



## Success Through International Cooperation

I have just returned from the 2008 Pacific Rim Meeting on Electrochemical and Solid State Science (PRiME 2008) in Hawaii. This was the fifth such joint meeting to be held in Hawaii since 1987 in our continuing tradition of successful collaboration with The Electrochemical Society of Japan (ECSJ).

Meetings serve the core objectives of ECS – education and dissemination of scientific information – and this meeting was extraordinarily successful. With approximately 3,400 participants and 3,237 papers on 53 separate topics, it was the largest meeting in the history of our Society. It was, in fact, the largest meeting ever held in our discipline. The overwhelming response to our Call for Papers created a challenge in accommodating the large numbers of papers, symposia, and attendees. We had to schedule 15 of our 53 symposia at the Hawaii Conference Center, a short distance from meeting headquarters at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, and provide a shuttle between the two locations.

Location is an important factor in the success of our meetings and Hawaii is an ideal location, even if it means a long trip for those of us who live in Europe. Its beauty and ambience provided an ideal environment in which to informally network as well as participate in the scientific program of PRiME 2008. The traditional luau on the Lagoon Green on Thursday evening provided an opportunity for attendees to relax and have fun and experience together a little of the magic of Hawaii.

Student involvement is very important to us as a Society as reflected in the growing number of our Student Chapters and the enthusiasm of our student members was very apparent at PRiME 2008. The Sunday Student Mixer was a very well-attended and lively event. The Student Poster competition was also very successful: a record-setting total of 254 posters were presented on a wide diversity of topics and the judges were highly complimentary in their comments on the high standard of the entries. I met with students from many different places – Pacific Rim, America, Asia, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere – and it was a pleasure to experience their enthusiasm, excitement, and dedication to science as they mingled and exchanged ideas about their work. The diversity of the group reflected the collaborative nature of the

meeting, involving four co-sponsoring societies from the Pacific Rim in addition to ECS and ECSJ. It also reflected the international status of ECS.

ECS has become increasingly international, especially over the last two decades, and now has members in over 70 countries. We have active Sections in Brazil, Canada, China, Europe, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, and the U.S. In addition to joint meetings with ECSJ, we regularly hold meetings in Europe; the next one is scheduled in Vienna, Austria, in October 2009. We held a joint meeting with the Sociedad Mexicana de Electroquímica in Cancun, Mexico, in the fall of 2006, and planning is underway for a future joint meeting with the Sociedad Iberoamericana de Electroquímica in Latin America. We also have active collaborations with the International Society for Electrochemistry (ISE), including an important initiative on education in electrochemistry.

The size and quality of PRiME 2008 was a result of a long and very successful collaboration between ECS and ECSJ, as well as technical co-sponsorship by the Japan Society of Applied Physics, the Korean Electrochemical Society, the Electrochemistry Division of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, and the Chinese Society of Electrochemistry. Perhaps a more important result is the goodwill generated among international organizations, the new channels of communication opened, and the exchange of ideas between scientists from different countries. Such links are not only good for ECS and our collaborating organizations but also for the international community as a whole.

Collaboration and the exchange of ideas has always been a hallmark of progress in science. International collaboration between scientists and scientific organizations benefits humanity not only by its contribution to scientific progress but also by its unifying effect between people and by the example that it sets for collaboration in other spheres. The great success of PRiME 2008 is another reminder of what can be achieved through such cooperation.

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