

Sigma Xi Today

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Sigma Xi Center Opens in Research Triangle Park

The official opening in April of the new Sigma Xi Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, marked an historic occasion for the 118-year-old science and engineering research society.

Sigma Xi President Peter H. Raven called the new building "a marvelous achievement... both a reflection of our distinguished past and a bright symbol of the Society's future." Raven, a renowned environmentalist, is director of the Missouri Botanical Garden and a winner of the National Medal of Science.

Executive Director Patrick D. Sculley presented Raven the ceremonial key to the facility. Raven and other speakers praised Sculley for his leadership in making the Sigma Xi Center a reality.

The grand opening was attended by many of the Society's past presidents, officers, board members, chapter officers, members and friends and included remarks by North Carolina Congressman David Price, who has been honored nationally for his support of science and engineering education and research.

Also on the program was Robert

McMahan, North Carolina Governor Mike Easley's senior advisor for science and technology. Developer Robert D. Teer, Jr. was inducted as an honorary Sigma Xi member for his

successful efforts to have the building completed on time and within budget. (See related story page 392.)

offices, as well as the editorial and pre-press production offices of *American Scientist* magazine.

Sculley says that the additional space and upgraded technology in the new \$9.3-million facility will enhance chapter support and member services. It will also allow growth and enhancement of the Society's programs in such key areas as research ethics, science and engineering education, public understanding of science and engineering, international research cooperation

and the health of the research enterprise.

"We wanted our new building to reflect the joy of discovery and the satisfaction our members derive from research," Sculley says, "and the architects certainly fulfilled that ambition."

A winding, wooded entrance leads employees, visitors and patrons to an inviting, glass-layered structure that conveys innovation and excellence. Numerous sustainable design

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Shown clockwise: Executive Director Patrick D. Sculley and Sigma Xi President Peter H. Raven; visitors enjoying the plaza; Rep. David Price (center) talking with attendees. Photos by Jay Mangum



Construction on the Sigma Xi Center began in March 2003 and was completed by December 1.

Teer Associates served as developer for the building, which was designed by Little Diversified Architectural Consulting. The general contractor was Clancy and Theys.

The three-level, 52,000-square-foot facility is the new home of Sigma Xi's program and administrative

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elements are incorporated within the project, including storm water management, daylight control and protection and reduced site disturbance.

Architectural features include a dramatic spiral staircase in the lobby and a Hall of Honor where the names of Nobel Prizewinning members—nearly 200 strong—are inscribed on granite panels.

“We anticipate that the Sigma Xi Center will be a popular gathering place for members and other visitors,” Sculley says, “a place to commemorate the accomplishments of science and engineering and promote the future health of the research enterprise.”

The multi-purpose auditorium in the new facility has been named in honor of the Research Triangle Foundation and the Triangle Universities Center for Advanced

Studies, Inc. (TUCASI) in honor of a \$1.5-million gift to the building fund.

The Society’s capital campaign is ongoing. As part of the campaign, members and friends can honor others with a gift to the building fund. Gifts of any size will be acknowledged in an Honor Roll of Donors on the Society’s Web site and on an interactive display in the lobby of the new building.

For contributions of \$1,000 or more, payable over three years if preferred, the names of those honored, along with those honoring them, will be etched into paving stones in the Sigma Xi Center plaza for permanent display.

Naming opportunities for various spaces in the new building are available to recognize larger gifts. For more information, visit www.sigmaxi.org, contact development@sigmaxi.org or call 800-243-6534. All donations to Sigma Xi are tax-deductible in the U.S. and Canada.

American Scientist Online Celebrates First Anniversary

American Scientist magazine’s Web site has become a highly utilized resource, averaging 1.6 million page views and more than 90,000 unique visitors each month.

University libraries and research labs have licensed the site to give convenient access to their students, staff and faculty, and advertisers are finding its visitors an excellent audience for their science-related products.

