



Los Alamos Postdoc Newsletter

REMINDER!!!

The next GA
Meeting is June 11

The next Postdoc Social
is June 4. Please see the
events calendar.

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Submissions Welcome
lapa_communications@lanl.gov

Visit LAPA's website @
<http://www.lanl.gov/projects/pda/>

Vice-President's Report



**Presented at the LAPA Biannual Meeting:
May 14, 2008
by Dhriti Bhattacharyya**

1. Introduction

The Los Alamos Postdoc Association, or LAPA, has been growing both in numbers and in its vibrancy as an organization since its inception in 2006. A dedicated and focused leadership and an enthusiastic member population have contributed to the steady growth of the

organization. In the past few months, LAPA has refined itself as an organization and fine-tuned its procedures. It has also made significant progress in reaching out to the Postdoc population through its many official and social activities.

It is time to take stock of the progress LAPA has made in these past months, as well as to plan for its activities in the coming months. To this end, the chairs of the individual committees shall present the reports of the respective committees in separate documents. I shall here try to present some highlights of the past six months' events and achievements, as well as the work in progress being pursued by LAPA.

2. Current Status:

2.1 Current membership

According to LAPA bylaws, all postdocs associated with LANL are automatically LAPA members. As of the writing of this report, the number of LANL postdocs was about 343. Of these, 14 members currently hold voting membership status as of October 10. (see bylaws for definition of voting member). Additionally, 17 individuals are eligible to attain voting member status when they present themselves at the May 14th biannual meeting. Four more members are eligible for reinstatement of their membership by being present at this meeting.

The policy committee has passed a number of amendments to modify the current process of voting and participation in LAPA meetings to make it convenient for our fellow postdocs and encourage participation in LAPA events. The details of these amendments shall be presented by the chair of the policy committee.

2.2 Officers and Committees

The current elected officers of LAPA are:

- President : Nathan Mack
- Vice president : Dhriti Bhattacharyya



- Treasurer : Kevin Houston
- Secretary : Gus Keksis

The current chairs of LAPA standing committees are:

- Policy : Jessica P. Houston
- Communication : Chandra Savage Marsden
- Finance : Chris Taylor
- Social : Zoe Fisher
- Conversion : Open
- Career : Nenad Velisavljevic
- Special committee – NPA : Jessica Houston

2.3 Budget

The treasurer will give a separate report on LAPA Financial standing.

3. Completed business and “Work in Progress”:

3.1 Policy committee

Jessica Houston continued her great work as the Policy Committee Chair this term too. The Policy Committee (PC) convened numerous times during the last six months to discuss the amendments for (i) interpretation, (ii) legality with LAPA bylaws, (iii) recommended alteration, and (iv) generate resolutions for submission to the General Assembly. In addition The Policy committee continued to review LAPA bylaws for relevance to present day LAPA organization. Three amendments to the LAPA bylaws were proposed by the Policy Committee and were passed by LAPA. Three more amendments have been proposed and shall be considered in this meeting if time permits. The details of the resolutions are presented in the report of the chair of the Policy committee.

Overall, the policy committee has done excellent work in helping to streamline the functioning of LAPA as an association.

3.2 Communication committee

The communication committee under the leadership of Chandra Savage Marsden has streamlined the format of the monthly newsletter, and made it more user-friendly. As the LAPA members are already aware, the Monthly Newsletter reports on recent LAPA events, provides a calendar of monthly LAPA events, Committee reports, and minutes from the monthly General Assembly meetings. It also contains committee spotlights to highlight the roles

of different committees of LAPA and provides information on how postdocs may get involved directly with each committee. The Newsletter also includes postdoc profiles, where pictures, research and social interests of postdocs are documented. This exposure allows fellow LANL postdocs to get acquainted to and possibly interact in both research and social fronts. LAPA will continue to publish the newsletter monthly.

3.3 Finance committee

The Finance committee is currently auditing the financial records produced by the LAPA treasurer.

3.4 Social committee

The social Committee under the leadership of Suzanne “Zoe” Fisher was very active in providing opportunities to bring fellow postdocs and their families together at a social level. This has also helped in increasing attendance at LAPA General Assembly meetings.

The Social Committee organized six Post-doc socials - 3 at Lala’s Cocina, 2 at Quark’s restaurant and bar, and one open-air picnic at Ashley Pond. In the last three occasions, the complimentary food was provided by LAPA through its Morale Funds.

A summer barbeque picnic is being planned by the Social Committee later this season.

