

DPS

Reaching out to the Community: A DPS Speakers' Bureau

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One of the most frequent ways in which scientists reach out to the community is through public talks, which are often informal and held at local schools, planetariums, and museums. These talks are usually arranged by personal contact between the scientist and a person at the host institution. We propose to facilitate these contacts by creating a voluntary DPS Speakers' Bureau. Respondents to the 2000 Education/Public Outreach Survey conducted by E. Miner expressed interest in this idea: 40% of respondents indicated a willingness to participate. The benefits of the Bureau would be many: it could serve regional needs for planetariums, museums, and clubs, as well as some limited formal education needs in local schools. The Bureau could also be useful to the media trying to locate experts on particular topics. We propose to implement a one-year trial run for the Bureau. We propose to make this service available via the DPS web site. Method of coordination is yet to be determined and input from potential participants is solicited. We will consider linking the Speakers' Bureau web page to the web sites run by the National Science Teachers' Association, the International Planetarium Society, and the Solar System Exploration E/PO site at NASA. A sign-up sheet for additional potential participants will be available at the poster site.