

## Handicapped Resource Group Members Work for Barrier Elimination

Making the environment more accessible to the disabled, promoting the image of the handicapped person as one who is able to function successfully in a professional career, encouraging disabled students to follow the career of their choice—these are some of the goals of the AAAS Project on the Handicapped in Science. Two members of the project's resource group have demonstrated how the handicapped themselves can play a significant role in the accomplishment of these goals.

The two, Robert Larsen and Phyllis Stearner, are scientists employed at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois, where they have been active for the past 18 months in a campaign to eliminate obstacles that have hindered or prevented the employment of physically disabled workers at Argonne. The effort began when Stearner, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, was appointed head of an affirmative action committee at the laboratory. She submitted the committee's final report by mail to lab director Robert Sachs, explaining that she would have preferred to deliver it in person, but she could not get into his office. Stairs made it inaccessible.

Since then, according to lab engineer Henry Hoffnung, a number of changes have been made in the environment at the lab: an intercom was installed to enable visitors to secure passes without leaving their cars; a van equipped with a lift was put into operation to transport wheelchair users from building to building; some 20 ramps were built to provide access to buildings; several dozen washrooms were modified to accommodate wheelchairs; elevators were equipped with braille markings on the control panels; and reserved parking spaces were provided at many buildings for the use of handicapped employees and visitors.

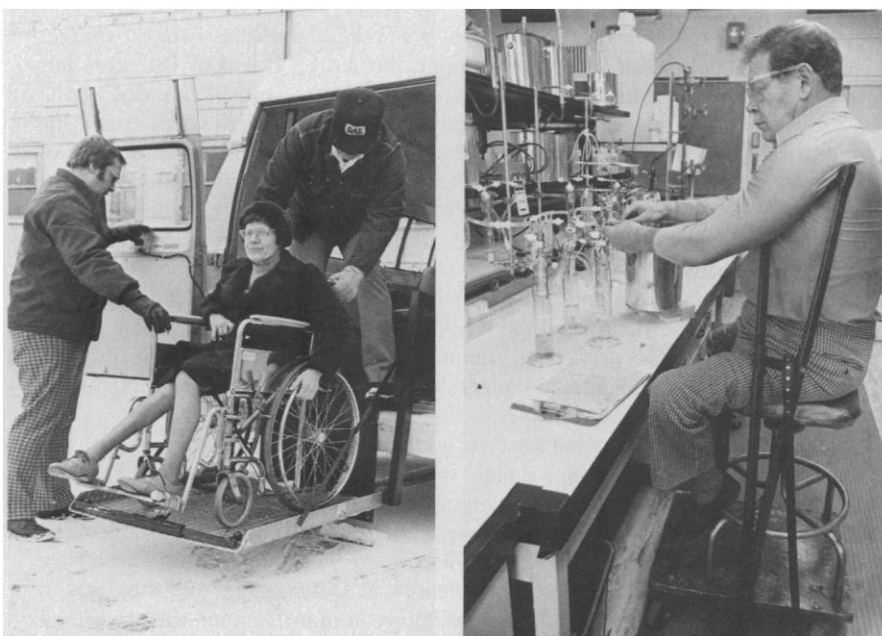
According to Richard Adams, assistant laboratory director for public affairs, contributions to the project have been provided by each of the several handi-

capped workers at Argonne. "The moving force," he says, "was the handicapped people themselves. . . . There was a complete lack of understanding of barriers. Somebody aware had to point them out." He is particularly enthusiastic about the AAAS project's recent publication of *Barrier-Free Meetings: A Guide for Professional Associations*, which he says will aid Argonne in eliminating barriers to attendance at professional meetings by handicapped employees.

Arthur Vervack, director of the personnel division at Argonne, reports that the lab's affirmative action program now has been broadened to include handicapped individuals. Weekly lists of job openings are circulated to more than 35 agencies and organizations concerned with the physically disabled, and more handicapped people are being interviewed.

Stearner and other laboratory employees also have been active in exposing local graduate and undergraduate students to opportunities in research through Argonne's Center for Educational Affairs. Both she and Sachs met with students from Southern Illinois University recently to discuss career options. It was an event that Stearner had been anxiously awaiting. "I wanted handicapped students to see handicapped scientists working in their chosen careers in a barrier-free environment. Often, counselors steer handicapped people away from careers in science because of either real or imagined barriers."

Larsen, Stearner, and the other handicapped people at Argonne are enthusiastic about the role of the handicapped in initiating the type of changes they have witnessed. In their words, "It is important to recognize that such changes are occurring at just this time, when the regulations of the Rehabilitation Act have . . . been enacted into law. The handicapped themselves can do a great deal to help bring about more accessible working conditions and can effect great changes in attitudinal barriers that have so long served to retard their entry into professional fields."



