

2009 SERMACS Final Report

Final Report of the 2009 Southeastern Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society

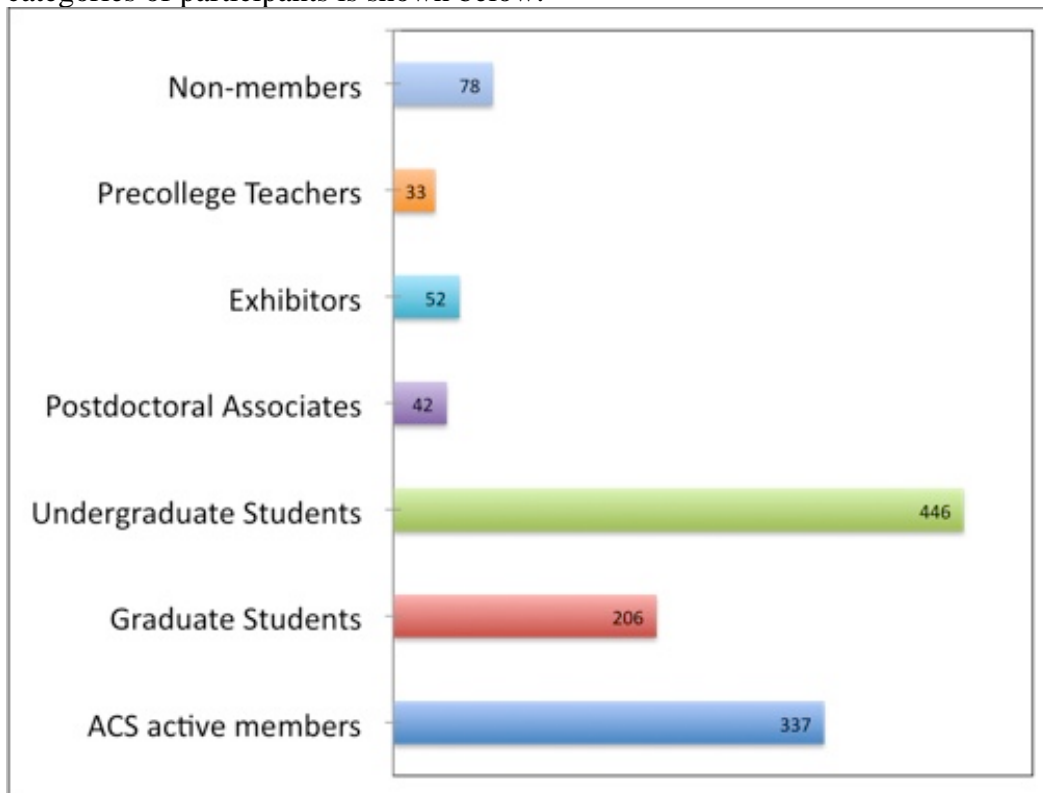
I Introduction and General

Submitted by Ingrid Montes, General Chair

I Executive Summary

(a)

The 2009 Southeast Regional meeting of the ACS was held October 21-24 at the Puerto Rico Convention Center, San Juan. Some 1,338 participants attended oral and poster technical sessions that focused on topics from across the discipline. A variety of special events were held, including plenary addresses, an exposition, luncheons, dinners and receptions, student-focused events, and the National Chemistry Week celebration, which attracted more than 500 additional participants. Feedback from attendees through a post-conference survey indicates a high level of satisfaction with the event. The meeting earned revenues in excess of expenses. A graph with the different categories of participants is shown below.



I Site Selection

(b)

With the assistance of our initial meeting advisor (Peggy Smith), we sent out a bid solicitation to the Puerto Rico Convention Center as the venue for our meeting. All major hotels in the city of San Juan (Conrad Condado Plaza, Caribe Hilton, Marriott, Miramar Courtyard) were considered for the meeting (Appendix 1). The Convention Center had just opened (less than 4 years prior to the meeting). The Miramar Courtyard was found to be of marginal size and the location was also marginal. This hotel was designated as a backup candidate. The Caribe Hilton and the Conrad

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Condado Plaza were studied as finalists. The Marriott was larger and had significantly more meeting space, though the arrangement of the space was not ideal, it was too far away from the Convention Center, and the staff had not held such a large convention before. The Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza Hotel offered the best price and was conveniently located closer to the Convention. A copy of the final contracts with the Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza and the Miramar Courtyard hotels may be found in Appendix 2.

I Meeting Organizing Committee Selection

(c)

Complete contact information for the final composition of the Organizing Committee can be found in the Appendix 3.

General Chair: Ingrid Montes, Professor of Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. Dr. Montes was chosen to lead the Organizing Committee by the ACS Puerto Rico local section. Dr. Montes has been the Councilor for the Puerto Rico Section since 1998 and has served as a member in different ACS National Committees, including being the Chair for the Committee on Community Activities (2007-2009) and for the Policy Board of ChemMatters Magazine (2007-2009).

Program Chair: Néstor Carballeira, Professor of Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. Dr. Carballeira was asked to serve as Program Chair by the General Chair. Drs. Montes and Carballeira have had a long-standing collaboration, so they knew they could work together well. Carballeira's position at UPR-Río Piedras insured active participation by the only large PhD-granting institution in the section.

Finance Chair: Jorge Colón, Professor of Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. Dr. Colón was chosen as Finance Chair. He has served as the Treasurer of the Local Section since 2004 and has always shown to be committed and enthusiastic about his responsibilities.

Web Master: José A. Prieto, Professor of Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. Dr. Prieto was chosen as the SERMACS 2009 Web Master. In 2003 he was the Web Master for the local section. The SERMACS 2009 web site included all meeting information and links, including registration, abstracts submission, scientific program, plenary lectures, transportation, housing, sponsorship, workshops, exhibition, graduate school fair, undergraduate program, high school teacher's program, special events, social activities, area and convention center maps, etc. Actually, the art work, meeting information, exhibition, general program, etc. that were printed on the program book were taken directly from the website.

Publicity Chair: Ram Lamba, Professor of Chemistry, and Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico-Cayey Campus.

Exposition Chair: Agustín Ruíz (Retired) was chosen as Exposition Chair. Unfortunately, he passed away some months before the meeting. Ms. Adnalia Flores accepted the position. She has a lot of experience in this type of events and has extensive contacts with vendors.

