller – Southeast
Antonio Pita – Southwest

Abridged Joint Chairs' Report, January 2001 Board Retreat

We were happy with the openness and the frank and friendly tone of discussions during the retreat at RTP.Ê From a Regions point of view, we felt the most important items related to membership and chapters were:

Membership – Early on, John Prados articulated the notion that Sigma Xi Programs must focus on membership development and chapter support.

As a practical step in that direction, Directors agreed that there should be a formal program set up to notify relocating members of the chapter[s] near to their new location, and simultaneously to notify Officers of those chapters that the member has moved nearby, with an accompanying encouragement to invite the member to chapter functions.Ê It is hoped that this will encourage member retention, thereby strengthening the chapters.

Other noteworthy issues concerned the Sigma Xi niche and Centre:

- There were convincing assurances put forward that construction on the Sigma Xi Centre will not be started until the donated money to build it is in hand, or as good as.Ê Directors were also satisfied that neither operation nor upkeep would be any more onerous than current operations and upkeep [including rent].
- Niche – After discussion on the first day, we all felt little or no need to revise Sigma Xi's core mission from that set down by the framers of the Society's Constitution.Ê Discussion on the second day, guided by the facilitator, amplified this sentiment--most of those at the retreat prize Sigma Xi most for the qualities best called the companionship of zealous research.Ê As well, a sizeable body name the hope to impact public policy and public perception of science.

Zachary Jacobson, Chair 2000-01
and
Arthur Geller, Chair 2001-02
Committee on Regions