American Scientist Online offers special features for Sigma Xi members:

- A searchable archive of *American Scientist* issues back through 1998;
- Online-only content such as “Site of the Week,” which helps visitors explore noteworthy science-related sites on the Web;
- An expanded *Bookshelf* section that includes interviews with noted scientists and authors, upcoming science publications and letters to the *Bookshelf* editor;
- Two free e-newsletters: *Science in the News Weekly* (an adjunct to Sigma Xi’s popular daily *Science in the News* service) and *Scientists’ Bookshelf Monthly*;
- Automated linking to the underlying peer-reviewed literature through CrossRef and to the *Scientists’ Bookstore* (a joint venture with Barnes & Noble), where members receive an additional 5 percent discount.

In coming months, free PDF versions of articles and columns will become available to Sigma Xi members.

Visitors will also be offered discussion boards encouraging dialogue about columns and articles, excerpts from selected books reviewed in the magazine and indexes to older issues.

Visit *American Scientist Online* at www.americanscientist.org and explore its many features.



The Sigma Xi Center grand opening weekend included a Sally Ride TOYchallenge™ Regional Showcase at the new facility. Shown here are middle school students whose toy- and game-design projects received special recognition. Visit www.sigmaxi.org for more on the grand opening and TOYchallenge. *Photo by Jay Mangum.*

An Interview with Sigma Xi President Francisco Ayala

On July 1, Francisco J. Ayala begins his term as president of Sigma Xi. He is University Professor, the Donald Bren Professor of Biological Sciences and professor of philosophy at the University of California, Irvine. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, Ayala has served as president and chairman of the board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the U.S. President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology. His many honors include the National Medal of Science and Sigma Xi's William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement.

How long have you been involved with Sigma Xi?

My association with Sigma Xi has been long and rewarding. I became a member in 1964 and have lectured at numerous chapters, starting around 1965. I have also participated as a speaker at several Sigma Xi Forums in conjunction with the Society's annual meetings.

I admire *American Scientist* as a prime science and science-education journal, not only because of its large circulation, but also because of its focus and breadth. Some of my most cited scientific papers were published in *American Scientist*. Moreover, where else could I have published on topics related to science, such as the use of scientific experts in the courts of law ("Science and the Courts," 1993) or the philosophy of science ("Biology as an Autonomous Science," 1968, an article reprinted in numerous collections and readers up to the present)?

What plans do you have for your presidential term?

I plan to focus my leadership on four issues: (1) federal and other support for scientific research, particularly investigator-initiated research, including Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research; (2) science education in K-12 and scientific literacy of the public; (3) protection of the environment and preservation of biological diversity; and (4) interna-



Francisco J. Ayala

tional science and environmental leadership. Sigma Xi's chapter structure may be put to good use in seeking these objectives.

The future of colleges and universities, as well as the economic welfare and industrial leadership of the United States, depends on the success with which we preserve and enhance the scientific base of our educational and economic activities.

It has been said that more than 90 percent of all economic activity depends one way or another on scientific discovery. The case must be made to the federal government and Congress, and to the people who are the ultimate source of the public purse, that investment in scientific and engineering research pays back handsome financial returns. I would seek to expand the extremely effective Grants-in-Aid of Research program of Sigma Xi.

Science literacy has long been one of your interests. Can you elaborate on that?

Science literacy is necessary for the fruition of life in a modern society that is ever more technologically driven. The rational exercise of civil rights and the full participation in social life depend on some understanding of the scientific and technological principles involved in individual and government decisions.

Understanding science, moreover, enhances the willingness of the public to invest in scientific research. Yet much of the public is scientifically illiterate. There is urgent need to enhance science and math education in the schools. The press, TV and other media, as well as museums and cultural institutions, are means for educating the public and increasing scientific literacy. I would explore additional ways for our national office and local chapters to become engaged in promoting science education and scientific literacy.

