



# AAAS NEWS AND NOTES

edited by Coimbra Sirica

## PROFILE

## New AAAS President to Focus on Societal Concerns

Floyd E. Bloom—the new president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)—began his academic life at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, where he studied German literature and was advised to seek a career in journalism or public relations.

Instead, at his father's suggestion, Bloom entered medical school and eventually became one of the principal architects of modern neuroscience, but his continued ability to communicate ideas, in particular his vision of science as a way of life, has made his relationship with AAAS a natural fit.

"I ... see a scientific aspect in almost every issue of modern life, [including] global social issues such as peace, armaments, the environment, energy, nutrition, crime, violence, and ethics," Bloom wrote in a statement he prepared as a candidate for the AAAS post. "I believe we must continue to strive to enhance the diversity of the global community of scientists and endeavor to attract the brightest and best of our students to a stimulating educational exposure to the world of science."

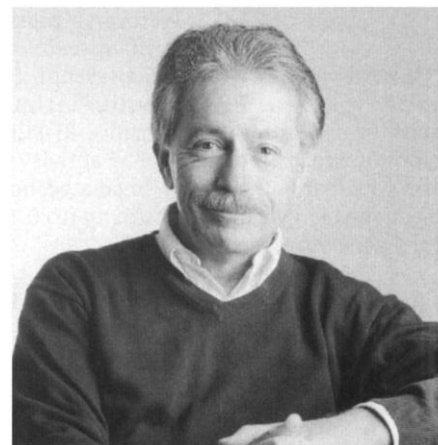
As he begins his presidency of the Association in 2002, Bloom, former editor-in-chief of *Science*, promises to help the Association continue to play a forceful role in addressing many of society's most pressing

concerns, among them the challenges inherent in genetic engineering of plants and animals and stem cell research. "These opportunities will necessitate consideration of ethical and philosophical issues that are complex, judgmental, and certain to influence future support of scientific research," said Bloom, who will take office at the close of the AAAS Annual Meeting on 19 February 2002. "AAAS is perhaps the only body with the general global support necessary to develop and invoke community guidelines on the appropriateness of scientific applications."

### Drawing Knowledge from Information

Also, with the boom in scientific information that has been made available online, Bloom would like to see AAAS and *Science* in the forefront of efforts to help scientists organize and "draw knowledge from information," a process Bloom began during his tenure as editor-in-chief of *Science*.

"Few people will benefit from technology that only intensifies today's information glut," Bloom said. He points to *Science*'s Signal Transduction Knowledge Environment ([www.stke.org](http://www.stke.org)) as the first time an online medium had succeeded in providing an interactive forum for a rapidly evolving field of science.



Floyd E. Bloom

Bloom was one of the first neurobiologists to use modern molecular biological techniques to characterize genes that are specific to the brain and to search for molecules that are key to its functioning. He also pioneered the use of computers in neuroanatomic investigations. Bloom began his career in neuroscience in medical school, when a mentor took him under his wing after he had failed to grasp the equations that explain how ions are involved in the transmission of nerve impulses. Bloom spent the summer in the mentor's laboratory.

"As a result," Bloom said, "I was a co-author of two papers in the *American Journal of Physiology* while a student, was selected by the Pharmacology Department to be a student instructor for second year students when I was a senior, wrote an honors thesis and published that during my residency, and those qualifications got me my job at the National Institute of Mental Health" (NIMH).

Bloom is chairman of the Department of Neuropharmacology at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, CA, as well as CEO of Neurome, Inc., a neuroscience company he co-founded in October 2000 to create genetic databases and identify targets for treatment of brain disorders. Bloom has also been director of the Arthur V. Davis Center for Behavioral Neurobiology at the Salk Institute in San Diego, CA. At NIMH, he served as acting director of the Division of Special Mental Health Research Programs and chief of the Laboratory of Neuropharmacology. Before that, Bloom was a professor at the Yale University School of Medicine.

## AAAS

## Call for Nomination of AAAS Fellows

AAAS Fellows who are current members of the Association are invited to nominate members for election as fellows. A fellow is defined as "a Member whose efforts on behalf of the advancement of science or its applications are scientifically or socially distinguished." Each nomination must be sponsored by three AAAS Fellows, two of whom must have no affiliation with the nominee's institution. Election is by the AAAS Council.

Nominations with complete documentation must be received by 31 May 2002. Nominations received after that date will be held for the following year. To request a nomination form, please write Linda McDaniel at the AAAS Executive Office, 1200 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC, 20005. She can also be reached by telephone at 202-326-6635, or by e-mail at [Lmcdanie@aaas.org](mailto:Lmcdanie@aaas.org). A list of current AAAS Fellows can be found on the AAAS Web site at [www.aaas.org](http://www.aaas.org); click on "choose a page" and then click on "AAAS Fellows." Fellows are listed both alphabetically and by AAAS section.