

NEWS FROM THE PROFESSION, CONT.

As senior president of the prestigious New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), Adams has been at the center of the national conversation on the cost and value of liberal arts education. “I see the power of what is happening on our campuses and among the alumni I meet across the country and around the world,” he says. “People who engage in a profound way with a broad range of disciplines—including, and in some cases especially, with the humanities—are preparing to engage the challenges of life. They are creative and flexible thinkers; they acquire the habits of mind needed to find solutions to important problems; they can even appreciate the value of making mistakes and changing their minds. I am convinced that this kind of study is not merely defensible but critical to our national welfare.”

A statement from the National Humanities Alliance: Colby College President William D. Adams is the ideal person to lead the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Adams is an accomplished teacher and administrator who has been a leading proponent of the importance of a broad-based education grounded in the humanities. We are fortunate that he will bring his years of experience to the NEH at a time when the humanities are being called upon to help achieve critical national goals such as promoting educational opportunity for all, fostering innovation, ensuring productive global engagement, and building strong communities. Dr. Adams has a deep understanding of the ways

in which the humanities can change lives, tracing his passion for the humanities to his search for answers to eternal questions while serving on the battlefield in Vietnam. The National Humanities Alliance applauds the nomination of Dr. Adams.

For more information, please see the announcement from the White House. The nomination must be confirmed by the Senate.

Quito and the Sun

By Hans J. Haubold, UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (this article is adapted from a report by E. D. López (Quito Astronomical Observatory, Ecuador))

There is a relatively new field of scientific research devoted to studying the physical phenomena that take place in the atmosphere around the sun. This field has been given the name “space weather,” and it includes many interesting and complex phenomena that are poorly understood, phenomena that are waiting for the sensitive instruments and adequate physical models that will explain them.

Fortunately, for over two decades, the **United Nations Basic Space Science Initiative (UNBSSI)** through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) has provided a huge amount of support to establish regional centers for space science and technology in

developing countries. Moreover, the United Nations’ initiative has played a pivotal role in organizing the world-wide scientific community through its support of space-science schools, symposia, and annual UN workshops such as those under the auspices of the **International Space Weather Initiative (ISWI)**. These events have facilitated communication among space-science students, engineers, and scientists, thus enabling agreements for educational programs, the deployment of instruments in new regions, and the enhancement of international cooperation in research projects.

The United Nations Space Weather Initiative (UNSWI) has involved leading scientists from around the world and these scientists have participated in three meetings to follow up on activities from the successful International Heliophysical Year 2007 (IHY). The first ISWI Workshop was hosted by Helwan University, Egypt, in 2010, to benefit the nations of Western Asia. In 2011 the United Nations/Nigeria Workshop was hosted by the Centre for Basic Space Science of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, for the benefit of nations in Africa. The third ISWI workshop was hosted by Ecuador in 2012 in support of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Participants at the Ecuador workshop made key decisions in order to give continuity to future activities in space science, technology research, and education. They took advantage of that

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workshop to promote space science studies in Ecuador by creating a new station supported by the Quito Astronomical Observatory of the National Polytechnic School. The new station began with the operation of the AWESOME instrument provided through cooperation with Stanford University (USA) and with the MAGDAS instrument provided by Kyushu University (Japan). This new Ecuadorian station, Solar Physics Phenomena, is now established as a division of the Quito Astronomical Observatory.

Ecuador is located in a strategic geographical position where solar-physics studies can be performed year-round, providing data for the scientific community working to understand Sun-Earth interactions. We invite leaders from other scientific projects to deploy their instruments in Quito and to join us in supporting our new strategic research center.

Note: The proceedings of the UN Ecuador Workshop on the International Space Weather Initiative (ISWI), edited by E. D. Lopez and S. Gadimova, are published in the open-access journal *Sun and Geosphere*, Vol. 9 (2014), Nos. 1 & 2.

U.S. Members: Ask Your Representative to Join the National History Caucus

The National Coalition for History (NCH) has worked with the offices of Congressmen John Larson

(D-CT) and Tom Cole (R-OK) on the creation of a Congressional History Caucus. Please encourage your member of the House to join the caucus and to actively participate in its activities. The purpose of the caucus is to provide a forum for members of Congress to share their interest in history and to promote an awareness of the subject on Capitol Hill. [Click here](#) to learn more and go [here to send a letter to your representative](#), asking him or her to join the Congressional History Caucus.

New Center in Holland

The Stevin Centre for History of Science and the Humanities, initiated and headed by HSS member Ida Stamhuis and named after the polymath Simon Stevin (1548–1620), is a collaboration of staff members from most faculties of the VU University Amsterdam. It opened on 18 March 2014. The lectures from the opening can be viewed at <http://stevincentre.com/news-agenda.html>.

Members of the Stevin Centre offer courses taught in English or Dutch on the history of science and the humanities at the BA and MA levels. The Stevin Centre is also a platform for research. It has formulated a common research theme titled “Knowledge Practices and Normativity within their Historical Context.” The concept of science will be problematized, and the role of philosophical, normative, religious, and legal aspects will be central in the historical analysis. The Stevin Centre aims at making its results available

to the wider community and to achieve this it will organize activities for the VU community and special activities for particular groups.

2014 Midwest Junto for the History of Science

The 57th Meeting of the Midwest Junto for the History of Science took place this past April at Truman State University, which is located amidst the gentle slopes of northern Missouri in Kirksville, the birthplace of osteopathic medicine. Peter Ramberg, David Robinson, and Amy Bix served as the gracious hosts for the approximately 50 Juntoers who attended. The meeting began in lovely fashion with an opening dinner at the home of Amy Bix and Taner Edis, close to the Truman campus.



Kate Sheppard answers a question on WWI spies

The sessions kicked off on Saturday, 5 April, in Magruder Hall (Truman’s science building). Due to the large number of submissions for the program, graduate students received priority and attendees came from near and far: from the frozen north (Minnesota