

Philadelphia – August 20-25, 2016

Highlights from the Philadelphia Meeting

ACS hosted its 252th national meeting in Philadelphia, which has become one of the favorite locations for a National ACS meeting, with the expanding Convention Center right in the middle of the city, surrounded by hotels, restaurants, the adjacent Reading Terminal Market, and nearby historic sites. The city has an extensive and convenient transit system, including a direct train to and from the airport with a center city station connected to the Convention Center and the Marriott Hotel, which was the main governance hotel for this meeting. While there was still some evidence of signage, the city seemed none the worse for wear from the recent Democratic National Convention held there at the end of July. The weather was pretty hot and muggy at the start of the meeting and at the end, but a rain storm late Sunday afternoon ushered in some very pleasant weather early in the week. Fortunately, there did not appear to be any major weather issues and flight delays that plagued the start of last year's meeting in Boston.

As always, this was a very busy meeting for CALACS Councilors, Past Presidents, and our Director-At-Large – all of which are active in other ACS Governance and volunteer activities beyond that of representing CALACS at the Council meeting, as you will see documented later in this report.

The meeting highlight for CALACS came on Tuesday evening at the ChemLuminary Awards. CALACS was a finalist for two awards, and won both: Outstanding Project SEED Program and Most Creative NCW Celebration Using the Yearly Theme. For those CALACS members in attendance, it was especially gratifying to see Elaine Yamaguchi's excitement in hopping up on stage to accept the Project SEED award, considering all of the energy and dedication she has brought to that program over the years. Likewise, for Alex Madonik in accepting the NCW related award for CALACS and all of the work he puts into this effort and the many volunteers he has recruited and retained over the years.

Prior to the start of the ACS meeting, a Presidential Public Outreach event: "Exploring Our World through Chemistry", which has become a feature on the Saturday preceding National meetings, was held at the Franklin Institute, with over 600 people attending and 50 volunteers. Visitors received copies of the NCW 2016 edition of Celebrating Chemistry, with the theme, "Solving Mysteries Through Chemistry," and they explored nine tables of hands-on activities, many based on this theme. CAL-ACS Councilors Sheila Kanodia and Alex Madonik are on the organizing committee for these events (the Committee on Community Activities, which also brings you Chemists Celebrate Earth Day and National Chemistry Week).

The overall theme of the Philadelphia meeting was "Chemistry of the people, by the people, for the people." As usual a plenary session highlighted and introduced the overall theme, while Division programs related to the theme continued throughout the week. Multiple Presidential Symposia were held in addition to the Plenary session, including: "Chemical Sciences & Human Rights;" "Chemistry in the US & China: Current & Future States of Shared Scientific Interests & Opportunities for Cooperation;" "Fracking: Economics vs Environment;" "NSF Opportunities;" and "Broadening Participation in Global Chemistry Experiences: Why Engaging Diverse Chemistry Communities in Global Research is Critical. Two other special symposia were held: "Connectivity and the Global Reach of Chemistry: Honoring the Life and Scientific Contributions of Ernest L. Eliel;" and "Kavli Symposium on Chemical Neurotransmission – What Are We Thinking?"

The popular Kavli Foundation Lecture series continued on Monday afternoon, with the Emerging Leader lecture given by Dr. Omar Farha of Northwestern University on "Bioinspired Sponges: Metal-Organic Framework for Combating Nerve Agents and Toxic Gases" and the keynote Innovations in Chemistry lecture given by Dr. Chad Mirkin of Northwestern University entitled "Establishing a Genetic Code for Unnatural Materials."

For the second ACS meeting, twelve young science trailblazers using chemistry to solve challenging global problems, dubbed by C&EN as the Talented 12, were the subject of a special symposium to present their work. The accomplishments of this group include: creating more efficient solar cells, untangling the mysteries of aging, probing foods for contaminants, and developing drugs to treat Alzheimer's and other diseases. One of them was Dr. Ke Xu of the University of California, Berkeley, who uses advanced microscopy to study cell structure and organization. Nominations are sought for 2017 Talented 12 through an on-line form.