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University of Puerto Rico-Cayey Campus.

Exposition Chair: Agustín Ruíz (Retired) was chosen as Exposition Chair. Unfortunately, he passed away some months before the meeting. Ms. Adnalia Flores accepted the position. She has a lot of experience in this type of events and has extensive contacts with vendors.

Local Arrangements Chair: Agnes Dubey, Professor of Chemistry, Interamerican University-Metropolitan Campus, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz, Research Assistant at the Mayagüez Campus of the University of Puerto Rico, were chosen as the Local Arrangements Co-Chairs. Both are active members of the local section and had worked together as local arrangements chairs in other local meetings.

Registration Chair: As the National ACS office largely handled the registration this position was not filled. However, several of the faculty advisors of the ACS Puerto Rico Student Chapters help the ACS Staff members during the on-site registration process.

SERMACS 2009 Organizing Committee

General Meeting Chair	Ingrid Montes, Ph.D.
Program Chair	Néstor M. Carballeira, Ph.D.
Treasurer	Jorge L. Colón, Ph.D.
Webmaster	José Antonio Prieto, Ph.D.
Scientific Committee Members	
Adam, Waldemar, Ph.D.	Martínez, Judith, Ph.D.
Armbrust, Kevin L., Ph.D.	Mouakad, Adele
Basu-Dutt, Sharmistha, Ph.D.	Oliver-Hoyo, Maria, Ph.D.
Buckner, Steven W., Ph.D.	Orna, Mary Virginia, Ph.D.
Bunker, Christopher E., Ph.D.	Padgett, Clifford W., Ph.D.
Cadilla, Carmen L., Ph.D.	Prieto, José A., Ph.D.
Carballeira, Néstor M., Ph.D.	Raptis, Raphael G., Ph.D.
Cooper, Melanie M., Ph.D.	Rivera, José M., Ph.D.
Doran-Peterson, Joy, Ph.D.	Stipkala, Jeremy M., Ph.D.
Gauthier, Carmen, Ph.D.	Sun, Ya-Ping, Ph.D.
Gorman, Christopher B., Ph.D.	Tollinche, Carlos A., Ph.D.
Hernandez, Rafael, Ph.D.	Vera, Marisol, Ph.D.
Kaifer, Angel E., Ph.D.	Vercellotti, Sharon V., Ph.D.
Koether Marina, Ph.D.	Whiteside, Tad S., Ph.D.
Marky Luis A., Ph.D.	
ACS Meeting Planner	Michelle Stevenson
Awards Chair	Timothy Hanks, Ph.D.
Education Program Chair	María Oliver-Hoyo, Ph.D.
Undergraduate Program Chair	Juan Suárez, Ph.D.
Members	
Carmen Gauthier, Ph.D.	Maiella Ramos, Ph.D.
Agnes Dubey, Ph.D.	Nilka Rivera, Ph.D.
Anadellys Plata	Sonia Rivera González, Ph.D.
Angela González, Ph.D.	Wilfredo Resto Otero, Ph.D.
Brenda J. Ramos-Santana	
High School Teacher Program Chairs	Adele Mouakad Judith Martínez, Ph.D.
National Chemistry Week Coordinator	Ingrid Montes, Ph.D.

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Co-coordinators Juan Suárez, Ph.D. Sister Mary Orna. Ph.D.	
Events Coordinator Floor Coordinators	María de Lourdes Rivera Carlos Ruíz Agnes Dubey
Exposition Chair	Adnalia Flores
Public Relations Chair	Ram Lamba, Ph.D.

Event Chair: María de Lourdes Rivera, Retired Chemist, Ex-President of the Puerto Rico Chemists Association was chosen as Special Events Chair. Ms. Rivera had help this position for the 2008 Congress “Federación Latinoamericana de Asociaciones de Química”.

Tour Coordinator: UPR Graduate Student Association coordinated the tour to the UPR-Río Piedras Campus.

Undergraduate Program Co-Chairs: Juan Suárez, Professor of Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico-Humacao. Dr. Suárez is the advisor to the UPR-Humacao Student Chapter. He lead the organization of the undergraduate program and the National Chemistry Week events as well. In addition, all the other Puerto Rico Student Chapters’ advisors actively collaborate in the coordination of the different events.

Educational Program Chair: María T. Oliver-Hoyo, Professor of Chemistry, North Carolina State University. Dr. Oliver-Hoyo was chosen to head the Educational Program. She is the Director at large of the ACS Division of Chemical Education.

Fundraising Chair: The Finance Chair also held this position.

I Meeting Organizing Committee Operations

The Finance Chair participated in the 2006 Regional Meeting Planners Conference and the General Meeting Chair participated in the 2008 Regional Meeting Planners Conference. Regular monthly Committee meetings were begun in August 2006 (38 months out). These were supplemented by email and phone conversations between Committee members as required. This structure was satisfactory. The monthly meetings were sufficient to keep everyone informed as to our progress and to generate new ideas in brain storming sessions, yet infrequent enough not to be a major barrier to participation.

The Committee worked well as a team on most projects. Establishment of sub-committees to handle specific functions was very important. All the Faculty Advisors of the ACS Student Chapters worked very efficiently to coordinate National Chemistry Week outreach events as well as other specific tasks related to the program. Some individuals were assigned to specific tasks; they were generally handled very well, though this resulted in some individuals carrying very heavy loads at various points.

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More detailed training for the Local Arrangements Chair might have been helpful. This is an extraordinarily complex job and involves a myriad of details that are difficult to anticipate in advance.

I **Budget Development**

(e)

The budget was developed based on the results of previous meetings. We looked at the registration numbers and distributions, the various income sources and the expenses incurred. For us it was not easy to follow previous meetings because it was the first time that a SERMACS was held in Puerto Rico. Many aspects were uncertain due to the location (people from US needed to travel by plane) but at the same time we promoted SERMACS 2009 as an international meeting. We looked very closely at previous meeting plans and preliminary results. We looked to minimize expenses where possible and tried to dedicate as much funding as possible to the program. We were careful when considering organizing large off-site events as these had proven to be poorly attended (and costly) at other meetings.

