CLEO’s Impact: A view from the Inside and the Outside

The impact of the CLEO physics program, represented in over 500 published articles, is breathtaking. It spans the rich and precise information on charmed mesons and baryons, B-mesons and their decay properties, quarkonia, the tau lepton, as well as the continuum in $e^+e^-$ annihilation. In this brief review, I will present, albeit from a somewhat narrow perspective, the impact that CLEO’s path-breaking contributions has had on our understanding of the properties of the $b$ quark and $b$-flavored mesons, the validation of the CKM picture, and the on-going search for physics beyond the Standard Model.