

**American Mathematical Society  
Committee on Science Policy Meeting  
March 23-24, 2021  
Washington, D.C.**

**Committee Meeting Summary Report**

The Committee on Science Policy (CSP) met virtually over two days to hear presentations by key DC-based policymakers and funders; discuss and resolve issues of the committee; as well as to plan committee activities for the coming year.

**Presentations were given by**

***Mark Green***

*Chair, Board on Mathematical Sciences and Analytics  
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*

***Michelle Schwalbe***

*Director, Board on Mathematical Sciences and Analytics  
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*

Dr. Green and Dr. Schwalbe described ongoing work of the BMSA and future themes and directions. Focus themes for 2021 include the following: education careers in mathematical sciences; mathematical sciences driving machine learning and artificial intelligence work; how the mathematical sciences are changing medicine; and mathematics and inequality.

***Sean Jones***

*Assistant Director, Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences  
National Science Foundation*

Dr. Jones gave an overview of the NSF's mission and organization structure, as well as priorities for the next year. NSF policy directions are informed by NSF Director Sethuraman Panchanathan's vision, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Four Pillars of New NSF Vision (advancing research; accessibility and inclusivity; global leadership; and Translation Innovation and Partnerships). Dr. Jones shared that the CARES Act enabled NSF to respond in a timely fashion by granting \$75M to support research projects related to COVID-19.

***Sara Barber***

*U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology*

Dr. Barber described the roles of committees in Congress—their jurisdictions, partisan make up, and work moving legislation. Her committee is currently comprised of 23 Democrats and 19 Republicans (Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Texas and Ranking Member Frank Lucas, Oklahoma). She then provided legislative highlights from the 116<sup>th</sup> and 117<sup>th</sup> Congresses. Dr. Barber encouraged continued input from mathematicians and invited committee members to contact her.

*Rachel Levy*

*2020-2021 AMS Congressional Fellow*

*Office of Senator Margaret W. Hassan, New Hampshire*

Dr. Levy described her experience as the AMS Congressional Fellow. She has been working remotely and reports still having a very good and transformative experience.

*AMS Executive Director Report*

Catherine Roberts, Executive Director of the AMS, welcomed the committee. She discussed highlights from 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, AMS offices moved to remote work from home. AMS founded its sixth policy committee - Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (CoEDI). Then-AMS President Jill Pipher established the Task Force on Understanding and Documenting the Historical Role of the AMS in Racial Discrimination. Co-chaired by Kasso Okoudjou (Tufts University) and Francis Su (Harvey Mudd College), the Task Force report was made available to the public March 22, 2021. Recommendations have been made and will be followed and tracked. AMS has established a new fellowship which is intended to support the scholarship of mid-career black mathematicians.

The status of future meetings (which can change) is operating under the assumption that in-person meetings will begin in the fall; the Secretariat is considering virtual sectional meetings once in a while; JMM may be in-person provided this is allowed by government policies. The Secretariat reported that, as an experiment, the Spring 2023 northeast Sectional will be held online even though we expect in-person meetings will have resumed by then. Summer 2021 events have been changed to be held virtually. The Director of Meetings has been attending regular meetings with other directors from other scientific societies and exchanging best practices.

*AMS Director of Government Relations Report*

Karen Saxe, Associate Executive Director, updated the committee on the work of the AMS Office of Government Relations (OGR).

The Biden/Harris transition team requested AMS recommendations for the direction of the NSF for the next few years and these were duly written and submitted (written by Bryna Kra, Kasso Okoudjou, Jill Pipher, and Karen Saxe). AMS/MSRI Congressional Briefings have been on hold during the pandemic. However, the AMS

has helped host two briefings with coalitions that we are members of. Karen Saxe reported on legislation that is moving through Congress and on the various COVID-19 relief packages that have become law and include funding for the NSF. The 117<sup>th</sup> Congress is expected to be an active one, and a positive one for science and math. In addition to normal appropriations, there are competing NSF reauthorization bills being debated.

Recent changes in federal leadership include the new NSF Director, Sethuraman Panchanathan (the 15th director). President Biden nominated mathematician Eric Lander to serve as top science advisor to the White House; he is awaiting Senate confirmation. Sean Jones began as Assistant Director of the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences in fall.

The OGR—on behalf of AMS—signed 36 letters in 2020 and endorsed two bills in 2020.

*Committee Actions:*

1. A subcommittee was formed to conduct a comprehensive review of the AMS National Policy Statement and to potentially draft a new statement for consideration by AMS Council. At the 2018 CSP meeting, it was decided that a new statement should be written and a subcommittee was formed to take on this work. This effort is still underway and a new subcommittee was formed at this year's meeting to continue this work.
2. A subcommittee was formed to consider how to diversify the applicant pool for AMS Congressional Fellowship.
3. A subcommittee was formed to summarize discussion with Dr. Sean Jones of NSF and to submit recommendations to address issues pertaining to mathematics and mathematicians.
4. Each year the AMS sponsors a mathematician to serve as the AMS Congressional Fellow. A subcommittee was formed to help with the selection process.
5. A subcommittee was formed to plan for the CSP panel at the JMM in Seattle in 2022.

*Date of Next Meeting*

The 2022 Committee on Science Policy meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15 and Wednesday, March 16, 2022 in Washington, D.C.