

## NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

The Forum on Physics and Society has been granted its own seat on the APS Panel on Public Affairs (POPA), the main public policy body of APS. This should be a synergistic relationship, since the areas in which POPA acts are often those in which the Forum is deeply involved. This new relationship will keep both sides better informed, and help the APS tap the rich talent and expertise of Forum members.

The Forum's first representative to POPA, Aviva Brecher, was appointed at the end of 2001 for one year. At the end of this summer, the Forum will hold its first election for POPA representative. Requirements for this new position include membership in the Forum for at least 4 years, time to attend the 3 yearly meetings of POPA and participate in its activities, a commitment to regularly communicate with the Forum leadership and membership, and a willingness to listen, learn, and bring the best of oneself to the job. This position is a 3-year term, and the elected member will also serve as a member of the Forum's Executive Committee. This will be an all-electronic election, for which Forum members will receive an electronic reminder. The Forum's Nominating Committee, chaired by Daniel Kammen, is currently taking suggestions for nominees for this new position. He can be reached at <[kammen@mindspring.com](mailto:kammen@mindspring.com)>. The Forum is proud to have permanent representation on POPA and looks forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

On a less joyful note, the Forum announces the departure of Marc Sher from its leadership, after a decade of extraordinary service. Marc, like many of the Forum leaders, was personally recruited, and once on board, made tremendous contributions. He served three years on the Executive Committee, three years on POPA, was news editor and electronic communications editor of *Physics & Society*, developed the first Forum webpage, and started the first Forum electronic elections, paving the way for electronic elections at APS. In every position he served with energy, enthusiasm, and skill. He is always a pleasure to work with, and an inspiration to all who interact with him. It is with immense gratitude that we bid Marc farewell from our leadership, with the hope that he will return at some later time.

As the new chair of the Forum on Physics and Society, I am excited and a bit awed by the task before me. The membership of the Forum has broad interests, from Missile Defense, to Renewable Energy, to Climate Change, to Science in Commerce and Foreign Affairs, just to name a few. Each year we try to address some of these areas in both our newsletter and in our sessions at the APS March and April meetings, as well as other timely issues where science and society intersect. We can never deal with all the issues the membership would like, nor can I dream of being able to lead our efforts in so many areas. But I don't need to, because the heart and soul of the Forum is its very impressive Executive Committee. We are also supported by talented and knowledgeable people at APS. I look forward to a productive year, and hope you will participate in our activities.

*Dr. Laurie Fathe*  
*Director, Center for Teaching Excellence*  
241 Johnson Center, George Mason University, MS 4D6  
4400 University Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030-4444  
703-993-8671  
[lfathe@mason.gmu.edu](mailto:lfathe@mason.gmu.edu)