Section I(e) Budget Development

Budget development was based initially on financial reports of previous SERMACS (2001-2005, particularly 2005) and later on information on budget for SERMACS 2007. We asked the ORM to send us the Financial Report from SERMACS 2006-2007 but did not receive them. In addition, at SERMACS 2008 we asked the ORM staff present to send us the registration numbers and income for that regional meeting to help us in our planning, but also were never received. For us it was not easy to follow budget developments from previous meetings because it was the first time that SERMACS was held outside the continental US. Many aspects were uncertain due to the location (people from US needed to travel by plane) but at the same time we promoted the meeting as an international meeting.

We issued a first budget in May 2007, a second revised budget December 2008 (this one received critiques from the Regional Board Chair), and the final budget was issued on May 2009. This final budget received a critique from the SE Regional Board that was sent to us on August 5, 2009. The major concern regarding whether the financial crisis would affect registration made us, with the recommendation of Peggy Smith of the ORM and the Regional Board Chair, to lower our total meeting attendees estimate from 1,500 to 1,000 and we based our budget on that number. The Regional Board Chair informed us on August 5, 2009 that the SERMACS Corporation had no liability to the Puerto Rico local section in case of a loss since we had not submitted a budget and therefore was not approved at the Greenville SERMACS meeting in 2007. We were not told at the Greenville meeting, nor at anytime up to August 2009, that since the 2007 meeting the SERMACS Corporation had no liability to our local section in case of a loss.

Registration fees were set using the 2008 fees as template and upon consultation with Peggy Smith of the ORM to be fairly consistent with those of previous regional meetings and trends and taking into consideration the extra costs of traveling to Puerto Rico. Some research was done on typical exhibition booth costs for scientific meetings in Puerto Rico. College fair booths were also kept inline with those of previous SE regional meetings. Solicitations for bids were requested

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from three recommended outside AV companies, as well as the “in-house” Puerto Rico Convention Center company. Three local companies that had worked conventions at the Puerto Rico Convention Center site bid on the exhibit hall set-up.

As planning progressed and as bids for AV equipment, the exhibit hall set-up, menus and coffee breaks, etc. were received, the budget was revised more tightly. Organizers were encouraged to find their own funding for symposia. They were offered direct financial support up to \$1,000 (which was used only if they asked).

I **Other/Lessons Learned**

(f)

The selection of the Convention Center was critical to the success of the meeting. Being a new convention center there was somewhat limited access to restaurants, coffee shops, bars and the like. A new hotel contiguous to the Convention Center opened shortly after the meeting, which provides access to all the amenities, and a second hotel is schedule to open in the nearby future.

Regular meetings of the Executive Committee helped to keep the program development on track. Many tasks proved difficult to break into smaller components, resulting in several individuals carrying very heavy loads. Unfortunately, we didn't get early financial commitments by local industry/academia and that did not allow us to plan for an aggressive program.

II **General Meeting Program**

Submitted by Dr. Néstor Carballeira, Program Chair, and the Program Committee

Undergraduate Program

Chair, Juan Suárez, University of Puerto Rico-Humacao

Undergraduate Program Undergraduate Leadership

Ms. Emily Robles (**University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras**)

Ms. Zulmarie Pérez (**University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras**)

Ms. Soleyl Vázquez (**University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras**)

Ms. Aixa V. López (**University of Puerto Rico-Humacao**)

II (a) **Data**

Symposia (number of presentations in parentheses)

New Trends in Boron Chemistry (10)

Organizer: Jose A. Prieto, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

Bioorganic Chemistry Sessions I and II (9 + 17) = 26

Organizer: Néstor M. Carballeira, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

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Chemical Scholarship via Education (6)

Organizer: Maria Oliver-Hoyo, North Carolina State University

Analytical Chemistry Symposium I: Applied Analytical Chemistry (9)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry

Organizer: Marisol Vera, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez

Analytical Chemistry Symposium II (7)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry

Organizer: Marisol Vera, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez

Patent Law Developments (7)

Sponsor: Stipkala LLC

Organizer: Jeremy M. Stipkala, Stipkala LLC

Small Business Startups – A Guide (4)

Sponsor: Division of Small Chemical Businesses

Organizers: Sharon V. Vercellotti, V-LABS, INC., Larry Evans, Soltec Ventures

Chemical Education Research (11)

Organizer: Melanie M. Cooper, Clemson University

Preparing the 21st Century Chemistry Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges for the Student and Faculty (12)

Organizer: Sharmistha Basu-Dutt, University of West Georgia

Current Trends in Inorganic Chemistry (11)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Inorganic Chemistry

Organizer: Raphael G. Raptis, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico

Process Technologies in Bio-Pharmaceutical Industry in Honor of Carlos Lopez(5)

Sponsor: Pfizer Chemical Company

Organizer: Carlos A. Tollinche, Ph.D., Colegio de Quimicos de Puerto Rico

New Polymeric Materials and Applications (10)

Organizer: Christopher B. Gorman, North Carolina State University

Physical Chemistry Symposium I and II (12 + 18) = 30

Sponsor: ACS Division of Physical Chemistry

Organizers: Tad S. Whiteside, Ph.D., Savannah River National Lab, Clifford W. Padgett, Armstrong Atlantic State University

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Frontiers in Nucleic Acid Chemistry I and II (9 + 6) = 15

Organizer: Luis A. Marky, University of Nebraska Medical Center

Nanotechnology: From Energy to Medicine I –III (7 + 21 + 9) = 37

Organizers: Steven W. Buckner, St. Louis University, Ya-Ping Sun, Clemson University, Christopher E. Bunker, Air Force Research Laboratory

Biochemistry Symposium (13)

Organizer: Carmen Cadilla, University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine

Bioenergy: Fuels, Chemicals, and Power (10)

Organizers: Kevin L. Armbrust, Ph.D., State Chemical Laboratory of Mississippi and Mississippi State University, Rafael Hernandez, Ph.D., Dave C. Swalm School of Chemical Engineering, Joy Doran-Peterson, Ph.D., University of Georgia

Current Trends in Environmental Chemistry (14)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Environmental Chemistry
Organizer: Marina Koether, Kennesaw State University

Supramolecular Science and Self-Assembly (12)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Organic Chemistry
Organizers: José M. Rivera, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, Angel E. Kaifer, Ph.D., Miami University

High School Teachers Day (8)

Organizer: Adele Mouakad, St. John's School

Current Interdisciplinary Trends in Organic Chemistry Celebrating Waldemar Adam's 1000 Publications (6)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Organic Chemistry
Organizer: Waldemar Adam, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

History, Chemistry and Art of the Elements (6)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Chemical Education, ACS Division of the History of Chemistry, ACS Divisional Activities Committee
Organizer: Mary Virginia Orna, College of New Rochelle

Total = 269 presentations

Twenty one symposia were offered during the meeting. The most popular symposium was the Nanotechnology from Energy to Medicine

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symposium with 37 oral presentations spanned into three sessions followed by the Physical Chemistry symposium (two sessions) with 30 oral presentations. A total of 269 oral presentations were offered during the meeting in the symposia. This accounted for 35% of all of the presentations in this meeting.

