13 April 2020

OSA Foundation Donors and Beneficiaries:

The OSA Foundation Board of Directors met on 31 March 2020. The discussion focused on 2020 programs and ensuring that we continue to support our students and early career professionals. Effectively serving our community requires revamping some of our offerings and reallocating funds to new opportunities. However, thanks to your generosity over the years, we did not focus on cutting back or cancelling programs.

A few examples of how we are retooling opportunities:

**Mentorship and Professional Development**

Throughout the year, we offer a wide-variety of in-person professional development training at OSA meetings. These are moving online and will increase in frequency. Visit osa.org/WEAREON and check out the “Let’s Learn” section. Topics will include online job interviewing skills, enhancing your Linkedin profile to stand out, and how to combat imposter syndrome.

The Foundation is providing the 2020 OSA Ambassador Program class with individual Zoom accounts and personalized promotional videos highlighting their skills and interests, as well as a social media marketing kit. Their Zoom-based training session, held on 5 April, focused on repositioning their mentoring to online activities. This was followed by an online networking session with Ambassadors from 2016-2019.

**Schools and IONS**

The Siegman International School on Lasers will become a virtual “All Stars” meeting facilitated by 2017 OSA President Eric Mazur. The school will be open to all attendees who were accepted to the 2020 school as well as all alumni. The University of Warsaw will now host the in-person school in 2021 and students accepted in 2020 will be offered a seat. The Innovation School will also become a unique, online experience that is project-based and group-work focused.

Most of the student chapter hosted International OSA Network of Students (IONS) conferences have opted to postpone until 2021. However, the IONS OPUMA 2021 is going to convert to a virtual conference experience. We look forward to supporting this model piloted by the students of the OSA Student Chapter at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

**Chapter and Travel Grants**

Some of the chapter grant funds are being repurposed to support virtual events and/or presentation fees. Additionally, chapters are being offered a professional subscription to Zoom to help their members facilitate group meetings and discussions without worrying about limited participant numbers or meeting duration cut-offs.

The Incubic Milton Chang Travel Grants will be repurposed as presentation grants for student and early-career authors at CLEO.
Other programs are proceeding as planned, such as the Bernard J. Couillaud Prize, endowed by Coherent, the Tingye Li Innovation Prize, Maiman Student Paper Competition and the James P. Gordon Memorial Speakership, all of which will be recognized at the virtual CLEO awards plenary. The Milton and Rosalind Chang Pivoting Fellowship and Thomas F. Deutsch Fellowship will both open with extended application periods and be recognized later in the year.

It is worth noting that OSAF launched its first Career Accelerator in January 2020, designed to acclimate OSA students and early-career members with fundamental business skills including leadership, team building, business strategy, finance, marketing communication and negotiation skills. The first program focused on optical communications, with 67 attendees from 19 countries. We plan to hold the next Career Accelerator 8-12 November 2020. Additionally, in March at OFC, the 2020 Corning Women in Optical Communications Scholarships recipients were recognized.

Your support has enabled us to pivot our programs quickly and continue to foster and recognize the next generation in optics and photonics. You can continue to support by visiting OSA.org/donate. Any gift enables the OSAF continue to expand programs and impact.

On behalf of the OSA Foundation Board, thank you. I wish you all comfort and hope in this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Alexander (Sandy) Sawchuk
OSA Foundation Board Chair

PS:
I also encourage all of you to see the 2019 OSAF Annual Report, now available online at osa.org/OSAFANNUALREPORT.