Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam Student Chapter

Annual report 2017

Amsterdam, 30-09-2017

Officers

President: Fabio Feroldi
Vice President: Mathi Damodaran
Treasurer: Steven Beekmans
Secretary: Luca Bartolini
List of members

Jacob Bauer, Steven Beekmans, Dirk Boonzajer Flaes, Mathi Damodaran, Anne de Beurs, Menqgi Du, Fabio Feroldi, Maximilian Gräfe, Marica Marrese, Miriam Moester, Luca Bartolini, Judith van Santen, Kari Vienola, Lianjia Wu, Jacob Bauer.

Activities

First, we held elections for the officer positions (14-12-2016). The first event that we organized was a personal branding workshop, given by Wing Yan Man (16-03-2017). This was a session dedicated to scientists for helping them throughout the first career choices. We also had a few formal and informal meetings about which activities to hold over the year. Recently, we had a new workshop about career planning and burnout prevention (15-09-2017). We organized a science outreach event, in the realm of the nationwide Weekend van de Wetenschap (weekend of science). For this event we will use the SPIE outreach kit and also other experiments that we designed ourselves. Finally, we held an impromptu event in which we shared the benefits of SPIE membership with the students of other groups at our institution.

Future activities

The first event of the new academic year will be the outreach event during the Weekend van de Wetenschap. Then we are planning to invite a speaker. We are organizing a writing weekend, where the students that are in the course of writing articles will gather in a quiet place for a few days and write together.

Financial information

Beginning balance: 0 USD
Funds raised: 0 USD
Funds expended: 500 USD
Funding received: 0 USD
Ending balance: -500 USD

Best regards,

Fabio Feroldi
President of the SPIE student Chapter Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Individual reports of activities

Elections

Date 14-12-2016

The first meeting of the SPIE was held in room TK-029, with which the chapter was formed and the elections were held.

Unanimously, the board for the year 2017 was formed as follows:

- President: Fabio Feroldi
  Vice-President: Mathi Damodaran
  Secretary: Luca Bartolini
  Treasurer: Steven Beekmans

We had a brief visit by our advisor, Prof. J.F. de Boer.

We also discussed a few options for future events and set up a roadmap for the establishment of the chapter.
Workshop: Personal Branding, by Wing M

Date: 16-03-2017

Location: C669 of the FEW building at the VU

Participants: all the current members.

This was the first event of organized by the Student Chapter, hosted at the VU University. It offered an insight into the topic of personal branding. Standing out in a crowd, in fact, is of particular importance when searching for a job, but also in every social aspect: from networking at conferences to meeting new people at parties. Although these kinds of issues are not addressed as often in academia, the career of a scientist relies deeply on these skills, therefore the importance of this activity.

It was a highly interactive workshop, and during the presentation, it was often asked to answer specific questions about ourselves. Eventually, all these answers were summed up and put together in a take-home booklet.

This format, together with refreshments and healthy snacks, encouraged attendants to share personal stories and immediately contributed in creating a warm and welcoming environment. Therefore, the feedback for the participants has been very positive.
Meeting for planning

Date: 31/03/2017

Location: U052 of the FEW building at the VU

Participants: Fabio, Max, Steven, Kari, Luca, Judith, Ben

The president opened the brainstorming session for the next SPIE chapter events.

The group discussed ideas towards three different kinds of events: a visit from a SPIE lecturer, events for the students of the chapter, and outreach events.

List of proposed events for SPIE students:
- TNO visit (optics company in Delft)
- ASML visit (company making microprocessors)
- Philips research visit
- Group bonding activity: e.g. climbing, kayaking trip, wandeling
- Organization of a VU/AMC day where we can share the research in Biomedical Optics done by the two institutions.

Outreach events
- Open the sky observatory at the VU for a public star gazing night in winter
- Science event for kids organized at our university using simple optics such as a carton microscope and the SPIE diffraction kit
- A science fair for kids
- An event for Bachelor or Master students of Physics to show them our research
- At the introduction days of the VU, have a desk with experiments and our research to gather attention around Physics

Visit from an SPIE lecturer
- Kirill Larin
- Du Pont

We agreed on organizing a few of these activities, namely:
- AMC/VU day where the PhD students will give short presentations of the research going on the different groups. This will be organized in May (Steven/Fabio)
- Invite a speaker for SPIE, in the summer (Max/Fabio)
- TNO visit + presentation about event planning, in the summer (Luca/Dirk)
- Bachelor day of the VU, October (Judith)
Lunchtime Career Meeting

Date: 15-09-2017

Location: P640 of the FEW building at the VU

Participants: all the current members.

This lunchtime career meeting offered two talks. The first one, from Wing Yan Man, was about internal and external expectations, and pressure to succeed. Dealing with these aspects is very important in one’s career, and neglecting them can even lead to burn-outs. The talk offered insights by having each member of the audience actively question themselves.

The second talk was given by Arjen Amelink, who was Assistant professor, before moving to a the TNO Research Institute and becoming group leader in there. He presented the steps in his career, from his brief experience in the industry, to his return to academia, to his relocation in the largest non-profit scientific organization in the Netherlands: TNO. The variety of experience stimulated several questions and a lively discussion.

Lunch was offered by the Chapter.
SPIE membership outreach with Biophysics group

Date 29-09-2017

An evening meeting to share the opportunities given by SPIE membership and joining out SPIE student chapter with the group of Prof. E. Peterman. Their group is studying dynamics and morphology of molecules and cells at a microscopic level, often using high resolution imaging techniques. Pizza and drinks were offered by the chapter.