

Despite the many challenges we all faced during the 2020 year, the APS Committee on Minorities – in collaboration with APS staff - accomplished several activities supporting the APS and the APS membership. The activities described below as the accomplishments of APS COM are inclusive of activities led by the APS staff members that support COM.

Supporting APS Programs and Initiatives

APS COM supported the organization and hosting of the 2nd half-day Summit of HBCU/BSI Chairs held on February 6, 2020 in Orlando, Florida. During this summit, members of APS COM met with the chairs of physics departments at HBCUs and BSIs to discuss ways to address the decrease in physics students earning degrees from these departments. Fifteen department chairs participating in this summit. In addition, to multiple virtual meetings held through June 2020, a network was established to sustain continued communication, the HBCU/BSI Chairs Network, a digital community discussion group.

APS COM continued to serve in an advisory role to the APS National Mentoring Community (NMC). APS COM supported the organization of and hosting of the APS NMC conference held from February 6 – 8, 2020 in Orlando, FL. The APS NMC database was also updated and improved – a priority set by APS COM in 2019. Virtual events for members of APS NMC were held in the summer and fall of 2020, and a new member orientation was also held in summer 2020. Plans for a virtual 2021 conference in partnership with the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP) and the National Society of Hispanic Physicists (NSHP) are already underway.

APS COM maintains several sub-committees that support the APS Bridge Program. This is in addition to the full committee serving in an advisory role to the APS Bridge Program by providing feedback on program updates at the quarterly APS COM meetings. The APS Bridge Program Partner Institution Application Review Subcommittee reviewed 7 applications for partner institution status. The APS Member Institution Recertification Committee completed reviews of 5 applications for recertification. In addition to approving applications, these subcommittees offer feedback and advice to departments on how to improve departmental policies and climate to better support APS Bridge Program students when applications are not initially approved. Departments then have an opportunity to make modifications to their programs and policies, which can then be included in a new application should the department choose to apply again.

Collaborating with Equity and Identity-focused Organizations for Physicists and Scientists

The APS COM continued collaboration with NSBP and NSHP, with multiple members of APS COM being members of these organizations and serving on the boards of these organizations. The APS COM also collaborated with these organizations on the APS NMC Conference held in February 2020.

The APS COM Task Force on Native Americans in Physics reported out to APS COM in the winter of 2020 and this resulted in a number of efforts. The first being that the APS COM created a subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples in Physics. An article on Indigenous peoples' barriers in physics was shared in the Fall 2020 APS Gazette newsletter. Finally, an action plan was created

to increase collaboration between Indigenous Peoples and the APS COM and the APS Forum on Diversity. One of the initiatives in this action plan included a collaborative session at the meeting of the Society for Advancing Chicano/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). Another initiative underway is to establish a subunit under the Forum of Diversity & Inclusion (FDI) using the APS 'engage' platform. Liaisons with various groups such as SACNAS, AISES and AAPT were also established as part of this plan.

The founder of African American Women in Physics, INC (AAWiP) was a member of APS COM in 2020 and supported collaborating with APS on a number of projects. AAWiP was a sponsor for two APS panels on equity and inclusion in 2020:

- From Passion to Action: Levers and Tools for Making Physics Inclusive and Equitable
- Removing Barriers: Physics in HBCU, MSI, and PBI Communities.

AAWiP also supported African American women in physics through mentorship, amplification of the accomplishments of Black women in physics, and actively advocating against harassment. AAWiP also joined the Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM, a movement that was driven by the repeated concerns of younger African American women in physics and their experiences at physics conferences.

Communicating with APS Membership

The APS COM created the fall issue of the APS Gazette. This sixteen-page issue highlighted the #Strike4BlackLives and the associated #ShutDownSTEM movements held on June 10, 2020 and led by physicists, the experiences of Indigenous Peoples in physics, strategies for celebrating and supporting Black women in physics, and ways to support equity, equality, and justice and avoid being a barrier to diversity efforts in physics.

APS COM also organized sessions at the virtual March 2020 and April 2020 meetings of the APS. At the March meeting, APS sponsored an invited session on the TEAM-UP Task force report. For the April meeting, APS COM sponsored a session on "Acknowledging African and Indigenous Peoples' Contributions to Physics and Astronomy." This session was opened with a presentation by Dr. Ximena Cid, who framed the discussion of who gets to decide what is considered STEM and why it is important to acknowledge and center the contributions of African and Indigenous peoples to STEM. This was followed by Dr. Gerceida Jones' presentation of the historical contributions of the Dogon People and the Incas. Next, Dr. Katemari Rosa discussed decolonizing thought and how physicists can decolonize physics and science by acknowledging the contributions of African and Indigenous peoples. The session concluded with a 30 minute question and answer panel discussion with the presenters.

Planning for APS March and April 2021 meetings are actively underway. At the April 2021 meeting, in addition to the COM invited sessions, parallel sessions on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion are also being planned for the first time.

APS COM Oversight of Awards

Due to the global health pandemic, there were no travel awards made through the Minority Serving Institution travel funds that APS COM oversees. A subcommittee of APS COM approved

7 applications for financial support to student members of the APS NMC, totaling \$7,630. APS COM also oversaw the 2020 Edward A. Bouchet Award, which was awarded to Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein “for contributions to theoretical cosmology and particle physics, ranging from axion physics to models of inflation to alternative models of dark energy, for tireless efforts in increasing inclusivity in physics, and for co-creating the Particles for Justice movement.”