3.5 Conversion committee

The conversion committee, chaired by Nathan Mara, consolidated data regarding recent conversions. One conversion seminar was held in this 6-month period. It was presented by Zach Baker (CCS-1), Michael Blair (EES-2) and Joseph Hickey (ES-SE) on Feb. 12, 2008. Refreshments were served using Morale Funds.

In the coming months, the conversion committee plans to invite management and converted postdocs to give seminars on the process and statistics of conversion to regular staff members in their respective Divisions or Groups.

3.6 Career committee

The Career Committee has been very active under the leadership of Nenad Velisavljevic. In 2007, the Career Committee successfully planned

and organized the First Annual Career Fair for postdocs at LANL. The feedback received from the participants, both the companies and postdocs, was overwhelmingly positive. On the basis of these feedbacks, the Career Committee has decided to organize the 2nd Annual Career Fair for Postdocs, to be held from the 25th - 27th of Aug., 2008. The Career Fair for 2008 has already been authorized by Lab Director Michael Anastasio. The Career fair will consist of a "Meet and Greet" social gathering of postdocs and representatives prospective employers, followed by a day of exhibition-style interactions, and finally a day for interviews.

The Career committee has already sent out invitations to many companies for the fair, and is in the process of sending out more. The committee is inviting postdocs to suggest the names of companies to invite for the Fair and volunteer for help in organizing the Fair. A detailed report of the Career Committee shall be presented by the Committee chair.

3.7 NPA Special Committee

The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) held its Annual Meeting in Boston from April 25th to April 27th, 2008. LAPA sent two of its members, Nathan Mack and Kevin Houston, as members of the NPA Special Committee, along with Mary Anne With of the LANL Postdoctoral Office, to this meeting as its representatives.

The NPA Special Committee shall be presenting its report to the LAPA GA Meeting separately.

Acknowledgements

The Vice President acknowledges the help of the President, Nathan Mack and the Secretary, August Keksis for providing valuable information and for helpful discussions which made this report possible.



Recent Events

LAPA Social at Ashley Pond (Left & Right)

LAPA Bi-annual Meeting (Bottom)





Upcoming Events

GA Meeting

Date: June 11, 2008
Time: 12:00-1:00 pm
Where: Otowi Cafeteria, Siderooms A&B

Postdoc Night

Date: June 4, 2008
Time: 5:30-8:30 pm
Where: Ashley Pond

Postdoc Orientation (March-May hires)

Date: June 30, 2008
Time: 12:00 - 1:00 pm
Where: Canyon School Rm. 160

CV Writing Workshop (**Registration Required**)

Date: June 4, 2008
Time: 1:00 - 3:30 pm
Where: UNMLA-Mesa Room 130

Delivering a Technical Talk (**Registration Rqd**)

Date: July 8th, 2008
Time: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Where: MSL Meeting Place (TA-3, Bldg. 1698)

Behavioral Interviewing Workshop (**Registration Required**)

Date: August 13, 2008
Time: 1:00 - 3:30 pm
Where: Canyon School Room 164

LAPA Committee Reports

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee (PC) hosted the biannual Employee Concerns Meeting on May 8, 2008. There were 9 postdocs who attended.

The following topics were discussed as necessary changes for postdocs community to bring to Director Anastasio:

1. Early Z# assignment to expedite training
2. Use of LANL time for postdocs career development (specifically interviews)
3. Mentorship Oversight: Mandatory meeting of postdocs with their division to discuss mentor issues; also make mentorship part of IPO process for mentors
4. Procurement: need for stock room; is a bottleneck for postdocs

The PC agreed to create a Google Document to discuss these topics and formulate a final list of 3 issues to bring to Director Anastasio. If you are interested in joining the Google discussion send an email to Jessica at lapa_policy@lanl.gov and provide your email address (gmail or otherwise).

The PC also recommends a special committee be formed to finalize the discussion and create a loose agenda for the Director's Meeting (i.e. begin meeting with Director Mike on

a positive note citing examples such as career fair).

The PC recommends this special committee include those attending the Director's Meeting (i.e. those who attended the May 8 meeting).

Communication Committee

- The Committee presented another successful Postdoc Orientation on May 5, with approximately 10 attendees. We would like to have a way to evaluate the presentations – anyone willing to help develop an evaluation form is encouraged to contact the Committee chair at lapa_communications@lanl.gov. The next orientation will be on June 30, for March-May hires, and future sessions will be held on a quarterly basis.
- Thanks to everyone who has sent in profiles for the newsletter. This is a good way to link up with other postdocs who share the same interests, either work- or play-related. Keep the profiles coming!

