

encouraging the development of a process to more carefully examine the factors influencing how knowledge may be applied to public problems.

Proceedings of the conference will be produced and distributed by AAAS. They are expected to include an annotated bibliography on problem-oriented research.—RICHARD A. SCRIBNER and ROSEMARY A. CHALK

AAAS Affiliate Works to Promote Equal Opportunity for Women

To promote equal opportunities for women to enter the professions and to achieve their career goals.

This is the stated goal of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS), one of the newest AAAS affiliates. This month Marion Webster of the National Institutes of Health will be installed as fifth president of the Association. Founded in 1971 by a group of women in biomedicine, AWIS has since grown to a membership of over 2500, including women and men in all the scientific disciplines who are interested in promoting equal opportunity for women in science.

AWIS was founded on the belief that inequities can be overcome by people working together. Its major activities include: promoting enforcement of equal rights legislation, developing a national registry of women in science, publishing a newsletter, establishing regional chapters, and furthering career development.

Anne Briscoe, of Columbia University's Harlem Hospital Center and retiring president of AWIS, has often reiterated the organization's emphasis on "action and not just civil rights words." AWIS has been involved in various litigations, including several class action suits against the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It also has acted as *amicus curiae* to support individual suits of women complainants in civil rights cases.

As a positive response to affirmative action, AWIS made one of its first goals the establishment of a national computerized registry of women in science. This has just been accomplished, with computer operations beginning this spring. The registry will function as a talent bank of women to serve on review boards and committees and as a pool of active job seekers. Employers can buy

searches on the registry or place ads in the AWIS newsletter and the tri-weekly job bulletin.

The AWIS newsletter is a major vehicle for fostering communication among those interested in women in science. A bimonthly publication, it contains reports on AWIS actions to promote equal opportunity, current statistics on the status of women in the professions, and grant procedures and deadlines. It informs national members of the activities of local chapters, task forces, and committees, as well as those of other feminist organizations.

Local/regional AWIS chapters have been formed to improve communication and to provide mutual support. Active chapters now exist in New York, Hawaii, and Houston, and others are organizing. Activities of these groups include helping individuals write grant applications and curriculum vitae, apply for professional society membership, and fight discrimination on the job.

Local chapters also help women scientists with career development, as does another arm of AWIS, the AWIS Educational Foundation. This tax-exempt organization was set up to generate funds from a broad community base to help women attain their educational goals. Under the direction of its president, Estelle Ramey of Georgetown University Medical School, the Foundation currently awards three graduate scholarships each year to women science students.

In pursuit of its goals, AWIS works closely with the AAAS Office of Opportunities in Science, the AAAS Women's Caucus, and other groups which share the AWIS commitment to equal opportunity for all.—SUSAN E. POSNER

Atlanta Area AAAS Group to Meet

Atlanta area AAAS members will meet on 26 April at the Fernbank Science Center to discuss organization of local public understanding of science activities. A panel discussion on "Compliance, Compulsion, Control—The Scientist's Conscience" will be featured. A short business meeting will follow. The area involved stretches for a 100-mile radius around Atlanta.

Groundwork for this unique endeavor was laid last December at a meeting of some 40 local AAAS members and other Atlanta citizens. A second meeting was

held 1 March, at which plans for the 26 April session were developed. Key organizers of the meeting include George Wallis of the University of Georgia in Athens and Melvin Kranzberg of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

AAAS members from other parts of the country interested in similar activities are urged to contact the AAAS Division of Public Sector Programs.

Science Education and Educational Policies

During the past year the AAAS Office of Science Education has held several conferences and seminars to address the question of the future of science education, particularly at the precollege level. These sessions included a conference last spring on science curricula and teaching for children 5–14 years of age; a meeting last fall to discuss precollege science education with particular concern for declining test scores; a forum discussion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress on science test score declines for 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students; and a symposium, "Science Education Amidst Educational Policies." The open forum and symposium took place during the AAAS Annual Meeting this past February.

One point that came from these sessions was that, in the present time of tight school budgets, science education will suffer unless special efforts are made to teach efficiently and less expensively. Another point was that there is as yet no apparent connection between what goes on in science programs in schools and declines in science achievement test scores. Indeed, as John Goodlad, director of research at the Institute for Development of Educational Activities in Los Angeles, emphasized at the February symposium, very little is known about anything that goes on in schools. The third point was a concern that, with the decline in funds available to support innovations in science education and educational programs for teachers, the impetus given to science education by federally funded science curriculum development and teacher training programs may fade away.

The major concern of the AAAS Office of Science Education is to stimulate communication about science education among educators and scientists. The Office welcomes AAAS members' views.

—ARTHUR LIVERMORE

Science

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