

2006 AAPT Planning Retreat

The AAPT Executive Board, augmented by other AAPT members, held a retreat June 22-25, 2006 at the Belmont Conference Center in Elkridge, MD to discuss ways for AAPT to more fully achieve its mission: "To enhance the understanding and appreciation of physics through physics teaching." The retreat was guided by the overarching question:

How can the AAPT strengthen its role as a leader in physics education?

Prior to the retreat, facilitator Karen Johnston solicited information from Section Representatives, Area Committee Chairs, and various other AAPT groups and members, and obtained statistical data from the AAPT Executive Office. The following topics were highlighted at the retreat:

- AAPT's identity and core values
- AAPT's membership size and profile
- Relationships between AAPT and its sections
- AAPT's partnerships with scientific societies and others
- AAPT's leadership

The goal was to identify the issues facing the AAPT in the next decade and begin a discussion of how to address them. Outcomes of the retreat are contained in the Action Vision and list of AAPT Issues below. The Action Vision and AAPT Issues will be reviewed by Area Chairs, Section Representatives, Executive Board, and AAPT staff. The whole AAPT community will be invited to comment on them. The Executive Officer, assisted by a small group appointed by the President, will develop an Action Plan to address the identified AAPT Issues and consider other related issues if desirable, within the framework of the Action Vision.

Action Vision

The AAPT Executive Board will establish bold measurable goals that embrace, strengthen, and extend AAPT's constituency groups and their linkages. The AAPT will become a more agile and active society, while continuing to be a grass-roots organization run largely by volunteers.

AAPT Issues to be Considered

General Issues

- Improve the funding base for ongoing AAPT programs.
- Address the challenges of electronic publishing and the potential demise of print journals.
- Increase the fraction of the populace who understand physics in high school, college, and the teaching profession.
- Improve service to the national and international physics-teaching communities.

External Issues

- Improve AAPT's visibility as a major voice of physics education in the USA and abroad.
- Increase the membership of constituencies currently underrepresented in the AAPT, including research physicists and faculty from minority-serving institutions.
- Build stronger relations with *all* physics teachers in high schools, 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges and universities; and with physicists in industrial and government research laboratories.
- Increase involvement of AAPT in the education of undergraduate and graduate students, especially graduate teaching assistants.
- Issue position statements on societal issues that entail physics and are relevant to physics teachers.
- Play a more effective role in the preparation and professional development of physics teachers at all levels, including graduate teaching assistants.
- Increase involvement with national and state governments on issues related to physics education.
- Continue and expand useful partnerships with other scientific and education societies whose activities complement AAPT's.

Internal Issues

- Strengthen relationships with sections.
- Strengthen the role of area committees.
- Better serve and link AAPT's diverse constituencies.
- Organize opportunities for retired members to contribute to the mission of AAPT.
- Strengthen participation in physics curriculum development and improvement at the high school and/or college-university levels.

Action Planning Group

At the retreat, it was decided that the AAPT President Ken Heller will appoint a group to assist AAPT's new Executive Officer, Toufic Hakim, formulate an Action Plan to guide AAPT's activities in the short term and throughout the coming decade. This Action Planning Group consists of

Ruth Chabay (At large member, FYC/U) Alan Gibson (Section Representative)
Dwain Desbien (At large member, TYC) Dick Peterson (Past President and former Secretary)

The Action Planning Group's charge is as follows:

The Action Planning Group (APG) will work with AAPT's new Executive Officer to develop a set of short-term (1 year), medium-term (2-5 year), and long-term (5-10 year) plans for AAPT. The Action Vision above and the issues identified at the retreat define the initial framework in which planning will proceed. Throughout the process, the APG will consult with the Executive Board, Section Representatives, Area Committees, and general AAPT membership for their ideas and advice. Based on the retreat issues, member and staff feedback, and outcomes of planning sessions with the APG, the Executive Officer will present a strategic plan to the Executive Board for discussion and action. It is anticipated that the Executive Board will be able to share the proposed Action Plan with AAPT members at or before the Summer 2007 AAPT Executive Board meeting.

Attention AAPT Members!

Do you have opinions on the Action Vision and Issues identified above? Are any areas that are important to YOU missing? What do YOU want the AAPT of the future to be?

We invite you to email your ideas to

future@aapt.org

before September 1, 2006. Thank you.

*Lila Adair
Vice-President, AAPT*

*Ken Heller
President, AAPT*

*Harvey Leff
President-Elect, AAPT*