September 23, 2021

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Subject: Joint DPS-NSBP speaker recognition program

From: Amy Mainzer, DPS Chair

To: All relevant leadership within NSBP and DPS

Summary

This memo outlines a new joint speaker recognition program between the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP; <https://nsbp.org/>) and the AAS’s Division for Planetary Sciences (DPS; <https://dps.aas.org/>) and requests that relevant volunteer leaders of both professional societies connect to determine the process to make the newly defined program a success. This MOU primarily defines DPS fiscal and organizational responsibilities for this joint program. However, this partnership is broader than that and will be strengthened by recognizing the connections and knowledge carried in both organizations (especially by the NSBP-EPSS leaders when they are also members of the planetary science community, as at present). Additionally, NSBP-EPSS leaders should be consulted with regularly to ensure that the needs of the community they represent (and, in particular, the needs of the speaker) are being met.

Background

DPS seeks to facilitate the involvement and participation in planetary science of more students/scientists belonging to racial/ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented in the planetary science discipline. The broad goal of the NSBP’s Earth and Planetary Systems Sciences (EPSS) section is in helping African American/Black scientists and students build relationships within the planetary science community; in particular, to identify African American/Black students/scientists with an interest in planetary science and facilitate their networking and career growth. An additional objective is to increase cross-membership (DPS and NSBP) for students/scientists of color (especially African American/Black scientists).

To that end, the DPS and NSBP will create a program to recognize outstanding early career researchers and give them wide exposure in the planetary science community by facilitating and sponsoring science talks at the DPS annual meeting and at least one other institution. This program is modeled after the AAS’s Beth Brown recognition program (see memorandum on this subject from Kevin Marvel), though with some unique and distinct features.

Program Description

The NSBP and DPS leadership will work together to organize a series of talks, to be given by an outstanding planetary science student or researcher who presented work at the NSBP annual meeting in the EPSS session.

The NSBP-EPSS leadership will, on the basis of presentations (either talks or posters) given at the NSBP annual meeting, select an early career student or researcher who gives an outstanding science presentation on any topic in planetary or Earth science.

* The NSBP-EPSS leadership is solely responsible for identifying the scholar for recognition and ensuring that they are willing to participate in the program.
* The NSBP annual meeting usually takes place in November, after the DPS annual meeting in October. Hence the DPS/NSBP organized talks will take place over the subsequent year. The selected speaker will present at the following year’s DPS annual meeting, and an invited talk at a prominent institution will take place before the next annual NSBP meeting.

Once the honoree has been identified, the DPS Chair will invite the NSBP-EPSS leadership to a DPS Committee meeting to announce their name. In addition, this meeting will serve as a forum for more general discussions between the NSBP-EPSS and DPS leadership. The DPS Chair will solicit a volunteer who is a member of the senior DPS leadership (either a Committee member, Subcommittee member, or Officer) to serve as the DPS point of contact (POC) for the honoree. The DPS POC will collaborate with the NSBP-EPSS leaders and a member(s) of the DPS Professional Climate and Culture Subcommittee (PCCS) to ensure all arrangements optimally benefit the speaker and the community that NSBP supports.

The DPS POC will be responsible for offering the honoree:

* A talk on a topic of the honoree’s choice at the next annual DPS meeting, along with complimentary meeting registration, and travel support for lodging, transportation and food. The AAS staff will provide administrative support for the trip and will pre-pay expenses where possible to limit any financial burden for the honoree. The DPS POC will coordinate with the DPS meeting Science Organizing Committee (SOC) to ensure that the honoree is given a talk and that this talk is well advertised. The SOC will select the appropriate session for the honoree’s talk based on the subject. The DPS POC will coordinate with the DPS Treasurer to ensure that the honoree’s meeting registration is covered by the DPS. A DPS POC will act as the honoree’s local host at the DPS meeting.
* A talk at a NASA center, national laboratory, or large planetary science university program or research institute. Alternately, if the honoree is not currently attending a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) or Minority-Serving Institution (MSI), the honoree may select an HBCU/MSI as the host institution for the talk, subject to the institution’s funding constraints. The DPS POC and NSBP-EPSS leaders will ask the honoree for their preference of venue and will seek to identify a suitable host institution. The DPS POC and the NSBP-EPSS leadership will work together to facilitate contact with the host institution and will work with the local colloquium coordinator to obtain a speaking slot for the honoree. In cases where the host institution is the home institution of one of the NSBP-EPSS co-chairs, or an institution with which an NSBP-EPSS co-chair has strong ties, the appropriate NSBP-EPSS co-chair will be responsible for facilitating contact with the host institution and working with the local colloquium coordinator to obtain a speaking slot for the honoree. The DPS POC and NSBP-EPSS leadership will communicate with the local colloquium coordinator, to ensure that the full planned experience will optimally benefit the speaker. Travel costs and speaker honoraria will be covered by the host institution. The DPS POC will coordinate with the DPS Secretary to announce the talk in the DPS newsletter, and with the NSBP-EPSS leaders to publicize the honoree in the broader NSBP community.

The DPS leadership will create a website to announce the program and publicize it in coordination with the NSBP. The NSBP-EPSS leadership will communicate with the honoree to confirm their acceptance and willingness to contribute relevant website materials, and then work with the DPS POC to acquire website content (e.g., biographical information, photographs suitable for publication, and/or links to professional/institutional websites). The DPS POC will additionally work with the AAS leadership and the DPS Chair and Secretary to publicize the honoree in the broader AAS community, and with the NSBP-EPSS leaders to publicize the honoree in the broader NSBP community.

Key Leadership Points of Contact:

NSBP-EPSS track Chairs (at present: Lynnae.C.Quick@nasa.gov, alexander\_evans@brown.edu)

DPS Chair (DPS.Chair@aas.org)

DPS Vice Chair (DPS.VChair@aas.org)

DPS Professional Culture & Climate Co-Chairs (DPS.PCCSchair@aas.org)

DPS Treasurer (DPS.Treasurer@aas.org)

DPS Secretary (DPS.Secretary@aas.org)

AAS Executive Officer (kevin.marvel@aas.org)