General Sessions

General Inorganic Chemistry Session I- II (11 + 9) = 20

Organizer: Raphael G. Raptis, University of Puerto Rico

General Analytical Session I (11)

Organizers: Carlos R. Cabrera, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

Undergraduate Oral Presentations I – V (6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6) = 30

Organizer: Carmen Gauthier, Florida Southern College

General Organic Chemistry Session I –III (5 + 9 + 7) = 21

Organizer: José A. Prieto, University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus

Total = 82 presentations

Eleven general oral sessions were offered during SERMACS 2009. It is significant to mention that five of these sessions were undergraduate sessions and the undergraduate contributions accounted for 36% of the contributions of the general sessions.

Poster Sessions

1) General Organic, Inorganic, Analytical, Biochemistry and Chemical Education Poster Sessions (75)

Organizers: Carlos R. Cabrera, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus; Carmen L. Cadilla, University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus; Maria Oliver-Hoyo, North Carolina State University; Raphael G. Raptis, University of Puerto Rico; José A. Prieto, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, Néstor M. Carballeira, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

2) Undergraduate Poster Sessions I and II (90 + 94) = 184

Organizer: Carmen Gauthier, Florida Southern College

3) General Physical Chemistry Poster Session (21)

Sponsor: ACS Division of Physical Chemistry

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Organizers: Tad S. Whiteside, Ph.D., Savannah River National Lab,
Clifford W. Padgett, Armstrong Atlantic State University

4) Sci-Mix Poster Sessions I and II (66 + 70) = 136

Organizer: Nestor M. Carballeira, University of Puerto Rico, Rio
Piedras Campus

Total = 416 presentations

Six separate poster sessions were offered during SERMACS 2009. In the inaugural poster session on Wednesday afternoon the different divisions of chemistry were divided into sessions with the exception of the Physical Chemistry session that took place on a special session on Friday since most oral Physical Chemistry presentations took place during that day also. The Sci-Mix poster sessions were very popular and were done twice during the meeting, which proved to be a nice blend of presentations. The Sci-Mix poster sessions proved to be ideal to place multidisciplinary presentations such as those in areas of nanotechnology, supramolecular chemistry and biofuels. The undergraduate poster session took place on Thursday and accounted for 44% of all of the poster presentations. The poster format was very popular during the meeting, which received 54% of all contributions.

Grand Total of **769 presentations.**

See Appendix 4 for a spreadsheet containing information on the technical sessions and special events.

II (b) **Plenary/Keynote Speakers**

Roald Hoffmann Cornell University

The Chemical Imagination at Work in Very Tight Places

Organizer: Waldemar Adam, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio
Piedras Campus

Sir Harold Kroto The Florida State University

Architecture in NanoSpace

Organizer: Waldemar Adam, Ph.D., University of Puerto Rico, Rio
Piedras Campus

Two Nobel laureates delivered their lectures on Thursday. These lectures were placed in the program such that no other presentations took place during this time. The two Nobel laureates also gave inspired talks during the Awards Luncheon and were later that day inducted into the Puerto Rico Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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Total = 2 presentations

II (c) **Workshops**

Writing Better NSF Research and Education Proposals

Bert E. Holmes, Program Director, NSF Division of Undergraduate Education

Luis Echegoyen, Director, NSf Division of Chemistry, National Science Foundation

Ethics Workshop

David J. Chesney, Department of Chemistry, Michigan Technological University

ACS Career Workshops and Resume Reviews

ACS Job Search Strategies Workshop

ACS Resume Review Workshop

ACS Interviewing Skills Workshop

Dr. Garreta Rollins, Office of Career Management and Development, ACS

Connecting Resources, Connecting Others: Supercomputing in the Global Age

Dr. Orlando Acevedo, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Auburn University

CHAS Workshops

Laboratory Waste Management

How to be a More Effective Chemical Hygiene Officer

Laboratory Safety Workshop

Chemical Reactivity Hazards, Laboratory Scale, Recognition & Control

Dr. Neal Langerman, Dr. James Kaufman, Mr. Russell Phifer

II (d) **Award Presentations**

A luncheon was held to honor the following individuals for their activities in the Region. Outstanding ACS Student Affiliates Chapters were also recognized. The Award luncheon flyer may be found in Appendix 5.

- Sondra Wieland, *ACS Division of Chemical Education SE Region Award for Excellence in High School Teaching*. Award presented by Eric Bingham, District Director.
- Larry Krannich, *Ann Nalley Award for Volunteer Service*. Award

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presented by Tom Lane, 2009 ACS President.

- Cornelia Gillyard, *Stan Israel Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Sciences*. Award presented by Janan M. Hayes, Director at Large -District IV.
- Carlos López, *ACS Regional Industrial Innovation Awards Program*. Award presented by Bruce Bursten, 2008 ACS President.

The Puerto Rico local section took the opportunity to present its 2009 Education Award to Professor Jorge L. Colón, our Finance Chair

II (e) A/V Arrangements

After discussing possible A/V suppliers we decided to use PSAV Presentation Services. This large audiovisual company had an office located at the Puerto Rico Convention Center and knew what worked and what didn't work in the specific rooms we would be using. This proved to be an excellent decision. They had courteous, knowledgeable staff on hand at all times that sessions were running, and they responded immediately to any issues that arose.

