

# Cold Fusion Conference Scholarship Program Aimed at Future Scientists

Christy L. Frazier

Like many advocates for and researchers in cold fusion, the organizers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference on Condensed Matter Nuclear Science (ICCF21) recognized that the field needed better outreach to young scientists, as well as an influx of new experimentalists. So, Steven Katinsky devised an approach to this challenge while in the early planning stages for ICCF21.

ICCF21, held in June 2018 at Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins, Colorado, was the first cold fusion conference to offer scholarships for students and teachers. Scholarships were first open to high school and college students. The student scholarship web page noted, “We created this scholarship because we believe it’s important for the next generation of capable scientists with fresh energy, ideas, and an interest in LENR to become involved in the field.”

Shortly after launching the scholarship program, Katinsky and co-chairman David Nagel broadened the outreach to high school STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) teachers because they are “in a unique position to inform

young students of the prospects of Condensed Matter Nuclear Science.”

Katinsky enlisted volunteer consultant Dana Seccombe to administer the scholarship program. Seccombe undertook a multi-pronged marketing campaign aimed at alerting thousands of students about the scholarship opportunity. In addition to highlighting the scholarship program on the ICCF21 website (<https://www.iccf21.com>), Seccombe and his staff direct emailed over 20,000 recipients multiple times about the scholarships. Additionally, college professors and department chairs were encouraged to notify their students of the opportunity. Targeted mailings were also sent to high school STEM teachers, asking them to alert their students to the scholarship opportunity, but also inviting them to apply.

About 50 student and ten teacher applications were received, and 42 applicants were accepted for the scholarship program. Some of those accepted were unable to attend ICCF21 due to scheduling conflicts, inability to get a travel visa and other factors. Ultimately, 18 students and three

