



Sigma Pi Sigma
The National Physics Honor Society
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ADOPT-A-PHYSICIST PROJECT SUMMARY

www.adoptaphysicist.org

Today's physicists aren't cookie-cutter Einsteins bent over notebooks or blackboards. They rarely study the block on the incline plane and most of them don't spend much time drawing circuit diagrams.

Today's physicists are professors, journalists, computer programmers, researchers, lawyers, physicians, managers, engineers, teachers, men, women, mothers, fathers, neighbors, volunteers, musicians, and rock climbers. There are physicists from all kinds of backgrounds, ethnicities, and faiths.

Adopt-a-Physicist aims to introduce high school physics students to the wide variety of careers open to people who study physics, and the wide variety of people who study physics.

Physicists and students participating in Adopt-a-Physicist interact for a three-week period. Before this period begins, each physicist creates a Facebook-like profile page on the Adopt-a-Physicist website. Teachers then choose up to five physicists for each of their participating classes to "adopt", preferably from different career categories. By "adopting" a physicist, a teacher is registering his or her class for an online discussion forum hosted by that physicist.

During the three-week period that the discussion forums are open, small groups of students within each class are encouraged to talk to their physicist about his or her career, educational background, most interesting projects, and anything else the students would like to know. Students are expected to report back to their class on their experience at the end of the three weeks. Since each class can have up to five physicists, each class hears multiple stories.

Adopt-a-Physicist is run by Sigma Pi Sigma, the physics honor society, and many of the volunteer physicists are Sigma Pi Sigma members.

Lead Organization: Sigma Pi Sigma (www.sigmapisigma.org)

Supporting Organizations: The American Association of Physics Teachers (www.aapt.org) and the American Physical Society (www.aps.org)

Adopt-a-Physicist Editor: Andrew Zeidell, Assistant Director, azeitell@aip.org