Monday's evening's SciMix poster session showcased posters from most ACS Divisions, including the Academic Employment Initiative helping members seeking academic positions to network with perspective employers, and enthusiastic Project SEED high school students from several local sections happy to share their experiences.

Report from the Council Meeting and other Society governance activities

Seven of our eight CALACS Councilors, our two Past ACS Presidents, and our Director-At-Large were present at the Council meeting. Information on some of the activities to which they are affiliated can be found below. Alternate Councilor, Xiaoxi Wei, attended her first Council meeting in place of Councilor Stephanie Malone so that CALACS was represented at Council by a full contingent of voting members.

The Philadelphia Council meeting was a relatively quiet and efficient one. Nothing overly contentious or with extended discussion came up. As usual for the fall National meeting, voting was held to select new members to the Council Policy Committee (CPC), the Committee on Committees (CONC), and the Committee on Nominations and Elections (N&E). The revised "Chemical Professionals Code of Conduct" was approved. The new edition of "Reagent Chemicals – Specifications and Procedures for Research Chemicals" was announced.

The ACS dues waiver for unemployed members was extended from two to three years by a unanimous voice vote.

A joint task force has been formed between the Board and CPC to evaluate ACS governance design for the future.

A special discussion topic session was held to review and comment on the ACS President's task force on employment of chemists, for which CALACS member and ACS Past President, Attila Pavlath, is the Chair and ACS Past President, Marinda Wu, and CALACS Councilor, Bryan Balazs are members. Many serious comments were made and it was evident that this subject remains of concern to ACS members and officers.

Affiliations/comments from our Councilors, Past ACS Presidents, and Director-At-Large

Bryan Balazs – Committee on Budget and Finance (B&F, Associate Member), ACS Career Consultant – Career Fair, and Undergraduate Program Advisory Board

Eight hours of workshops were presented within the Career Fair on identifying your career path, getting started in networking, interview techniques, and how to make the best interview impression.

At B&F, the deliberations on national meeting registration fees and new program funding requests proceeded smoothly.

At the meeting of the Undergraduate Program Advisory Board, the group that establishes and oversees the programming for undergraduates at national and regional meetings, it was noted that the undergraduate attendance at national meetings continues its remarkable upward trend (currently now an order of magnitude larger than the attendance in the early 1990s).

Mark Frishberg – Divisional Activities Committee (DAC), ACS Career Consultant – Career Fair

Four hours of workshops were presented on identifying a career path and getting started in networking, as well as fourteen mock interviews over eight hours. The "Making a Difference" recognition award was received for career consultant performance from the ACS Career Office at the joint ACS Career Consultants and Committee on Economic and Professional Activities (CEPA) dinner.

The Divisional Activities Committee is the primary focus, along with the Committee on Meetings and Expositions, of a new ACS division wide discussion regarding the potential elimination of Thursday programming at National meetings. A DAC strategic planning retreat was held in June. Five divisions are participating in a pilot program to evaluate the health of their divisions and their strategies for continuity and growth. Presentations were made to DAC by members promoting the establishment of two new ACS divisions, Material Science and Space Chemistry, for which action will be taken at the next national meeting.

Sheila Kanodia –

While no longer on the Committee on Community Affairs, participation continues on teams developing yearly themes for "Chemists Celebrate Earth Day" and National Chemistry Week.

Lee Latimer – Director-at-Large

The ACS Board heard more on renaming of the Chemical Heritage Foundation, which effort is not yet resolved. Budgets were considered and work proceeded particularly on the governance structure and agility review task force. Efforts were also focused on membership demographics, employment and work on the next Strategic Plan.

Alex Madonik – Committee on Community Affairs (CCA)

The NCW 2016 theme is "Solving Mysteries Through Chemistry." Copies of the NCW 2016 edition of Celebrating Chemistry are now available for order by local sections, and were also distributed at the Council Meeting.

Thanks again to everyone in the California Section who have supported the public outreach efforts that earned us a ChemLuminary Award. Colorful liquid nitrogen ice cream may have been the winning innovation, but our nomination rested on all of your efforts.

One of Sunday's Plenary talks was by Professor Rolf Halden of Arizona State University, on "Urban Metabolism Metrology: A New Discipline Elucidating the Human Condition in Cities

Around the World.” Urban effluent is a clear indicator of every substance used or abused by the residents, and Professor Halden is a key participant in the EPA’s recently announced phase-out of the antibacterials Triclosan and Triclocarban in consumer products.

