International Committee Report

APS members hail from 88 countries from over 6 continents and represent a large and important constituency within the Society. The International Physiology Committee (IPC) seeks to assist APS by identifying and implementing ways in which APS can best serve its international members, achieve globally its goals of fostering education, scientific research and dissemination of information in the physiological sciences, and raise its global stature.

Demography of International Members
International (non-US) physiologists comprise 26% of the Society’s total membership and are growing: international physiologists comprised 32% of the new regular members joining in 2009–10, 26% in 2010–11, and 30% in 2011–12. 27% of new student members in 2011–12 were internationals. Canada (562), Japan (350), United Kingdom (217), Australia (161), and Brazil (158) account for the largest numbers of international members, and this trend continues. Relative to the size of their populations, disproportionately few members come from India (58) and China (56).

International Early-Career Physiologist (IECP) Travel Awards
On the recommendation of the IPC, APS Council established the International Early-Career Physiologist (IECP) Travel Awards in 2008 to enable students, trainees and junior faculty from outside of the US to attend and participate in Experimental Biology (EB). Council approved funding for up to 10 awards annually, each of $500. In 2012, APS received nearly 100 applications. In addition to the 10 awards approved by Council, fundraising efforts by the APS for its 125th anniversary celebrations at EB2012 meant that APS was able to make a total of 35 awards of $1,000 each.

The IPC considers this program an exciting means of encouraging the very best and most promising young international physiologists to EB to share their research, and a means by which The Society can engender the interest of international students, trainees, and junior faculty in joining APS. The IPC noted significant increase in both the caliber of applicants and the quality of abstracts submitted to the IECP travel award program for 2012.

Latin-American Initiative
Established in 2000, the APS Latin-American Initiative (LAI) provides financial support for symposia, conferences, courses/workshops and other events held in Latin America, with the aim of strengthening ties between APS and sister societies in Latin America, and fostering interactions between APS members and physiologists working in Latin America. Up to four awards of up to $5,000 are funded annually. APS received four applications for the 2012 LAI. The IPC reviewed these applications and recommended for funding three awards of $5,000 each.

Attracting and Retaining International Members in APS
The IPC will collaborate with other committees and with Council to find and implement ways of attracting new international members, increasing retention, and encouraging international student members to convert to regular members upon graduation.
Improving Communication of International Programs
Two thirds of respondents to a 2010 international members survey were unaware of either the IECP Travel Award program or the Latin-American Initiative. To improve communication of these programs and other matters of particular interest to international members, the IPC has developed content for a page for International Physiologists that will be posted on the APS website.