

## **Report To ACA Council By the Officers of the BioMac Special Interest Group of the ACA, July 2006**

The planning for the 2006 meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, started at the 2005 meeting in Orlando. It was there that the BioMac SIG decided on participating in ten sessions. The ten sessions consisted of six individually sponsored sessions, two sessions co-sponsored with synchrotron radiation (Structural Genomics and Complementary methods), one with the Neutron Scattering Transaction Symposium, and the Buerger Award Symposium. Later on another session was added for International Macromolecular crystallographers. Despite the tough competition with the local surroundings, the sessions were well attended.

The SIG officers, led by chair-elect Bill Royer, have started preparation for the 2007 ACA meeting. The SIG membership was polled by email for session topics. The topics were collected, organized, and presented at the BioMac SIG meeting on Tuesday, July 25th. Bill Royer presided over the meeting. The active discussion of the approximately 50 people at the meeting led to a prioritized list of over ten session topics, two of which were co-sponsored sessions with the Synchrotron Radiation SIG (Radiation Damage and Micro-crystal, Micro-beam). These topics will be presented at the 2007 planning meeting on Thursday, July 27th.

All the planning for the next meeting is running smoothly. There are however, parts of the process that may need improvement. It was brought to the attention of the Council that despite its huge membership, only a very small fraction of the members actively participate in determining the session topics. Polling by email produces responses by a few interested members. Two suggestions were made to improve this situation. The first was to include a short and simple "area-of-interest" section on either the member or meeting registration forms. This would be useful to the succeeding SIG chairs. The second was to simply identify the SIG chair AND chair-elect at the meeting. This may encourage members that do not attend the SIG meeting to voice their opinions to the appropriate people.

The current BioMac SIG chair (Craig Ogata) would like to thank all of the session chairs, Steve Ginell (2005 chair), and Pat Loll (secretary/treasurer) for their help and efforts.

### **BioMac SIG Meeting July 25, 2006, Honolulu, Hawaii.**

Prior to the ACA meeting, the BioMac SIG members were polled via email for suggestions for session topics. The chair-elect Bill Royer presided over the SIG meeting. He presented the attendees with topics that were common to previous meetings (New structures, Difficult structures, crystallization, computational methods, membrane structures, large macromolecular assemblies, and structural genomics), new topics that were received from the polling, and the possibility for co-sponsoring two sessions with the Synchrotron Radiation SIG.

The floor was then open to discussion. Strong opposition to the “New Structures” session was voiced. Arguments against the session were that it was difficult to sit through the eclectic collection of topics. The majority of the speakers concentrated on the biology of their individual systems and the common thread of crystallography was relegated to an inconsequential, if any, portion of the presentations. The counter argument was that it is the session that consistently receives the highest number of abstracts and serves as a general category for members to participate in the meeting even though they do not fit into any of the specific topics of the meeting. This session was kept in for 2007. New suggestions were taken and all sessions were put to a vote.

The results from the voting are listed below:

- New Structures
- Difficult Structures
- Crystallization
- Computational Methods
- Structural Genomics/BioInformatics
- New Approaches for phasing (long wavelength)
- Function from Structure
- Infectious Diseases
- Membrane Structures

Two other sessions are co-sponsored with the Synchrotron Radiation SIG

- Radiation Damage
- Microcrystal/Micro-beams