Madonik attended the Monday morning session of a symposium organized by ACS President Donna Nelson and Past Presidents Marinda Wu and Anne Nalley, “Chemistry in the U.S. & China: Current & Future States of Shared Scientific Interests & Opportunities for Cooperation,” featuring leading Chinese and American scientists including Laura Kiesling and Martin Burke. The tiny audience that found their way to an obscure corner of the old convention center were treated to a breath-taking tour of some scientific frontiers.

Another wonderful session was Tuesday afternoon’s symposium, “Green Chemistry Innovations & Opportunities in Industry for Young Professionals,” cosponsored by the Younger Chemists Committee and the Committee on Environmental Improvement, among others. Former ACS President Bill Carroll gave the lead-off talk, followed by practitioners of sustainability in a variety of industries.

Eileen Nottoli – Committee on Environmental Improvement (CEI), Western District Caucus
Nottoli is the Chair for 2016 of the Western District Caucus (District VI).

Attila Pavlath – International Activities Committee (IAC)

IAC recommended, and Council approved, petitions to charter the formation of three new International Science Chapters: Greater Beijing, Southwestern China, and Iraq. This brings to 19 the number of International Chapters, half of them on the Pacific Basin which gives the California Section opportunities to develop close cooperation with them. The Committee is also working on providing help to these Chapters which operate in a similar way to Local Sections without financial support.

Pavlath continues as Chair of 2016 President-Elect Donna Nelson’s Task Force on “Progress on Employment Issues.”

The National Chemistry Landmark Subcommittee of the Board approved another National Chemistry Landmark, dependent on anticipated official Board consent, located in the California Section: The Chemistry Department of UC-Berkeley where the Mars exploration was started under the late George Pimentel. This brings to seven the number of National Chemistry Landmarks in the Bay Area, the most of any Local Section. The official presentation will be next year, possibly during the Spring ACS meeting in San Francisco.

Pavlath made a presentation to the Division Activities Committee in support of the formation of a new Division: Division of Space Chemistry. This effort was initiated by the California Section with international cooperation and encouragement. Dependent on feedback from other ACS Divisions between now and the San Francisco ACS meeting next April, a recommendation could be made to Council to grant Probationary status to the Division. Plans are being made to have Symposia both at the Spring and Fall ACS meeting next year with various presentations on Chemistry in Space. A special note will be presented in the VORTEX inviting participation both in the Symposia and membership in the Division once it is officially approved.

Paul Vartanian – Committee on Constitution and By-Laws (C&B)

Marinda Wu – Committee on Budget and Finance (B&F), ACS Career Consultant – Career Fair

Several new Program Funding Requests were considered by the PFR Subcommittee of B&F. They included the ChemIDP Program, International Student Chapter Program, Higher Education Faculty Development Program, ACS International Recognition Program of Undergraduate Chemistry Degrees, and the Atlantic Basin Conference on Chemistry.

ACS signed 5 MOU’s in Philadelphia with the Mexican Chemical Society, the Chinese Chemical Society, the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers, the Chinese American Chemical Society, and the Atlantic Basin Conference on Chemistry.

At the ACS Career Fair, Wu only had time to help with resume reviews this time due to too many other commitments including co-chairing a very successful Presidential Symposium on “U.S.-China: Current & Future States of Shared Scientific Interests & Opportunities for Cooperation”; participating in two of the ACS MOU’s with CCS (Chinese Chemical Society) and CACS (Chinese American Chemical Society); as well as two ACS Symposium Book signings with WCC (Women Chemists Committee) and CACS (Chinese American Chemical Society) for Wu’s third ACS Symposium Book 1195 on “Jobs, Collaborations, and Women Leaders of the Global Chemistry Enterprise” available at www.acs.pubs.org and Oxford University Press at a 40% discount off list price with promo code ACSOFFER.

