

## Users' Executive Committee Update

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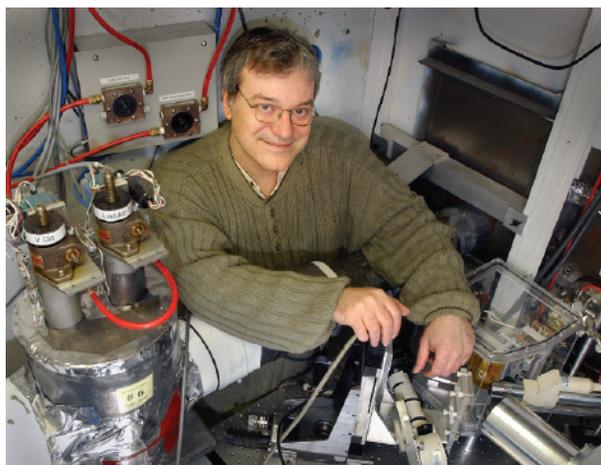
NSLS USERS' EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

This has been a very exciting year at the NSLS and it has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Users' Executive Committee. As of May 18, 2004, I will pass on the mantle to Larry Shapiro. It has been a distinct pleasure to represent the NSLS user community in a very exciting time in our history, as we begin to take a hard look at our future.

And a very bright future it appears to be. This past year, we prepared for the submission of the NSLS-II proposal to DOE, a proposal highlighted by a large degree of user interaction. I believe it is clear to all of us that the likelihood of NSLS-II coming to fruition is very good indeed, and I feel confident that we will see a third generation light source here at BNL. But, perhaps, it is in these times of elevated expectations that it is most important for the user community to make its desires and concerns clear – not only to ensure that NSLS-II becomes a reality, but also to guarantee that the current NSLS continues to operate at its maximum potential in the interim period. It has been my experience while serving on the UEC that users can have a strong impact on how such projects are prioritized by participating in education and outreach efforts to our representatives and local community.

As we look to the future and NSLS-II, we also want to ensure that there are adequate funds and staff to upgrade and improve the current facility. For example, it has been a pleasure to see new beamlines come online over the past year, and others begin construction. These include the new X17B2 and B3 wiggler beamlines for high-pressure research, using large volume multi-anvil and diamond anvil cell presses. These were constructed as the result of NSLS collaborations with the NSF Consortium for Materials Properties Research in Earth Sciences (COMPRES). A new undulator-based protein crystallography beamline, X29, was constructed through a partnership between AECOM, BNL's Biology Department, and the NSLS. In 2003, construction also began on a new undulator-based x-ray micro-diffraction beamline, X13B, recently funded by DOE, and a new hard x-ray microprobe beamline operated at X27A, funded as a joint DOE/NSF collaboration with Stony Brook University's Center for Environmental Molecular Sciences, BNL's Environmental Sciences Department, and the NSLS.

But many of the issues related to upgrading and maintaining the existing facility are not as obvious as the appearance of a new beamline. They include maintenance of an aging infrastructure, upgrades to beamline control and computing systems (particularly as older systems are no longer supported by manufacturers), detector upgrades, and adequate scientific and technical staffing at beamlines. I think these are areas where an increased level of dialog (and funding) is needed to keep the NSLS vibrant, and some hard questions must be asked about how DOE,



the NSLS, existing PRT's, and incoming Collaborative User groups will support these issues.

Over the past year, the UEC has also actively been involved in a number of administrative and policy changes that will directly affect how users obtain beamtime in the future. Arguably the most significant of these was the change in the User Access Policy, a re-definition of the modes of access to beamtime at the NSLS. The policy change saw the addition of Collaborative Users as groups that contribute to the beamline in terms of funding, instrumentation, or operations, but do not operate beamlines fully, like PRTs. We have also been involved in advising the NSLS on its development of an online Proposal, Allocation, Scheduling, and Safety (PASS) system that will dramatically change how requests for beamtime at the NSLS are submitted, reviewed, allocated, scheduled, and tabulated.

And of course the primary annual event organized by the UEC last year, with invaluable assistance from the Users' Office, was the 2003 NSLS Users' Meeting. Last year's meeting was held May 19-21. The UEC felt the meeting was a huge success with a record attendance of 396 registered participants. We all feel the attendance reflects our strong optimism about the future of the NSLS and synchrotron science at BNL. I assure you that this does not go unnoticed in Washington and I am confident that the 2004 attendance will far exceed what we achieved last year, thanks primarily to user and staff dedication and enthusiasm about the scientific accomplishments achieved at this facility. On behalf of the UEC, I wish to thank everyone for a pivotal and successful year. Cheers!