All session rooms were equipped with LCD projectors, screens, and all cables needed for connection to a laptop computer. Larger rooms had lapel microphones while the smaller rooms did not need them. PSAV was able to provide guidance on this since they knew the Convention Center so well. For the two plenary sessions we used a dual screen system. Each presenter was asked to bring a laptop computer with them for use in their session. Presenters were asked to bring their presentations on a USB memory stick and to arrive at their sessions early so they could load their presentation onto the laptop in the room. Having a single laptop in each room made the transition from speaker to speaker go smoothly without the cumbersome plugging and unplugging of computers between talks.

The LCD projection package (8' Tripod Screen, projector, screen drape, and wireless mouse) was \$299.75/day. We were initially quoted a price of \$545/day but were able to negotiate this down. Wired microphones were \$19.25/day (negotiated down from \$35/day) and wireless microphones were \$41.25/day (negotiated down from \$75/day). The A/V setup for the opening ceremony, both plenary sessions, and Puerto Rican night was \$3,227.50. In addition to the charge for the equipment rental there was a charge for support personnel of \$6,850. We were given two connections with free high-speed Internet access for the registration area and two telephone lines at no extra charge.

We wish to stress the importance of working with an A/V group that is

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agile enough to respond to changing needs throughout a conference of this scale.

II (f) **Electronic Abstract Service**

The electronic abstract service was very useful and reliable. Most abstracts were easily and accurately submitted. Problems tended to come from submitted errors in particular undergraduates submitting to wrong sessions. The tools for analyzing the program were powerful and worked well in general. We found the training provided by ACS particularly useful as a starting point, but we were able to figure out the system on our own and the help provided by Confex via e-mail helped to solve most of our doubts or arising problems.

The output for printing of the program and abstract book was first-class. The program book printer, OmniPress, help us to produced a high quality final program with the adequate resolution of the cover page for printing. In summary, the final product was very professional. The 8 1/2" x 11" size Program Book costs were \$8,210.00 for 1,250 copies (see below for total final costs due to late payment fees).

II (g) **Undergraduate Program Data**

The following symposia and Special Events comprised the undergraduate program. Additional details may be found in Appendix 6

Undergraduate Program Data

Many activities were organized for undergraduates and for the local student's chapters to participate.

Two Nobel Laureates presented lectures at SERMACS 2009. Prof. Roald Hoffmann from Cornell University with the title "*The Chemical Imagination at Work in Very Tight Places*" and Prof. Harry Kroto from Florida State University with the title "*Architecture in NanoSpace*".

Workshops

Chemistry Ethics Workshop

The workshop consisted of a series of case studies that were designed to provoke audience discussion. Electronic clickers were given to the audience members to provide for anonymous responses to multiple-choice questions that followed each case study. The workshop facilitators used the audience responses to foster further discussion.

ACS Job Search Strategies Workshop

This workshop addressed employment trends and professional values

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(self assessment). Then, the process of networking was explored: who is in your network, how to expand it. Strategies such as informational interviewing were discussed.

ACS Resume Review Workshop

In this workshop students learned which personal data format is right for your "marketing plan" to construct a winning résumé.

ACS Interviewing Skills Workshop

This workshop examined the entire interview process, types of interviews, frequently asked questions, and how to evaluate an offer.

Graduate School Fair

A total of 31 Graduate Schools participated in a very successful Graduate School Fair at SERMACS 2009 in which undergraduate students had the opportunity to search into the information provided by the different participating institutions and learn more about the graduate programs of the schools attending the fair. It was an excellent opportunity for the undergraduate students to interact with the different representatives of the graduate schools and learn more about the research programs available at these different universities as well as of their chances in getting accepted at these graduate schools. The student's affiliates actively participated and promote this activity.

Symposia: Undergraduate Oral Presentations I, II and III

Three undergraduate oral presentation sessions were scheduled as part of the scientific program for SERMACS 2009, which was hosted by the Student chapters of Puerto Rico. We had 30 presentations for these undergraduate sessions. All the presenters were recognized by a certificate (Sample in Appendix 6). Recognition of the best three research presentations and a certificate of participation were part of the activity.

Symposia: Undergraduate Poster Session

Two undergraduate research and poster sessions were scheduled as part of the scientific presentations for SERMACS 2009, which was hosted by the Student chapters of Puerto Rico. Undergraduate chemistry majors from Puerto Rico are among the most enthusiastic in the ACS and undergraduate chemistry research in the island universities is a key activity for most undergraduates. As a consequence, we had 184 poster presentations for this undergraduate section, which took place during the Graduate School Fair. The Student Chapters of Puerto Rico hosted these poster presentations. All the presenters were recognized by a certificate (Sample in Appendix 6). Recognition of the best three research presentations and a certificate of participation were part of the

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activity.

Luncheon with Nobel Laureates and SAACS Recognitions (awards)

In addition, an informal luncheon with the Nobel Laureate were hosted. This was an excellent opportunity for the students to hear an inspirational talk by a laureate and have the opportunity to exchange ideas with the Nobel Laureate winner in an informal setting on important issues in the chemical sciences and the opportunities available in a chemistry profession for them.

Festival de Química- NCW Celebration Outreach Event

Coordinator: Ingrid Montes

Co-Coordinators Juan Suárez, Ph.D.

Maiella Ramos, Ph.D.

Nilka Rivera, Ph.D.

Sonia Rivera González, Ph.D.

Wilfredo Resto Otero, Ph.D

Agnes Dubey, Ph.D.

Anadellys Plata

Angela González, Ph.D.