Finance Committee

The LAPA budget for FY08 totaled \$8,000. This consisted of \$3,000 for morale and a sub-total of \$5,000 for travel, materials and services. The total budget for 2008 was

\$1,000 higher than that for 2007, due to a larger morale fund. The breakdown is given in the table below:

LAPA budget FY08

Category	FY07 Budget (\$K)	FY08 Budget (\$K)
Travel	\$2.0	\$3.0
Materials	\$2.0	\$1.0
Services	\$1.0	\$1.0
subtotal	\$5.0	\$5.0
Morale	\$2.0	\$3.0
Total	\$7.0	\$8.0

LAPA funds for 2008 were spent in three principal ways:

- Food and refreshments for LAPA socials, the feedback forum, the biannual meeting and conversion seminars. The morale fund is used for this purpose
- Supplies for general assembly meetings
- Travel money to provide a competitive grant for one post-doc to travel to the National Post-doc Association meeting, in addition to funding the LAPA president to attend

As of May 7th, 2008, the LAPA budget for 2008 has a remainder of \$3,791.77. These remaining funds will be used to fund future LAPA events, including socials and refreshments for upcoming conversion seminars. LAPA continues to receive healthy funding from the Laboratory in order to provide our post-docs with the community and resources they need.

Social Committee

- Lala's Cocina has been unable to host the LAPA monthly socials – this is mainly because we are unable to guarantee enough sales in food to make it profitable for them to stay open. This necessitated the need for different venues and activities. Accordingly, the socials this year for March and April were held at Quark (Central Ave Grill) – these were very popular and well attended. LAPA purchased appetizers and some regular menu items and postdocs were responsible for buying their own drinks from the bar.
- In May, the social was a picnic at Ashley Pond and again LAPA provided sandwich foods and snacks. This social was very popular and we ran out of food – this is a good sign and we hope to continue having good attendance for the rest of summer.
- The plans for June are still up in the air, but another

picnic like May might be a good idea. As a new thing for last 3 socials, we have been providing food (paid for by Morale Funds) and it seems to be attracting people. We can do this again for June and still afford to increase the amount of food. The only other major activity for the summer is the end-of-summer barbeque picnic at Urban Park. More on that later.

- Also, the food today for the GA meeting was organized by the Social Committee and paid for by Morale Funds. Enjoy!
- See you at the next social, June 4th!

Conversion Committee

- Nothing to report.

Career Committee

- Goal of the career committee is to find and provide information on external career opportunities to LANL postdocs - currently working on the second annual LANL postdoc career fair and also work with other postdoc committees in order to enhance the overall postdoc experience.
- Career fair is scheduled for Aug. 26-27, 2008 - Endorsed by Dr. Terry Wallace (PADSTE)
- Our goal is to have 40 companies attend from a mix of government, civilian, and academic sectors.
- Postdocs given the opportunity to submit CV in advance, which will be compiled and made available for the registered companies to search (based on research area, field of study, etc) and invite postdocs of interest for an interview (last year ~50% had interview out of 170 postdocs that attended).
- Career committee postdoc members and staff support:
 - Ms. Mary Anne With - Postdoc office
 - Ms. Sandra One Feather - HR office
 - Ms. Karen J. Martinez - Gov. Affairs office
 - Chris Taylor - postdoc MST-6
 - Roshan Shrestha - postdoc MPA-MC
 - August L. Keksis (Gus) - postdoc C-NR
 - Jennifer Belyea - postdoc C-PCS
 - Dhriti Bhattacharyya - postdoc MPA-CINT
 - Devesh Ranjan - postdoc P-23
 - Nathan H. Mack - postdoc C-CDE
 - Nenad Velisavljevic - postdoc DE-9
- Past members: Michael Demkowicz and Laura C. Stonehill
- Career committee meets ~ 1-2 times per month, if you like to join please visit LAPA website and/or email Nenad Velisavljevic (career committee chair) at lapa_career@lanl.gov



Biannual Meeting Minutes

The biannual meeting of the Los Alamos Postdoc Association General Assembly was held on Wednesday, May 14th, 2008 at 12:10 PM in Siderooms A&B of Otowi. LAPA President, Nate Mack, was the presiding officer and upon calling the meeting to order announced that a quorum was present.

