



American Association of Physics Teachers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Symposium on Physics Education in Washington, DC, February 16

For more information, please contact:

Marilyn Gardner, American Association of Physics Teachers
301-209-3306 (office) mgardner@aapt.org

College Park, Maryland, Jan. 25, 2010 – Are Teacher Education Programs preparing physics teachers for the future? If not, what can be done now? The Fourth Annual Symposium on Physics Education will address these questions and many more during the 2010 Joint APS/AAPT Winter Meeting, which takes place February 13 to 17 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC.

Even as STEM education is receiving renewed emphasis and increased funding in the United States, current statistics indicate that there is a drastic shortage of qualified physics teachers. A strong STEM education starts in our schools and depends on a large supply of highly qualified teachers.

The AAPT symposium, titled “Educating Physics Teachers: A Call to Action for Physics Departments,” will examine the quality of Physics Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States. Symposium panelists will share their experiences in teacher education, and share the findings and recommendations of The Task Force on Teacher Education in Physics (T-TEP) Report.

T-TEP just completed a two-year effort in which it investigated the current status of physics teacher education in the United States, collected relevant research findings, and identified major local strengths, as well as significant systemic challenges. The T-TEP Report, which describes the accumulated results of the Task Force investigation, will be distributed to all Physics Departments in the nation and the corresponding Departments of Education.

SYMPOSIUM INFORMATION

“Educating Physics Teachers: A Call to Action for Physics Departments,” the Fourth Annual AAPT Symposium on Physics Education, is organized by the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT) and sponsored in part by the Phys-TEC Project, an NSF-funded partnership of APS, AAPT, and AIP.

The Symposium, dedicated to the memory of Dr. E. Leonard (Len) Jossem, will take place from 1:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 2010, in Salon 3 of the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel.

MODERATOR

Philip Hammer, AAPT Associate Executive Officer.

PANELISTS

Mary Ann Rankin, Dean of the College of Natural Sciences at the University of Texas at Austin, will discuss the UTeach (UT) program for math and science teacher preparation, the UT Discovery Learning initiative, the Texas Interdisciplinary Plan, and the UT Austin Freshman Research Initiative.

Sheila Tobias, author, will examine *Science Teaching as a Profession* and discuss why it isn't and how it could be. Sheila Tobias has made a science and an art of being a curriculum outsider. Neither a mathematician nor a scientist, she has tackled the question of why intelligent and motivated college students have specific difficulties in certain disciplines, particularly mathematics and science.

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Strengthening Physics Education. Supporting Physics Teachers.

Stamatis Vokos, Professor of Physics, Seattle Pacific University, will present findings and recommendations of the National Task Force on Teacher Education in Physics (T-TEP Report) as he discusses *Transforming the Professional Preparation of Physics Teachers in the United States*. He is member of the APS Executive Committee of the Forum on Education and chair of the National Task Force on Teacher Education in Physics (T-TEP), sponsored by APS, AAPT, and AIP.

ABOUT THE JOINT APS/AAPT MEETING

The 2010 Joint APS/AAPT Winter Meeting takes place February 13-17 at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. This year's theme is "Physics for the Nation's Future." Full meeting program, workshop, and job fair information, and directions to the hotel are at: <http://www.aapt.org/Conferences/wm2010/>

Journalists are invited to cover the meeting onsite. News releases describing meeting highlights, including this year's plenary lectures featuring several nationally renowned speakers, are available at: <http://aapt.org/aboutaapt/PressReleases.cfm>.

MEDIA CREDENTIALS

Members of the press can request information and are invited to cover the upcoming meeting onsite. Credentials can be obtained by sending an email to mgardner@aapt.org or by contacting Marilyn Gardner at 301-209-3306.

ABOUT AAPT

AAPT is the leading organization for physics educators -- with more than 10,000 members worldwide. Its mission is to enhance the understanding and appreciation of physics through teaching. AAPT was founded in 1930 and is headquartered in the American Center for Physics in College Park, Maryland.