

MRS Contributes to the NISE Network

The Materials Research Society is part of the Nanoscale Informal Science Education (NISE) Network, spearheaded by three science museums as part of the largest National Science Foundation (NSF) award ever presented to the science museum community. This is a five-year grant of \$20 million to educate the public about nanoscale science, engineering, and technology. The network includes the three main host institutions, the Science Museum of Boston, the Exploratorium in San Francisco, and the Science Museum of Minnesota, and extends outward to a myriad of groups, including NSF centers across the country. MRS is playing a key role in participating and linking many parts of the network, and educating MRS members on creating effective outreach activities.

The NISE project has organized its activities into eight distinct deliverables: (1) Exhibits and Packages; (2) Professional Resource Center; (3) Visualization Lab; (4) Public Web Site; (5) Professional Development for Informal Science Education (ISE) and Nanoscale Science, Engineering,

and Technology (NSET) Leaders; (6) Public Forums; (7) Network Media; and (8) Research and Evaluation. The MRS NISE Subcommittee recruits and organizes a nationwide network of scientists and engineers to participate within these strands.

Building the Network

Over the past year, subcommittee members attended numerous NISE strand workshops, the national NISE annual meeting, and ISE conferences, where they played an active role in the NISE initiative.

The MRS NISE Subcommittee currently focuses on building the network of professionals through three distinct approaches. First, the subcommittee members have asked Educational Outreach Directors at the NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers, the NSF Nanoscience and Engineering Centers, and the Department of Energy (DOE) Nanoscience Centers to serve as local nodes in the network. Second, they asked these Centers as well as ISE institutions to identify existing local networks. Third, MRS established a

NISE activities area at both the Spring and Fall Meetings where MRS members could learn about the goals of NISE, interact with museum personnel, and volunteer to help. For example, MRS members who attended the 2006 Spring Meeting worked with artists from the Visualization Lab to develop graphics that illustrate the unique world of matter at the nanoscale (see photo).

Activities

Last year, the NISE subcommittee played a supporting role in the First Lego League, a robotics competition for middle school students that attracts approximately 60,000 participants working in teams of about eight students each. As part of that competition, the teams were also required to complete a research project on a scientific and engineering topic chosen by the League. For the year's research topic called "Nanoquest," subcommittee member Julie Nucci recruited MRS scientists to serve as "answer scientists" to respond to questions posed by the participants about nanoscience and nanotechnology. Through coordination efforts at the Boston Museum of Science, "Ask the Nanoscientist" questions and answers were posted on the First Lego League Web site at www.firstlegoleague.org.

In addition to direct public outreach activities, NISE educates scientists to lead such activities. MRS made a significant contribution to NISE through the informative and instructive handbook written by Wendy Crone, director of education and outreach at the University of Wisconsin's Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC) on Nanostructured Materials and Interfaces. The handbook, "Bringing Nano to the Public: A Collaboration Opportunity for Researchers and Museums," introduces informal science education to researchers wishing to partner with science centers to bring nanoscale science and technology to the general public.

To assist in the Professional Development strand, MRS recruited a large pool of graduate students and postdoctoral candidates to the NISE Nano-Education and Outreach (NEO) program led by Barry Kluger-Bell of the Exploratorium. NEO is a semi-annual, five-day workshop that provides training in inquiry-based education and public communication.

To become an advisor in the NISE Network to help develop innovative approaches to engage the public in nanoscale science and engineering education, research, and technology, access Web site www.mrs.org/nise_survey.



During the 2006 Materials Research Society Spring Meeting in San Francisco, MRS members worked with artists from the NISE Visualization Lab to develop graphics that illustrate the unique world of matter at the nanoscale.

MRS Invites Nominations for the Von Hippel Award, Turnbull Lectureship, and MRS Medal

The Materials Research Society is seeking nominations for the Von Hippel Award, the Turnbull Lectureship, and the MRS Medal. The deadline for nominations is **June 1, 2007**. These awards will be presented at the 2007 MRS Fall Meeting, November 26–30, in Boston.

The MRS awards program recognizes outstanding contributors to the progress of materials research. Nomination forms and details about eligibility and nomination criteria are available from the Materials Research Society, 506 Keystone Drive, Warrendale, PA 15086-7573, USA; tel. 724-779-3004, fax 724-779-8313, and the MRS Web site at www.mrs.org/awards.

Von Hippel Award Acknowledges Outstanding Interdisciplinary Work in Materials Research

The Von Hippel Award, first presented to Arthur R. von Hippel, whose interdisciplinary and pioneering research typified the spirit of the award, is the

Society's highest honor. The recipient is recognized for brilliance and originality of intellect, combined with vision that transcends the boundaries of conventional scientific disciplines. The award includes a \$10,000 cash prize, honorary membership in MRS, and a unique trophy—a mounted ruby laser crystal, symbolizing the many-faceted nature of materials research.

Turnbull Lectureship Honors Career of an Outstanding Researcher and Communicator

The David Turnbull Lectureship recognizes the career of a scientist who has made outstanding contributions to understanding materials phenomena and properties through research, writing, and lecturing, as exemplified by the life work of David Turnbull. While honoring the accomplishments of the recipient, the Turnbull Lectureship is intended to support and enrich the materials research community.

The recipient will give a technical lecture of broad appeal at a designated session of the 2007 MRS Fall Meeting. The Turnbull Lecturer will receive a \$5,000 honorarium and a citation plaque, along with a travel allowance for speaking engagements throughout the year.

MRS Medal Recognizes Recent Discovery or Advancement in Materials Science

The MRS Medal offers public and professional recognition of an exceptional achievement by an individual in materials research. The Medal is awarded for a specific outstanding recent discovery or advancement that is expected to have a major impact on the progress of any materials-related field.

The award consists of a \$5,000 cash prize, an engraved and mounted medal, and a citation certificate. 