

# Brief Report on The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual South-Western Regional Technology Conference

by Taewan Ryu, General Chair and Chapter President and  
Jane Oh, Program Chair and President Elect

The Southern California Chapter hosted the 17<sup>th</sup> annual technology conference on February 10, 2007 at the Hilton Pasadena, Pasadena, California. The conference was jointly organized by Southern California Chapter, KUSCO, and KWiSE. The conference was a great success with over 200 members (senior, junior, and student) and non-members attended, and many outstanding speakers invited from research, educational institutes, and industry.

The highlight of the conference was the keynote speech by Dr. Robert H. Grubbs at Cal Tech, the 2005 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry. He spoke on “Olefin Metathesis Catalysts for the Preparation of Molecules and Materials.” His discovery of the catalyst capable of functioning in the aqueous environment and the successive improved efficiency of the catalyst made it possible to eliminate the use of organic solvents in the chemical synthesis, thus leading the chemical synthesis to “Green Chemistry” more environmentally friendly.



The impact of his discovery of such unique catalyst influenced such a wide range of fields in our daily lives, from the sturdier and harder baseball bats to bullet-resistant plastics and to anticancer pharmaceuticals. Although it could be highly technical, he used common examples such as a traditional Hungarian dancing to explain the intricate nature of the catalyst to form olefins.



[Dr. Grubbs with students]



[Dr. Grubbs with senior members]

He mentioned several times the remarkable contribution to his current research made by several Cal Tech students from Korea. He also showed many different photos from the Nobel Prize

Ceremony, which made us feel so close to the event and made us begin wondering who would be our first Nobel Prize winner from Korea other than the Nobel Peace Prize. In general, the keynote speech was fun, extremely interesting, and inspiring.

The keynote speech was followed by invited speeches by Mr. Ki Suh Park, architect, a partner of Gruen Associates and the chairman of Nara Bank and Dr. Yunjin Kim from Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Both Mr. Park's and Dr. Kim's speeches were very influential to many young members.

Mr. Park has been involved in environmental design, beginning his practice as early as in the 70's even before the awareness of the environmental quality came about. He has completed such gigantic projects such as designing the Interstate 70 Glenwood Canyon in Colorado without intruding the beauty of the nature. His architectural projects include the Edge Water Building in Long Beach and numerous well known buildings throughout the world including France and Germany. He shared an advice for our young scientists and emphasized the hard but smart work in order to succeed in this currently competitive work environment. Mr. Park's speech on his life stories, business, and the message to young members was very inspiring.



There were also congratulatory speeches by Dr. Oh-Kab Kwon, the president and chairman of KOSEF, Prof. Sung Won Lee from University of Maryland and the chair of KUSCO EC, and Prof. Wayne Lee representing the KSEA HQ.

A unique session offered in our conference was the special session for Bio Venture Forum coordinated by Dr. Henry Yoo. The forum began with the invited speech by Dr. Esther Yang from Abbott Laboratories, followed by presentations by six Biotech companies from the Korea Bio Venture Association. The audience included the representatives of several companies from the Southern California region and patent lawyers including Mr. Min Cheol Kim, seeking for possible partnership, licensing, commercialization of ideas, and investment opportunity.



In addition, there were three parallel technical sessions. Each session, unlike typical parallel sessions focusing on specific topics in many conferences, had speakers from various disciplines to promote the collaboration and to give different perspectives of related or supplemental topics. The sessions offered are listed below:

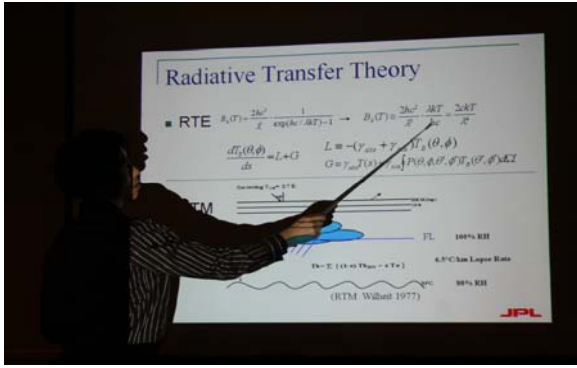
Track #1 chaired by Dr. Youn Sim, Mr. Jason Hyon, Dr. Chan Seung Park, Dr. Ray Won, Mr. Jin Kim, Dr. John Hong covered the fields of Earth and Planetary Science, Applied Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Electrical Engineering.



Track #2 chaired by Prof. Jang H. Youn, Dr. Woojin An, Mr. Sam Bae, Dr. Haejung An, Dr. Gye Won Han covered the fields of Biomedical Engineering, Medical Sciences, and Life Sciences.



Track #3 chaired by Prof. George Wang, Dr. Jeong Moon, Dr. Daniel Choi, Mr. Chanho Lee, Dr. Jongwook Woo covered the fields of Physical and Material Sciences, Mechanical Engineering & Aerospace Technology, Computer Science and Information Technologies.



Organizing committee members including Dr. Sora Cho, Mr. Dan Kim, Mr. Hugh Kim, Ms. Erica Shim, Mr. John Lee, Mr. Josh Choi, Dr. Choong H. Kim, Dr. George Wang, Mr. Lee Jong Yoo, Ms. Hyun Lee, and Mr. Jason Choi put huge amount of effort in preparing the operation of the conference. Many student volunteers from UCLA, Cal Tech, and UC-San Diego were great help in smooth operation of the conference without any problem. Both the organizing committee members and student volunteers worked very hard behind the scene to make this conference possible.

In summary, it was an excellent yet fun conference with many volunteers and participants with great team work. The conference of this magnitude of participation and quality was made possible through the unselfish collaboration and dedicated services of our members. The general chair and chapter president, Dr. Taewan Ryu, California State University, Fullerton and the program chair, Dr. Jane Oh, Jet Propulsion Laboratory are very grateful to session chairs, invited speakers, session speakers, organizing committee members, student volunteers for their full support, and many senior members for their valuable advice and encouragement.

KSEA members from nearby chapters including Dr. Jae H. Kim (Pacific Northwest), Dr. Kookjoon Ahn (Sacramento), and Dr. Gye Won Han (San Diego) deserve our special recognition in sending their excellent speakers and students to the conference. Especially, we appreciate Dr. Han's full support and detail advice in preparing the conference.

KSEA-SC is very grateful to the financial sponsors including the Korea Bio Venture Association (president Dr. Jong Sei Park), Leedco Engineers (president Dr. Chong Do Lee), and one anonymous but very significant individual sponsor. We would like to acknowledge that the financial support from these sponsors was critical in the success of this conference. We also appreciate the support for several articles about the conference by our friendly media sponsors Korea Times (Hankook Il Bo) and Korea Daily (Joongang Il Bo). Without the participation and collaboration of all these involved, conference such as this with so many successful outcomes could not have been possible.