

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OCEANOGRAPHY SOCIETY

Oceanography

CITATION

Baeseman, J., and A. Pope. 2011. APECS: Nurturing a new generation of polar researchers. *Oceanography* 24(3):219, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2011.73>.

COPYRIGHT

This article has been published in *Oceanography*, Volume 24, Number 3, a quarterly journal of The Oceanography Society. Copyright 2011 by The Oceanography Society. All rights reserved.

USAGE

Permission is granted to copy this article for use in teaching and research. Republication, systematic reproduction, or collective redistribution of any portion of this article by photocopy machine, reposting, or other means is permitted only with the approval of The Oceanography Society. Send all correspondence to: info@tos.org or The Oceanography Society, PO Box 1931, Rockville, MD 20849-1931, USA.

SIDEBAR | APECS: Nurturing a New Generation of Polar Researchers

By Jenny Baeseman and Allen Pope

Established in August 2006 by young researchers involved in the planning stages of the fourth International Polar Year (IPY 2007–2008), the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) has evolved into the pre-eminent international organization for polar researchers at the beginning or early stages of their careers. Now comprising over 2,600 members from approximately 74 countries, APECS represents an international, interdisciplinary body of undergraduates, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, early faculty members, educators, and others with interests in polar regions and the cryosphere. The program aims to raise the profile of polar research by providing a continuum of leadership that is both international and interdisciplinary, and by stimulating collaborative projects in research, education, and outreach. In line with this aim, many of its founding members are now transitioning into the APECS mentor role by providing guidance, advice, and opportunities for newer APECS members, demonstrating the perpetuity of the organization and its mission.


APECS provides a strong voice for young researchers by enabling information sharing between early-career and more established professionals; promoting and organizing science, education, and outreach events; and being actively involved with other polar organizations such as the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC). Since its inception, APECS has strived to develop a strong network of partnerships with international organizations and scientific bodies. These partnerships have not only facilitated early-career representation on an international level but have also made available education and outreach opportunities for young polar researchers.

The core programs that have been implemented and developed by APECS include career development workshops and panels, online career development webinars, field schools and expeditions, and education and outreach projects such as (1) the development of a polar resource book, *Polar Science and Global Climate: An International Resource Guide for Teachers and Researchers*, an outstanding IPY legacy, and (2) FrostBytes, sound bytes of cool research.

The APECS website hosts many initiatives to provide information and resources to early-career scientists, and to facilitate discussion and interactions among polar researchers from all

disciplines. These initiatives include career development videos, virtual poster sessions, a literature discussion forum, field site information, a mentorship program, and a “Who’s Who in Polar Research” guide to help members find their way through the acronym soup of projects, institutions, and organizations.

IPY has created a large influx of new, enthusiastic, and talented young researchers. It is important to consider how to retain their motivation and initiative by keeping them involved with polar research and recognizing their important contribution to education and outreach activities. APECS is helping to retain this energy by developing a sense of community among young researchers and their mentors. The lessons learned in creating APECS can be used to facilitate other national and international initiatives aimed at meaningfully engaging early-career researchers.

APECS members encourage all polar researchers to join in their effort to shape the future of polar research. Visit <http://apecs.is> to become a member or mentor to help share your knowledge and wisdom with the next generation of polar researchers. 

Jenny Baeseman (jbaeseman@gmail.com) is Director, Association of Polar Early Career Scientists, University of Tromsø, Tromsø, Norway, and Affiliate Assistant Research Professor, International Arctic Research Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK, USA. **Allen Pope** is the APECS 2010–2011 President and PhD Candidate, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK.



APECS workshop participants at the IPY Oslo Science Conference, June 2010. Photo credit: Francisco Fernandez, AWI, Germany