Phyllis Stearner (left) and Robert Larsen (right) are two Argonne National Laboratory scientists who were instrumental in implementation of a barrier-elimination effort at the lab. Larsen, an analytical chemist, is shown on a specially adapted bench he designed himself; Stearner, a biologist, boards a van equipped with a lift provided for handicapped employees at the lab. Both are members of the AAAS Project on the Handicapped in Science resource group.

Adams is quick to point out that there are benefits to be derived by the employer, too. A barrier-free environment for handicapped workers is theirs by right, he says, but, in addition, such a project "opens up . . . the mental skills available of those who have a physical disability."

The AAAS Project on the Handicapped in Science resource group, which numbers some 500 people who are blind, deaf, use a wheelchair, or are otherwise physically disabled, encourages all handicapped persons who have had experiences in effecting barrier elimination or other relevant activities to contact Martha Redden, Project Director, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-467-4497).

## AAAS Annual Meeting

### Notes

*Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility* — Projects and directions of the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility will be reviewed at a meeting of the full Committee, 1:00 p.m. Sunday, 20 February, in the Statler Room of the Denver Hilton. The second

part of the Committee meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, 21 February, in the Cedar Room of the Hilton. Since this group convened for the first time in early October, its subcommittees have held organizational meetings to discuss their respective activities and goals. (See AAAS News, *Science*, 3 December 1976, pages 1036-1037, for a list of the subcommittees.) The chairpersons of the five subcommittees will give reports at the full Committee meeting in Denver. The Committee also is sponsoring a full-day symposium as part of the annual meeting program, entitled "Case Studies in Scientific Freedom and Responsibility." The symposium will be held on Monday, 21 February, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Spruce Room of the Denver Hilton. During the afternoon session of the symposium, members of the Committee will give brief progress reports and the audience will be encouraged to suggest specific projects or agenda items for the evening session of the full Committee meeting. All annual meeting registrants are invited to attend the symposium and Committee meeting. Persons interested in obtaining more information on the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility should contact Rosemary A. Chalk, AAAS, 1776

Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

*AAAS Council* — The annual Council meeting will take place in two sessions, 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 23 February, in the Silver Room of the Denver Hilton. There also will be an open hearing of the AAAS Committee on Council Affairs at 3:00 p.m. Monday, 21 February, in the Statler Room of the Hilton. All annual meeting registrants are invited to attend the sessions.

*Student Hospitality Center* — A Student Hospitality Center, serving both graduate and undergraduate students at the annual meeting, will be located next to the AAAS Hospitality Center in the Convention Lobby of the Denver Hilton and will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 21-25 February. The Student Hospitality Center will serve as an informal gathering place and message center, and staff will provide information on accommodations, annual meeting symposia, and other activities. In addition, informal meetings between distinguished speakers and students will be arranged at the center.

*Workshop on American Training Programs for Foreign Graduate Students* — Twenty foreign students representing several countries and disciplines will attend the annual meeting under grants from the Institute of International Education and the Asia Foundation. A workshop to explore the effectiveness of American graduate programs in training foreign students to meet the needs of their countries will be held on Monday, 21 February, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Century Room of the Denver Hilton. A reception for all workshop attendees will follow.

*Project on the Handicapped in Science* — An open meeting of the AAAS Project on the Handicapped in Science will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, 23 February, in the Molly Gibson Room of the Holiday Inn. Members of the project's resource group will participate. All annual meeting registrants interested in learning about the aims and activities of the project are invited to attend.

*Business Meetings* — AAAS Sections will hold business meetings at various times during the annual meeting. All registrants are encouraged to check the schedule of business meetings on page 17 of the final program.

(Continued on page 508)

## Board Approves Continuation of R & D Budget Project

Following favorable response to last year's *R & D in the Federal Budget* report and its complementary colloquium, the AAAS Board of Directors has approved continuation of the project as an ongoing annual activity of the Association. The project was initiated last year on a trial basis under the sponsorship of the Committee on Science and Public Policy, with the goal of improving understanding among the AAAS community of the federal budget and the budget processes as they relate to research and development.

Willis H. Shapley, who prepared *R & D in the Federal Budget: FY 1977*, will again be responsible for this year's analysis, with the assistance of the Public Sector Programs Division staff and with guidance from the Committee on Science and Public Policy and the AAAS executive officer. The report on the 1978 budget will be an analytical summary and interpretive review of research and development in the annual budget, with objective analyses of some topics and issues of general interest.

Plans also have been made for a second colloquium in conjunction with the budget report. The meeting, which will provide a forum for constructive discussion of selected topics in the report by interested members of AAAS and officials of the executive and legislative branches of government, is scheduled for 15 and 16 June 1977. Topics for discussion will include future trends in R & D budgeting, the congressional role in R & D budgeting, and problems in the rationales and criteria for budget decisions. A more detailed agenda will be formulated during the 1977 AAAS Annual Meeting in Denver later this month.

AAAS members interested in attending the colloquium are invited to contact Catherine Lighthizer, Division of Public Sector Programs, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.