What environmental issues are foremost in your mind?

The United States should be the leader, rather than a reluctant follower, in transforming the lifestyle of the world's nations from environmental insult and destruction to preservation and enhancement. Scientific knowledge and technological know-how are crucial for achieving the transformation.

The United States is the world's greatest economic power and dominant political force; it is also the undisputed leader in science and technology. The United States can and should lead the world's nations toward a new, environmentally sane world order.

Can international research cooperation play a role?

The United States can and should exercise leadership toward enhancing international cooperation in scientific research and technological development. I welcome Sigma Xi's recent decision to increase its international activities. For reasons of background and conviction, this is very congenial to me. We could expand international Sigma Xi chapters, whether in individual institutions or in sets of them within the same country.

Sigma Xi counts 70,000 members, but it is little known outside the U.S. Sigma Xi's traditions and activities would benefit other countries and they will benefit us in return.

Teer Elected Honorary Member

For his major role in shepherding the new Sigma Xi Center to completion, developer Robert D. Teer, Jr. of Durham, North Carolina, was inducted as the 32nd honorary member of the Society during grand opening ceremonies in April for Sigma Xi's new home in Research Triangle Park.

Since 1983, distinguished individuals not otherwise eligible for membership in Sigma Xi, who have served science, or the Society, in a manner or to a degree that merits such recognition, have been elected honorary life members by the Board of Directors.

"Robb Teer was the major factor in the Sigma Xi Center's being built on time and within budget," says Sigma Xi Executive Director Patrick D. Sculley. "I met him when he was managing the building in which we formerly leased space and came to trust him. Whenever I called him about an issue, he was always candid with me. That trust was validated every day during the construction process, and we now have the magnificent Sigma Xi Center as evidence of the value of that trust."

Following a family tradition of building that dates back to 1909, Teer established Teer Associates in 1986. It is the oldest and only development company located in Research Triangle Park and has developed more than 2.5 million square feet of office, retail and hotel space.

From the purchase of raw land, through development, design, construction, and financing, the Teer development team handled the Sigma Xi Center project from start to finish.

"As a developer, my position is similar to that of an orchestra leader," Teer says. "It is my responsibility to coordinate all aspects—the land development, architectural design, construction management, budget preparation, landscaping and tenant requirements—ensuring that all elements are completed on time and within budget."



Robert D. Teer, Jr.

Teer earned a BS degree from East Carolina University and completed a postgraduate program in engineering economy at the University of Tennessee and a course in professional management at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

His professional management skills were honed at the Nello L. Teer Company headquartered in Durham. This multinational construction company was involved in all facets of construction, ranging from hydroelectric dams in South America and airports in North Africa, to countless highway and office construction projects.

As president of Teer Associates, his professional and business affiliations include serving as former chairman of the Durham board of Central Carolina Bank, a member and former director of the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, as well as service with the Triangle J Council of Governments and the board of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority.

Teer was a member of the U.S. Army Reserve for 27 years, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was last assigned to the Health Services Command, Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. He also completed the Army Command and General Staff College.

Student Research Conference Deadline September 30

September 30 is the deadline for undergraduate students from North America and abroad to submit poster abstracts for the 2004 Student Research Conference in Montreal on November 12-13.

Visit www.sigmaxi.org for guidelines, helpful tips and online registration.

Held in conjunction with the Society's annual meeting, the Sigma Xi Student Research Conference is a research poster competition that offers monetary awards as well as recognition.

During the two-day meeting, students also attend career development workshops and participate in mentoring activities. They also have an opportunity to discuss research with Sigma Xi members, hear talks by eminent scientists and network at various social events.

Sigma Xi chapters are encouraged to participate by increasing awareness of the event, sponsoring student participants and encouraging annual meeting delegates to serve as research poster judges.

Exhibit space is available for institutions to recruit students or feature their programs.

For the third consecutive year, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences is providing major support for the conference.