Brenda J. Ramos-Santana

For the fourth year in a row, the Puerto Rico Local Section coordinated an event called "Festival de Química". In 2009 the celebration of National Chemistry Week coincided with SERMACS 2009 that was held for the first time in Puerto Rico. One of the main goals of the "Festival de Química" was to promote the Student Chapters interaction and participation. This opportunity granted our ACS Student Member Chapters a chance to demonstrate their strong commitment toward their future profession and how proud they are to be chemists. In spite of the incident of the fire at the CAPECO refinery company a few miles from the event that threatened the possible cancellation of it, over 500 students, primarily from 9-12, home schooling and public in general were received during the celebration of the "Festival de Química". This traditional event joined the efforts of approximately 250 volunteers of the Puerto Rico Section with ACS Student Member Chapters from public and private institutions from Puerto Rico and for the first time from the southeastern region. Participating in the event were students from the University of Puerto Rico campuses from Aguadilla, Arecibo, Cayey, Humacao, Mayagüez and Río Piedras, the Inter American University at San Juan and San German, the Pontifical Catholic University at Ponce and the University of Turabo. In addition, the Furman University from Greenville, SC; Sewanee: The University of the South from Tennessee and the Clemson University, from South Carolina, also participated in the event. This NCW celebration also included the participation of the Younger Chemist Committee (UPR-RP

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Graduate Students Association), and the Chem Clubs from Colegio San José and Escuela de Artes Visuales. Each organization chose an element of the periodic table and highlighted its importance in everyday life with hands-on activities. Some of them designed their own brochures as well as some dramas (plays) to explain the relevance of chemistry in everyday life. All the attendees participated in chemical demonstration activities conducting hands on experiments related to the NCW theme **"Chemistry, It's Elemental"**.

The planning and organization of the "Festival de Química" required a great deal of effort from all those that agreed to work. Meetings were held at UPR-Rio Piedras Campus during September and October. Each faculty advisor and student members worked together in the selection of the demonstrations to be presented. All activities were thoroughly discussed by the student members and their Faculty Advisors and all the hands-on experiments related to the NCW theme were practiced prior to the event.

Safety was a priority while rehearsing and for the actual performance at the activity. The setting for the event was divided into eighteen stations. Ten stations were designated to student member chapters (Inter American University in San Juan and San German, the Pontifical Catholic University in Ponce, Turabo's University and the University of Puerto Rico campuses at Aguadilla, Arecibo, Cayey, Humacao, Mayagüez and Río Piedras) and the others were distributed among the Chem Clubs and the graduate students from UPR-Río Piedras. All the volunteers conducted demonstrations and hands-on activities for the students, their parents/teachers and the community to illustrate the importance and relevance of chemistry in everyday life.

The Puerto Rico Section also joined efforts with all the ACS Student Affiliate Chapters in Puerto Rico promoting and coordinating a variety of activities to celebrate the 2009 National Chemistry Week. These chapters conducted many activities, which included chemical demonstrations, chemistry contests, hands-on science activities, lecture series, open houses, and visits to schools. More than two thousand students from elementary, middle and high school, as well as members of the general community participated in these activities, which took place at the different campuses and schools through out the island.

The Festival de Química was covered by the following media:
Radio coverage (the University Radio Station - WTRU and also "WKAQ Univisión Radio").
Newspaper (Local Newspaper "El Nuevo Día" highlighted the activities in a one page article)

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SERMACS webpage <http://www.sermacs2009.org>

Refer to Appendix 6 to see the survey results and sample of certificate for volunteers and participants.

University of Puerto Rico Graduate School Tour (Río Piedras Campus)

The Student Members Chapter and the Graduate Students Association hosted those interested in visiting the facilities and in learning more about graduate school opportunities at UPR- Río Piedras.

Workshop: *History, Chemistry, and Art of the Elements* Organizer: Sister Mary Virginia Orna

This symposium embraced topics on elements known from ancient times and their uses today, through the spectrum of elemental discoveries to elements that exist only as a few atoms. Talks surrounding elements that never existed at all which marked the false starts along the way to actual discoveries were part of the workshop.

Social: Puertorrican Night

Social: Night in Old San Juan, Mixer

Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned from the Undergraduate Program

Overall, we consider the Undergraduate Program a successful one with 30 oral and 184 poster presentations. Last minute announcements that poster presentation boards would use Velcro instead of pushpins created some last minute rush and discomfort among presenters. The poster session setup created some discontent because some posters were facing the external walls of the exhibit hall. The NCW Festival de Química was a success considering many schools canceled due to the CAPECO Oil company fire. Nevertheless, over 500 students attended the festival. The event counted with the participation of more than 250 ACS student member chapters from PR and three from the mainland and several Chem Clubs from Puerto Rico.

II (h) **Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned in general**

Careful planning and assured funding up-front (\$1000/half day session was offered to all session organizers) allowed for the development of a well-rounded technical program with many outstanding speakers. We also chose to continue several symposia that historically play a role in this meeting, such as the ones on Nucleic Acids, Patent Laws, and Nanotechnology while also bringing in numerous new, highly relevant sessions such as New Trends in Boron Chemistry, Supramolecular

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Chemistry, and History, Chemistry and Art of the Elements.

III **Meeting Finances**

Submitted by Jorge Colón- Finance Chair

III (a) **Budget**

See Appendices 7 (an Excel file with tabs) for the meeting budget and expense accounting.

III (b) **Financial Accounts Used by Meeting**

A single checking account was opened on November 1, 2007 with the \$3,000.00 loan from the SE Regional Board to keep the SERMACS 2009 finances separate from the local section account. See Appendix 7 for a complete list of Bank Account transactions. General chair Ingrid Montes and finance chair Jorge Colón had signatory privileges for this account.

The number of checks written for speaker reimbursements (27) was low. Requests for reimbursements for symposium speakers and other symposium expenses (meals, etc.) were also accepted after the meeting. For this purpose, a reimbursement form was distributed to the symposium chairs that were responsible for sending it back (signed by both the symposium speaker and the symposium chair) with appropriate receipts to the finance chair. This form included a list of expenses and the address to which the reimbursement should be mailed.

We were able to finish writing most of the checks for reimbursements and other bills by February 25, 2010. The total excess revenue at that time for this meeting was \$44,184.12. Of that amount, \$8,836.82 was returned to the SERMACS Board as the 20% return of revenue required in the Region's bylaws (due to an error in the first check, the total amount was sent in two checks, one for \$8,036.82 and another for \$800.00). In addition, a \$3,000 check was mailed to the Regional Board in repayment of the Board's loan to SERMACS'09 as well. These checks were mailed to the SERMACS Board Treasurer on May 3 and June 1, 2010. However, at that time we still had pending three financial matters:

1. Receiving financial support for SERMACS 2009 that had been promised to us by the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Corporation (\$5,000.00 sponsorship)
2. Receiving the final funds from the College of Natural Sciences of the Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico (\$3,900.00 for payment of the poster boards that we rented to Expo Exhibits).
3. The check for OmniPress by which the College of Natural

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Sciences was going to pay for the program books for SERMACS 2009.

