

Users' Executive Committee and NSLS Town Meetings

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I wonder how many of the 3000+ users of the NSLS know that as an active user of the facility they are automatically a member of the NSLS Users' Association? The purpose of the Association is "to promote and encourage research at the NSLS by providing for organized discussions among users of the facility as well as between the user community and the facility administration and to address questions of general principles, trends, and development of user needs." The Users' Executive Committee (UEC) is the elected body of individuals, of which I am chair, to represent the needs of the Association. The UEC is not an extension of NSLS management and indeed, over the years, the UEC has ensured that it remains an independent organization in order to better communicate the needs of the User (you!) to NSLS administration, yet closely coordinates efforts with it to improve services for the User.

The UEC is comprised of six general members and the 11 members representing the specialized needs of the Special Interest Groups (SpIGs). However, in order to effectively function to represent your interests as Users, we need to hear from you! What is it that brings you to the NSLS to conduct your research? What are we doing well? Where do we need to improve? What services would you like to see at NSLS that are not currently provided? Take the time now to get involved by talking with any member of the UEC or SpIG (information available via NSLS webpage), or sending me (srbare@uop.com) or the incoming chair of the UEC, Leemor Joshua-Tor (leemor@cshl.org), an e-mail. Better yet, why not plan to attend the next Town Meeting. These meetings, held three times a year, are open to all Users.

So, what has the UEC been up to this year? How have we represented your interests? And what lies ahead in the coming year? The primary annual event organized by the UEC, in close cooperation with the User Office, is the NSLS Users' Meeting. A separate section in the Activity Report details the meeting. The meeting, held May 21-24, 2001 was a huge success: there was an all-time high overall attendance (370 registered attendees), there were seven workshops and one forum extending over three days, attended by a total of 480 people, and the cafeteria at Berkner Hall was transformed into the island of Maui for the Hawaiian luau banquet! The meeting emphasized everything that the NSLS is about: excellent science, participation and cooperation. The poor weather did not stop anyone from enjoying and participating in a most stimulat-

ing meeting. I would personally like to thank the efforts of all of the meeting organizers: Mary Anne Corwin, Nancye Wright, Lydia Rogers, Dan Fischer, Lisa Miller, Sue Wirick, and Chi-Chang Kao. It was a pleasure to work with you. The organizers of the workshops also deserve a big "thank you" for organizing such stimulating workshops: Peter Siddons, Richard Reeder, Tony Lanzirrotti, Jinguang Chen, Mike Becker, Lonny Berman, Anatoly Frenkel, Lisa Miller, Larry Carr, Peter Johnson, Chi-Chang Kao and Thorsten Ressler. The Users' Meeting is a Herculean effort to organize, and I am sure that all of you that attended the meeting would agree that all of the above individuals deserve a pat on the back! At the meeting this year a reporter from Chemical & Engineering News (the weekly news magazine of the 160,000 member American Chemical Society) was in attendance. He wrote an interesting piece about the meeting and in particular about the Catalysis Workshop. It was good to see some welcome positive publicity about the NSLS.

The UEC was also involved in a major DOE-BES review of the facility in July 2001. The UEC met separately with the review committee and provided separate written feedback in addition to the oral comments. I thank all of you for providing information or comments prior to this review. I am sure that as the recommendations of the committee are made known the UEC will be involved to ensure that the interests of the User are first and foremost in any changes that may occur.

The UEC has also been involved in some lobbying efforts to Congress in an effort to increase the level of support for funding of the physical sciences, primarily though increased funding for the DOE. These lobbying efforts have been in close cooperation with the chairs of the other DOE synchrotron facilities, the ALS, SSRL and the APS. We feel that what is needed is to raise the bar for funding for the sciences overall – the game of robbing Peter to pay Paul is not effective in today's environment. Only when the overall DOE budget is raised will the NSLS budget be raised to a level where there are sufficient funds to provide the operating funds for better user support. I take this opportunity to thank all of you who took the time to write letters to members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees this past year. It may appear that your efforts were not worthwhile, however, being silent is not going to help the situation!

Computer security, and its effect on users, has been a major issue at the NSLS this year. We have had rep-

representatives from ITD attend the Town Meetings to directly address your questions and concerns. This is an on-going, and important, issue. Please continue to provide feedback to the UEC.

This year also saw change at the NSLS, with Dr. Steven Dierker being appointed chair of the facility. The UEC welcomes Steve, and looks forward to working with him over the years. While in the period covered by this Report Dr. Dierker's main efforts were directed at understanding the facility and organizing the DOE review, he has some major plans in the works for the NSLS. The UEC will work with him to ensure that the voice of the Users is heard in any changes that might be proposed.

We are excited to announce a new award, the NSLS User Community Award. This award, to be presented annually, is to recognize the achievements of an individual from the NSLS user community in recognition of his/her service, innovation, and/or dedication to NSLS users. This is not an award for scientific achievement, but rather for contributions that have improved the quality of science at the NSLS. We are also updating and revising our charter – the bylaws under which the UEC operates. We will continue to be involved in political lobbying. There are also major proposals underway at the NSLS in the areas of nanoscience, and the future of the facility itself. The UEC is excited,

and supports, these initiatives. As they become further developed we will ensure that, once again, your interests are represented.

As of the publication of this Activity Report I will have completed my term as chair of the UEC and Leemor Joshua-Tor will be the new UEC chair. I have enjoyed my term as chair of the UEC. It has been personally challenging, and I have learned a great deal. I would like to thank all the members of the UEC (Leemor Joshua-Tor, Dan Fischer, Tony Lanzirotti, Michael Vaughan, Mark Chance, and Steve Almo, and Mary Anne Corwin and Erik Johnson as ex-officio members) and SpIG's (Michael Becker, Paul Stevens, Mark Furhmann, Lisa Miller, Mahbub Khandaker, Cecilia Sanchez-Hanke, Vincent Harris, Peter Stephens, John Sutherland, Michael Dudley, and David Mullins) for their hard work and dedication of representing your interests so that you can concentrate on what the NSLS needs to thrive: excellent science! Please give Leemor your full support – and remember that the only way she can do her job is to hear from you! So, contact her (leemor@cshl.org) with any concerns or comments that you have. Attend the Town Meetings, run for election to your Special Interest Group, and especially take the time for any letter writing campaigns initiated by the UEC. It will be good use of your time, and will improve the NSLS for all of us.