

students who desire to use their nontechnical skills. In this regard, professional societies can feature articles written by such individuals and can also arrange for presentations and meetings during conferences. As an example, APS and AIP have prepared a brochure, "Move in the Right Direction," which has sections written by physicists with nontraditional careers. This not only gives students insight into such employment avenues, but also provides a contact point. The document is usually distributed as part of APS's graduate student packet.

The following services, currently not provided by professional societies, would be beneficial.

Scholarship/Fellowship Program. Societies can promote university research by encouraging industrial fellowship support for graduate students. In return, the graduate student would carry out a small short-term project at the university. This need not necessarily require large amounts of money, but small grants which would enable students to become familiar with a company's research and development (R&D). This would also provide avenues for students to meet and work with industrial scientists. Since corporations are squeezing their budgets, such a program might be too much to expect from individ-

ual companies; however, a professional society can manage a fund of various industrial contributors for this purpose.

Conference Networking Aid. A program can be designed to match students with scientists in academia and industry to facilitate one-on-one or small group meetings at conferences. This would only demand a small amount of time of 30 minutes to one hour for scientists and would be immensely beneficial to the students to discuss research interests, work environment, and future plans of the corporation or professor. The APS March 1997 Meeting held such a session in which the Forum on Industrial and Applied Physicists had invited scientists to talk about their experience in industry.

Internship Program. Most industrial recruiters have mentioned that they prefer fresh PhD graduates with experience in corporate R&D. An internship is the most suitable way to acquire such experience. Such a program should be attractive to most companies, and from the perspective of the organizing professional society, the implementation should not be difficult. Internships are standard for undergraduate students and can be applied to graduate students as well. This service would also foster networking. Employers could specify their needs for summer interns to

the professional society in terms of number of interns required and desirable experience. The professional society could have a standard application form for interested graduate students to fill out, then forward the applications to the employers after preliminary screenings.

I have benefitted from the current student employment services offered by MRS, ACS, and APS and hope that some of the above mentioned programs, which are unavailable, can be implemented. During this past year, I have been encouraged by the observation of more students obtaining permanent positions (compared to the previous four years). I feel this is the combined effect of an improving employment market for science PhD graduates and more employment-proactive graduate students. Hence, current graduate students should look ahead with cautioned optimism.

Sabrina J. Diol received her PhD degree in physics in July from the University of Rochester. She will join Kodak as a research scientist in August. She has been an active member and co-president of the University of Rochester Chapter of the Materials Research Society. She is also a member of the Employment Subcommittee of MRS.

Letters to the Editor

"Packaging" Lessons Should Include Energy and Recycling Issues

To the Editor:

The article on a "Packaging" curriculum for education in the April [1997, page 43, *MRS Bulletin*] issue was quite interesting. I was disappointed, however, to note that there was no point made as to the rel-

ative energy "intensity" of different packaging strategies or to recycling issues. Recycling is a popular topic with teachers and much baloney is served in the name of science. These curriculum materials, if they addressed the issues from an energy standpoint, could do much to make the sausage more nutritious.

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Reply

Recycling is certainly important and an area where teachers could use more scientific guidance. We do include it in our lesson (but not in the one page in *MRS Bulletin*). The energy issue is an interesting one that we did not include. Specific ideas are welcome as to how to broaden this lesson from this perspective.

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EFFECTIVE AUGUST 25, 1997



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MRS is excited about its new headquarters facility and the opportunity it provides to advance our commitment to our members and the materials research community.