Efforts of the Physics Community

• American Physical Society (APS)

• International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP)
Physics: an example of a field where women are still under-represented

Since 1972 APS has had the Committee on the Status of Women in Physics

Most active APS committee: many programs over the years
Percent of PhDs awarded to women in selected fields, 1920-2006.

Because numbers are so small, emphasis in publications has been on:

• Motivating interest among women (posters, pamphlets)

• Sharing best practices (conference, website)

• Changing the physics culture
Sharing best practices:

2007 APS Conference on Gender Equity
Aimed at chairs of major physics depts. and high level managers at national labs

• Recruitment
• Climate
• Retention
• Outreach/pipeline building

Publication widely distributed and on the web

www.aps.org/programs/women
Sharing best practices:

Websites should reflect commitment to women: APS

- Female faculty
- Hiring the most qualified faculty
- Female postdocs
- Female graduate students
- Female undergraduate students
- Causes for concern
- Recommended strategies
Other APS programs to support these efforts:

Site visits to physics departments
(Efforts to change the culture)

Professional skills workshops
Communication
Negotiation
(Efforts to help women adapt to culture)
APS Meetings and Conferences

• Within APS, speakers are chosen by subunit (39) program committees
• Need to continually remind all of them to include more women
• Two steps forward, one back!

However, tremendous progress has been made in subunit governance
How IUPAP has helped

Women physicists in US noticed that there were almost no women invited speakers at large international conferences.

Such talks are prestigious and are key to good jobs and promotion and tenure.

We had no idea how to change this.
IUPAP goals when founded in 1922

- Promote international cooperation in physics
- **Sponsor suitable international meetings**
- Foster the publication of tables of physics constants
- Promote international agreements on the use of symbols, units, nomenclature, and standards
- Foster free circulation of scientists
- Encourage research and education in physics
My involvement in IUPAP

• 1999 first woman elected as officer of IUPAP – helped start a Working Group

• 2002 1st International Conference on Women in Physics

• Conference recommended that IUPAP require that women be involved as organizers and speakers at all sponsored conferences (there is money at stake!)

• IUPAP accepted recommendation!!
Women give invited talks at prestigious international conferences

Women’s CVs look stronger

Women get better jobs and more awards

Women students have better role models and strive for success in physics

More women become physicists
Physicists call this a “boot-strap” process

It has always worked well for men and now it will work for women as well!!

**BUT:** Someone has to monitor the process!!

Changes in leadership can result in all your efforts disappearing – *eternal vigilance is needed*
Use your organization’s publications – paper and electronic - to motivate women to become scientists and to show your commitment to helping them.

Design procedures and policies that ensure the inclusion of women in all key activities.

Do not think that these alone will be sufficient to accomplish your goals: **continually monitor and whenever possible enforce!**