The agenda was adopted without objection after deciding to move the NPA meeting discussion to the June agenda, since one of the attendees could not make it today. The minutes from the April 9th, 2008 G.A. meeting, which were published in the April newsletter, were approved without objection. The Vice-President, Dhriti Bhattacharyya, gave a report on completed business, ongoing business and future business. A new voting member, Devesh Ranjan, was recognized by the Secretary.

Committee reports were given by Nenad Velisavljevic (chair, Career Committee), Chandra Savage Marsden (chair, Communications Committee), Chris Taylor (chair, Finance Committee), August Keksis for the Policy Committee (Jessica Houston, chair) and August Keksis for the Social Committee (Zoe Fisher, chair). A motion was made and seconded to nominate Dhriti Bhattacharyya to chair the Conversion Committee, which he accepted.

The results from the LAPA officer election were presented. 12.2% of all postdocs voted in the election. The winners were Nate Mack by 56% (President), Devesh Ranjan (Vice-President), August Keksis (Secretary) and Kevin Houston by 53% (Treasurer).

The three bylaw resolutions were read by Nate Mack and a motion was made and seconded to vote on the resolutions as a package, which was unanimously approved. The package was then unanimously approved, so Resolutions 7 to 9 will be added to the LAPA Bylaws.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to charge the Communications Committee with developing a presentation about LAPA, which will be given at the MS Cookies & Tea on July 8th, 2008 at 4 pm.

There were two announcements:

1. Please send in your postdoc profiles for the LAPA newsletter to lapa_communications@lanl.gov
2. The Career Committee is having a meeting after the GA Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.

Submit your CV for the Career Fair!

http://int.lanl.gov/projects/pda/cv/add_file.php

Deadline: June 9

All CVs submitted by the deadline will be compiled and made available to companies registered for the career fair. This will allow the companies to search the CV database and contact postdocs for interviews during the career fair.

Postdoc Profiles

Name: Mark A. Nelson

Group: EES-2

Ph.D. Institution: New Mexico State University

Research Interests: Modeling of electron-air interaction phenomenology, laser-material interactions, laser radar, nonlinear optics.

Hobbies or interests: Trail running, marathons, travel, Latin American and African music, waterskiing, learning languages, photography.



Name: Zhaoyu (Jesse) Wang

Group: MPA-STC

Ph.D. Institution: Univ. of IL, Urbana-Champaign

Research Interests: Electronic materials and devices in thin films and nanowires.

Hobbies or interests: Avid reader, tennis player, exercise workouts



Name: Partha Mukherjee

Group: EES-6

Ph.D. Institution: Pennsylvania State University

Research Interests: Electrochemical energy systems, multi-scale modeling

Hobbies or interests: Reading books (tech articles), watching TV.



Name: Quinn Marksteiner

Group: ISR-6

Ph.D. Institution: Columbia University

Research Interests: Superluminal sources, high power microwave generation, non-neutral plasma physics.

Hobbies or interests: Music, hiking, camping.



Name: Rich Renneke

Group: ISR-6

Ph.D. Institution: Purdue University

Research Interests: High-power RF applications.

Hobbies or interests: Biking, soccer.



Postdoc Program Office Announcements

CONGRATULATIONS to those individuals who received a FY07 Postdoc Distinguished Performance Award:

Michael Demkowicz, MST-8
 Ki-Yong Kim, MPA-CINT
 Pinaki Sengupta, T-11/MPA-NHMFL

More information will be available in a future issue of Currents!

New Postdocs for April

Hari Dahal, T-11
 Pulak Nath, P-21/B-9
 Prashanth Upadhyay, MPA-CINT
 Jonghan Won, MST-8

April Postdoc Conversions - Congratulations!

Marc Cawkwell, T-14
 Marat Mustyakimov, B-8
 Sam Schofield, T-7

Calendar of Events

June 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 CV Workshop 1:00-3:30 UNM-LA 130 Postdoc Night! 5:30 pm Ashley Pond	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 LAPA GA Meeting 12:00 pm Otwi Side-rooms A & B	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 Postdoc Orientation 12:00 - 1:00 Canyon School Rm. 160					

Los Alamos Postdoc Newsletter

LAPA Officers

President:
Nate Mack

Vice-President:
Devsh Ranjan

Secretary:
Gus Keksis

Treasurer:
Kevin Houston

Committee Chairs

Policy:
Jessica Houston

Communication:
Chandra Savage Marsden

Finance:
Chris Taylor

Social:
Zoë Fisher

Conversion:
Dhriti Bhattacharyya

Career:
Nenad Velisavljevic

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