Workshop Will Demystify Running for Public Office

A workshop to be held in Washington on May 10 is designed to help other physicists do what Mike Fortner has done: run successfully for local office. Fortner, who has a physics PhD from Brandeis, does research at Fermilab and is on the faculty at Northern Illinois University. He now represents the 95th district in the Illinois General Assembly, but he started as a Historical Preservation Commissioner, and then served on his local school board before being elected as alderman and then mayor of West Chicago, moving on from there to the Illinois state legislature.

The day-long May workshop will focus on the nuts and bolts of running a local campaign, and is designed for scientists and engineers who are motivated by a desire for public service, possibly because their discipline plays such a crucial role in many policy questions or because it is important to maintain and improve science education standards.

"Any scientist or engineer who has ever thought about running for office should come to this workshop" says Lesley Stone, Executive Director of Scientists and Engineers for America (SEA). "The workshop will demystify the political process so we can get more scientists and engineers involved in positions that make a difference—from school board to Congress." SEA is the lead organization promoting the workshop, and is joined in this endeavor by a number of science and engineering societies, including APS.

The workshop is part of SEA's Campaign Education and Training project. The participating societies have produced a video to promote both the workshop and the general idea of scientists and engineers running for office. The video (below) features interviews with Fortner, with physicist and US Representative Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), and with David Westerling, a civil engineer who has served as Town Moderator of Harvard, Massachusetts. It can be viewed by visiting the SEA website.

The workshop will take place on the campus of Georgetown University. Further details and registration information will be found on the Campaign Education Workshop website.
Workshop Will Demystify Running for Public Office

http://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/200804/workshop.cfm?