The original invoice from OmniPress was for \$8,210.00, but as the months passed, OmniPress added late payment fees. We notified the College of Natural Sciences of those late payment charges, and by April 2010 we were notified that the College Dean's office had identified the source of funds from where they would make the payment and had given their final approval.

However, a student strike occurred at the University of Puerto Rico (from April 21 until early July 2009), during which mail service was interrupted, and administrative procedures were stopped or severely limited. Therefore, we did not receive the \$5,000.00 check from PRIDCO but until July (it was deposited on July 13). In addition, the College of Natural Sciences did not finish the bureaucratic process to issue the checks (the reimbursement to us and the check for OmniPress) before the student strike, and the strike stopped all the process. The final check was not issued but until the bureaucratic process restarted after the strike. The paperwork went for and obtained approval from the Chancellor at the end of July, and finally ended in the office in charge of actually making the check, where they corroborated that everything was alright about making the payment. After another short delay due to a tropical storm that affected us in Puerto Rico, the check was finally issued on August 30, 2010 and we were told on September 1 that we could go to the office to get the check and mail it to OmniPress. They also had ready for us the reimbursement check for \$3,900.00 for SERMACS 2009, Inc.

By the time we received the check from UPR for OmniPress, late fees had accumulated to a total of \$1,231.50. Since when the check issuing process had started, before the strike interrupted it, late fees were then only \$492.60, we decided to send OmniPress the rest of the late fees currently owed to them with a check for \$738.90. We did that since we were not going to try to get the UPR College of Natural Sciences to issue a new check for that amount, since we wanted to finish all of this matter once and for all. We sent the two checks to OmniPress on September 4 (one check from UPR for \$8,702.60 for the original invoice amount of \$8,210 plus the first late fees of \$492.60 and a second check from SERMACS 2009, Inc. for \$738.90 for the rest of the late fees).

OmniPress told us that they received the check on September 7, 2010. Vince Reindi, the Account Manager of OmniPress was extremely patient during the whole process. We were extremely pleased with OmniPress and we will recommend this printing company to anyone who needs

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printing service for a regional meeting. The quality of their product was excellent and their customer service superb.

Finally, after this final payments and reimbursements, the total excess revenue for SERMACS 2009 was \$52,065.22. Of this amount, with a final check for \$1,576.22 sent to SERMACS Inc. on October 27, 2010 a total \$10,413.04 was given to SERMACS Inc. (20% net for the Regional Board) and \$41,652.18 is for the ACS-Puerto Rico Section (80% net).

IV Fundraising*

Jorge L. Colón – Chair

IV Sponsorship

(a) <u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
University of Puerto Rico, College of Natural Sciences	\$12,002.60	Program Book and Poster Boards
ACS Puerto Rico Local Section	\$10,000.00	General
ACS Committee of Divisional Activities ¹	\$7,500.00	<i>History, Chemistry and Art of the Elements</i> and undergraduate program
AAAS-Caribbean Division	\$6,950.00	AAAS Annual Conference/Lunch
Puerto Rico Industrial Development Corporation	\$5,000.00	General
ACS President	\$3,000.00	Undergraduate program
Jeremy Stipkala	\$3,725.00	Patent Law Symposium and coffee break
ACS Chem Ed	\$3,725.00	Undergraduate, Chem Ed program and History, Chemistry, and Art of the Elements Workshop
ACS Organic ²	\$3,000.00	Current Interdisciplinary Trends in Organic Chemistry and Cope Supramolecular Science and Self Assembly Symposia
Institute of Nanofunctional	N/A	Sponsorship of Nobel Laureate

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Materials-Univ. of Puerto Rico ³		Harold Kroto
University of Puerto Rico-Cayey Campus	\$2,355.78	Sponsorship of Nobel Laureate Roald Hoffman
ACS Physical	\$1,000.00	Physical Chemistry Symposium
Gaussian Inc.	\$1,000.00	Physical Chemistry Symposium
ACS Analytical	\$1,000.00	Analytical Program
ACS Inorganic	\$1,000.00	Inorganic Program
ACS History of Chemistry ¹	\$1,000.00	History, Chemistry, and Art of the Elements Workshop
Agilent	\$1,000.00	General Program
Global Innovation Imperatives (Gii): A Program of the American Chemical Society and the Society of Chemical Industry	\$1,200.00	Luncheon with Nobel Laureates
ACS Division of Small Chemical Businesses	\$ 800.00	Small Businesses Startups Symposium
ACS Division of Environmental Chemistry	\$ 500.00	Current Trends in Environmental Business Symposium
ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry	\$ 500.00	New Polymeric Materials Symposium
Bruker Biospin	\$ 500.00	Frontiers in Nucleic Acid Symposium

¹The ACS Committee of Divisional Activities and the ACS History of Chemistry Division provided support directly to the organizer of the symposium *History, Chemistry and Art of the Elements*.

²The donation listed above was promised, but we were unable to collect from the Organic Division. Unlike other contributors, Organic demanded receipts and provided reimbursement directly to participants rather than a direct contribution to SERMACS 2009. The amount quoted was the amount that the treasurer of the ACS Organic Division said that it would be the maximum that the Division would reimburse directly to the speakers. We do not have any official notification of how much was actually reimbursed.

³The IFN paid for all expenses of Prof. Harry Kroto. The institute bought the airline tickets and made the hotel reservation. We do not know the total amount spent.

Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned

The ACS Technical Divisions were generous with our meeting. We distributed a sample ACS Division fund request letter to all symposia organizers. Some Divisions sent their funds directly to us, while other decided to handle their contribution directly (e.g., Organic Chem Division).

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Some exposition vendors were interested in making additional contributions to raise their profile. Organizers should look for unique ways to put the names of sponsors before the meeting attendees.

The finance chair brought the symposium budgets, account information, and the SERMACS account checkbook to the meeting so that he could write expense checks on the spot.

Fund raising was difficult due to the economic crisis. Fund raising is a big challenge and requires time. We understood that fundraising was everyone's business. Many team members, including the session organizers, raised funds. These individuals often had specific contacts within technical divisions or with companies that were critical.

