

Teaching and Learning in the Sciences

In 1989, when AAAS's Project 2061 published its first book, *Science for All Americans*, the authors described the nation's science and mathematics textbooks as "impeding progress toward science literacy."

In 2002, AAAS was given a major opportunity to further its work in curriculum reform. Moreover, through an award to a key staff member, the Association was recognized for efforts to improve science education for those least likely to enter the science and technology workforce—women and minorities, who continue to be underrepresented in the sciences. The National Science Foundation has noted, for example, that in 1999, women comprised 46 percent of the nation's workforce, but only 24 percent of those working in science and technology. The agency also reported that African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians made up 24 percent of the U.S. population but only 7 percent of the total S&E workforce.

Center for Curriculum Materials in Science >>> In 2002, the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced that AAAS's Project 2061 had been awarded a 5-year, \$9.9-million grant to create a Center for Curriculum Materials in Science, one of three centers funded that year by NSF specifically to expand the nation's "intellectual infrastructure" for teaching science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.

In partnership with three Midwestern universities, Project 2061 will have a long-term impact on curriculum research and development; on the graduate schools that prepare the professionals who educate teachers; and on the methods and materials used to teach science and mathematics to American schoolchildren.

As one of the NSF's five Centers for Learning and Teaching (CLT), the new AAAS center is being asked to respond to the challenges cited by NSF: "Replenishing and diversifying the instructional workforce, K-16, and conducting ongoing research related to learning and teaching across the spectrum of these activities, are clear national needs," the agency noted in May 2002.

Public Service Earns Top Honor >>> In 2002, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) announced that it would award Shirley M. Malcom, head of the Directorate for Education and Human Resources at AAAS, its Public Welfare Medal, the Academy's most prestigious award.

Established in 1914, the medal is presented annually "to honor extraordinary use of science for the public good." Malcom has spent nearly 30 years working at the policy and

grassroots levels to advance public understanding of science and technology and to increase the participation of women, minorities, and the disabled in these areas.

"Dr. Malcom has been at the forefront in making science available to those normally underrepresented in science careers," said NAS President Bruce Alberts.

Connecting Educators to Resources on the Web >>>

Tied to AAAS's *Benchmarks for Science Literacy*, AAAS's Science NetLinks is a Web site designed to help science educators identify and easily navigate Web-based resources to supplement classroom teaching with both written curriculum materials and learning activities. Funded by the MarcoPolo Education Foundation, the site also contains an extensive library of lesson plans that answer key questions in science. Whether focused on static electricity or managing the Everglades ecosystem, each lesson is geared toward at least one learning goal. Of key importance to the site are AAAS's "Science Updates," 90-second radio spots that present current research, and allow students and teachers to ask questions on the hotline (1-800-WHY-ISIT). In 2002, AAAS redesigned the site to make it easier to use. "Hits" to the site have increased dramatically since it was launched in 1997; at the end of 2002, hits totaled more than one million a month.





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BARBARA JASNY, Supervisory Senior Editor, Science