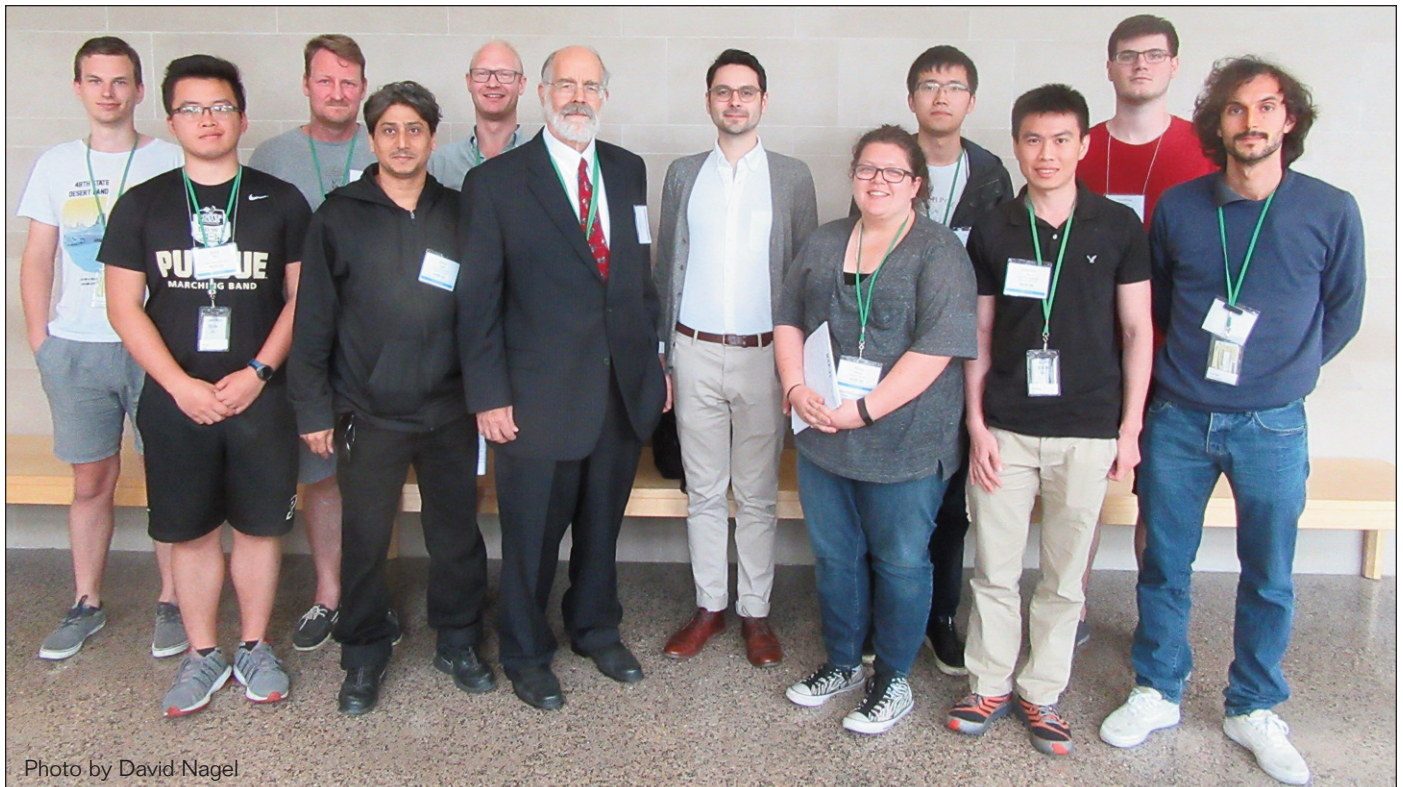


Photo by David Nagel

Many of the ICCF21 scholarship recipients with the program chairman Dana Seccombe (in the suit) and his assistant Florian Metzler (white dress shirt).

teachers attended ICCF21.

Some of the students attending ICCF21 were graduate level with an interest in cold fusion, while others were college students who simply showed an interest in the field. Most of the students were from U.S. colleges, including Texas Tech University, Purdue University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Case Western Reserve University, University of California at Los Angeles, Brigham Young University, University of Cincinnati, Washington State University and Eckerd College. Half of the students attending from U.S. schools were international students from Korea, China, India and the Middle East. But, a handful of international students also came from abroad to attend ICCF21, representing such schools as: University of Iceland, SISSA (Italian International School for Advanced Studies), Torrens University (Australia) and University of Toronto.

There were no high school student applicants for a scholarship to ICCF21. However, three high school STEM teachers did attend and were enthusiastic about the work being done in cold fusion. These teachers represented schools in California and Texas. Seccombe noted, "The teachers were amazed at the progress that cold fusion had made, and were interested in passing along their newly acquired perspective to students."

The scholarship program was funded by a generous donation from Ralph and Trish Nagel of the Nagel Foundation. Scholarships covered all conference costs except travel to and from Colorado.

All scholarship recipients were required to attend an intensive pre-conference short course on June 3, the day before the official start of ICCF21. This full-day overview of the cold fusion field included sessions on: Issues; Electrochemical Loading; Gas Loading; Calorimetry and Heat Data; Transmutation Data; Materials Challenges; Theoretical Considerations; Commercialization. These 40-minute sessions were presented by: David Nagel; Michael McKubre; Jean-Paul Biberian; Dennis Letts; Mahadeva Srinivasan;

Ashraf Imam; Peter Hagelstein and Dana Seccombe.

Seccombe saw the importance of having mentors available to answer questions for students and teachers attending the scholarship program. Jean-Paul Biberian, Florian Metzler and Mathieu Valet made themselves available to answer any questions.

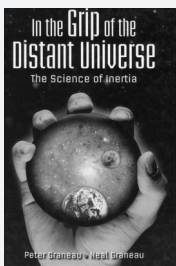
Researchers at ICCF21 had a clear impact on the students and teachers. In a post-conference survey of scholarship attendees, nearly all respondents noted the tremendous dedication of scientists in the field.

ICCF21 co-chairman David Nagel was pleased with the overall impact of the Scholarship Program. He said, "The Scholarship Program at ICCF21 did two good things. First, it enlivened the conference by bringing to it some new young people. And, it made those students and teachers aware of the status, challenges and promise of Low Energy Nuclear Reactions. Both of these factors are important because most of the people in the field are near the end of their research careers."

It is unclear whether future organizers of ICCF conferences will be able to raise the funds needed to support another Scholarship Program. What the field can hope for, at minimum, is that those who attended the 2018 conference will sustain interest in the field and attend future sessions.

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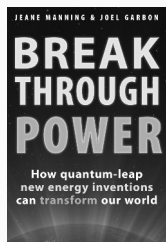
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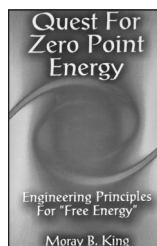
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