Arthur H. Guenther Congressional Fellowship Program
2008 - 2009

Co-sponsored by SPIE and The Optical Society of America (OSA)

A Unique Opportunity
The Arthur H. Guenther Congressional Fellow works in the office of a U.S Senator or Representative, or with a Congressional Committee to gain first-hand knowledge of congressional operations, contribute to the policymaking process, and forge links among the engineering, scientific, and public policy communities. Fellows also gain a perspective that will enhance industrial, academic, and government careers. The Fellowship is an ideal way to spend an academic sabbatical or leave of absence from a company.

Term
Fellowships are normally a one-year term, running September through August. The Guenther Fellow will join more than two dozen other scientists and engineers in early September 2008 for an intensive orientation program on the legislative and executive branches. This program is organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), which also provides educational and collegial programs for Fellows throughout the year. Following interviews on the Hill, Fellows choose a congressional office — personal or committee staff — where they wish to serve. Fellows are expected to handle varied assignments, both technical and nontechnical.

A competitive stipend of $55,000 is provided by SPIE and OSA, and additional support from other sources, such as a present employer, is permitted. The Societies also provide an allowance for health insurance, travel, and relocation expenses ($8,000), and pay expenses for any sponsoring-Society conferences that the Fellow is invited to attend. Final selection of the Fellow will be made in March/April 2008 after personal interviews are conducted.

Qualifications
Fellows are evaluated on the basis of technical competence, work experience, ability to serve in a public environment, and evidence of service to SPIE, OSA, and the optics and photonics communities. Prospective Fellows must have: a Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral level degree by program orientation; significant familiarity with optical engineering or science disciplines; a working understanding of the optical engineering and science communities; and demonstrated interest in the public policy process. Federal employees are not eligible.

Although prior experience in public policy is not necessary, a demonstrable interest in applying science and engineering to the solution of United States policy issues is required. Applicants should have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and possess the flexibility to tackle a variety of work. Specifically excluded as selection criteria are age, sex, creed, race, ethnic background, and partisan political affiliations.

Application
Candidates must submit the following materials by 9 January, 2008:
1. A resume, or curriculum vitae, providing information about educational background, professional employment and activities, professional publications and presentations, public policy and legislative experience, and committee and advisory group appointments;
2. A letter of intent (2-3 pages) outlining: why you have applied and why you are qualified; what policy issues and situations interest you; what you hope to accomplish as a Fellow and after the Fellowship year; your participation in civic activities and/or public affairs; and how you first learned about the fellowship program;
3. Three letters of reference sent directly to the address below. Please include the addresses and telephone numbers for your references in your application. The letters of reference should address: the writer's relationship to the candidate; technical accomplishments and relative standing of the candidate among his/her peers; candidate's interest and experience in applying his/her expertise to the solution of societal problems; and the candidate's ability to communicate, both orally and in writing, and to interact productively with individuals and groups.

Application Deadline: 9 January 2008
Send all application materials to:
Arthur H. Guenther Congressional Fellowship Program
c/o Angela Stark
Optical Society of America
2010 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20036
Office: 202 416 1443
Email: astark@osa.org