Elaine Yamaguchi – Local Section Activities Committee (LSAC)

LSAC approved 19 Innovative Project Grants totaling at this meeting, giving a total of 27

IPGs funded in 2016 for a total of \$69,230. LSAC is sponsoring two new pilot grants: Local Section Virtual Event Participation Grant and Mutual Exchange of Expertise in Technologies: Project MEET.

Looking ahead to San Francisco – April 2-6, 2017

The overall meeting theme will be “Advanced Materials, Technologies, Systems and Processes.”

The advance member registration fee for National ACS meetings in 2017 will be \$445.

Planned Presidential symposia under development will include: “Science for a Sustainable Energy Future” and “Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Accounts of Chemical Research Journal.”

News you might use

CAS announced the development of “New SciFinder.” This is an entire overhaul of SciFinder, the pre-eminent search tool for chemistry. Initial promotional announcement will take place about early November with full roll-out in the Spring, likely around the SF meeting. Lee Latimer attended a demonstration and judged it to be a huge leap forward in display and functionality for all users.

Abstracts of the papers and posters presented at the meeting are archived at www.acs.org, and those plenary and symposium presentations that were recorded, with sequenced slides, can be found at www.acs.org/meetingcontent.

There was a theater presentation of Periodic Graphics - a collaborative effort between C&EN and Andy Brunning, chemistry educator and author of the popular graphics blog Compound Interest. It has provided graphics for educational purposes to students as well as educators. The UK Chemistry teacher’s infographics takes a closer look at the chemical compounds we come across on a day-to-day basis. His infographics makes the chemistry of foods, drinks, coins, dentistry, doping etc. more lucid. *To see more of Brunning’s work, go to <http://compoundchem.com> and <http://cen.acs.org/periodicgraphics.html>*

Any members interested in the latest ACS financial performance can look at www.acs.org, click on the “About ACS” tab at the bottom and then “ACS Financial Information.”

Information regarding grants offered by all ACS committees can be found at www.acs.org/getinvolved.

On September 29th, the ACS Younger Chemists Committee in conjunction with the ACS Council Committee on Nominations and Elections will hold a virtual forum presenting the two nominees for President-Elect of the ACS for 2017. The YCC is also initiating the “Catalyze the Vote” campaign to encourage younger ACS members to vote in ACS National elections.

The Committee on Safety’s publication “Hazard Assessment in Research Labs” can be downloaded at www.acs.org/safety.

Interesting Statistics

There are now 3900 people who have joined the American Association of Chemistry Teachers (AACT) launched by the ACS in 2014, up from 2050 last year at this time, over 88% of whom are K-12 chemistry teachers.

Attendance at the Philadelphia meeting as of the Council meeting was 12,800, including 7437 regular attendees, 3249 students, and 613 expo only attendees. This was 1000 less than at the Boston meeting last year at this time and 3000 less than the San Diego meeting this spring.

The Committee on Economic and Professional Affairs (CEPA) reported that domestic unemployment for ACS members is down to 2.6% from 3.1% at this time last year, and the lowest it has been since 2008. The unemployment rate for new graduates remains high, over 12%. This data is all self-reported and represents a modest percentage of ACS members. For more information, see the reports in C&EN.

At the ACS Career Fair there were 710 job seekers, 37 employers offering 172 positions, and 17 recruitment booths in the Expo. As a new offering that began at the Spring meeting at the Career Fair, professional “headshots” were offered to registrants for use in on-line networking. In conjunction with these activities, as a benefit to members on site, Career workshops were held, along with 348 resume reviews and 179 mock interviews. CAL-ACS members, Mark Frishberg, and Bryan Balazs, and Marinda Wu, who are ACS Career Consultants, actively participated in these offerings.

There have now been 2082 students who have gone through the ACS Scholars program, 264 of which have gone on to complete a Ph.D. degree.

ACS membership had a slight decline from 2015 and now stands at 154,816, including 26,000 International members. The retention rate for US members is 84% and for International members it is 85%. Much of the variation is in the joining and dropping of student members and those members in the first five years of their membership.

During the summer of 2016, ACS local section enrolled and supported 421 Project SEED students in over 120 laboratories, with 400 volunteer mentors.

Submitted by Mark Frishberg, CAL-ACS Councilor, with input from our other Councilors, Past ACS Presidents and our Director-At-Large – September 17, 2016