Reimbursement from University funds was a challenge due to the complex bureaucracy and the student strike at UPR.

V **Exposition**

Submitted by Adnalia Flores, Exhibits Chair and Jorge L. Colón, Finance Chair

V (a) **Data**

Cost of booths - \$1,200/single or \$2,000/double until August 15, and \$1,450/\$2,500 thereafter.

A list of exhibitors may be found in Appendix 9.

V (b) **Vendor Feedback**

We received comments from several of the vendors that they appreciated the layout of the Exposition, i.e., that they were sandwiched between posters and some coffee breaks and refreshments. However, some asked for more spare time for participants to have time to visit the Exposition and for all coffee breaks to have been done at the Exposition hall.

V (c) **Approaches Used to Attract Vendors to Meeting**

We began approaching vendors two years out from the '09 meeting by canvassing the Expo of the two ACS meetings in '07, the PRCHEM 2008 and 2009 meetings of the Colegio de Químicos de Puerto Rico in San Juan, the SERMACS meeting in Nashville in '08, and the INTERPHEX Conference & Exhibition in 2009 in San Juan. Between the General Chair, the Finance Chair and the Exposition Chair, we went to all of the vendors, introduced ourselves and gave them a general flyer

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about the meeting and the Exposition booklet created for the occasion. Some vendors seemed surprised to be contacted early, while others appreciated the ability to put it on their calendars so far in advance. However, given the world financial crisis, vendors early on admitted that the traveling budgets had been seriously limited and they would not be able to travel to Puerto Rico for SERMACS 2009.

We also sent exposition information to all vendors from SERMACS 2008. In all these conferences the most important accomplishment was gathering business cards from most of the vendors, which we later contacted about SERMACS 2009.

In April of 2009, we sent out emails to all of the vendors for which we had contacts, gently reminding them of the upcoming meeting. A follow-up email went out in July and early August since we had extended the early-bird rates. All of this information was also available on the SERMACS '09 website.

V (d) **Exhibits**

The exhibit hall layout is presented in Appendix 8. Appendix 9 contains the Vendor Contract.

The setup time was:

Wednesday, 10/21 8 am – 4 pm

The expo times were:

Wednesday, 10/21 6 pm – 8 pm (Opening Reception)

Thursday, 10/22 9 am – 7 pm

Friday, 10/23 9 am – 4 pm

The takedown time was:

Friday, 10/23 4 pm – 9 pm

The Graduate School Fair was held Thursday, 10/22, 9 am – 5 pm. The Graduate School Fair booth cost was \$300 until early bird date, \$450 thereafter. The schools involved are listed below:

Clemson University

Duke University

Emory University

Florida International University

Florida State University

Georgia Institute of Technology

Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences

Louisiana State University

Michigan Technological University

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North Carolina State University
Rice University
Rutgers University
Texas A&M University
Tulane University
Univ. of Alabama
Univ. of Arizona
Univ. of Georgia
Univ. of Kansas – Lawrence, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Univ. of Miami
Univ. of Mississippi
Univ. of North Carolina – Greensboro
University of Puerto Rico – Río Piedras
University of Puerto Rico – Medical Sciences
Univ. of South Florida
Univ. of South Carolina
Univ. of Tennessee
Univ. of Texas – San Antonio
Vanderbilt University
Virginia Tech.
Wake Forest University
Western Michigan University

V (e) **Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned**

Our original Exhibition and Graduate School Fair Floor plan was revised after we did not receive the expected number of vendor contracts. We have originally asked the vendors and graduate schools to specify their top three choices for booth number and we tried to follow their wishes as close as possible once the floor plan was revised.

VI **Publicity/Web Site**

The Publicity Chair/Web Master was Dr. José A. Prieto.

VI **Data**

(a)

Initial marketing efforts were web based (aka virtual marketing) and involved establishing a web presence, with the web site being the resource that all other efforts pointed to. The ease and speed at which changes can be widely disseminated makes the web site the most up-to-date and accurate source of meeting information

The first actual marketing effort involved a booth presence at SERMACS 2007. SERMACS 2009 committee members, brought coffee and some goodies from Puerto Rico and promote the venue. This strategy was very successful and we repeated it again

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in SERMACS 2008, for which we also prepared thousands of bookmarks, highlighting important dates and the web URL. These bookmarks were given during 2008 ACS Spring and Fall meetings as well as IUPAC World Congress and many local meetings.

Traditional printed vehicles, primarily C&EN, were used for publicity and announcements such as Call for Papers and Meeting Announcements. Also the meeting was promoted in ACS InChemistry magazine.

A wide reaching effort, by e-mail, to make important dates and deadlines known to chemists, primarily in the southeast, was conducted.

Targeted mailings (usually by Email) were made to the entire membership of the region, Department Chairs of regional universities, local industrial contacts and so on. Press releases were prepared and sent out to local popular press, news. Due to the attractive tie-in to National Chemistry Week, the presence of two Nobel Laureates and more than 1300 chemists in attendance, these efforts were very successful and we got coverage from several radio stations, TV and newspapers.

VI **Publicity Methods**

(b)

Total costs for the web site, bookmarks and promotional materials were under \$1000. The bookmarks handed out at the SERMACS 2008 meeting and other chemistry meetings (ACS, FLAQ, PRCHEM, IUPAC and other) were prepared by student volunteers, and some other printed and logo promotional material. The web site design and maintenance and e-mail campaign were all done with volunteer efforts with no cost to SERMACS 2009. As a result, the cost effectiveness of the publicity efforts is very high.

VI **Web Page Design**

(c)

The web site was designed and maintained "in house" and was hosted on a private hosting service (JustHost). This enabled a high degree of autonomy and control within the many aspects that the Home Page impacted. It is strongly recommended that this be a model to follow for future SERMACS meetings, if possible. The webmaster was also an active and contributing member of the Steering Committee and the Scientific Organizing Committee. This provided him with broad and clear view of the many aspects that the meeting encompassed. The key is to have a web-savvy, html adept member of the steering committee that can serve as webmaster.

Increasingly, the web is replacing printed matter, faxes and phone calls and can be updated in near real time to provide the latest information regarding a SERMACS meeting. There is no other information medium that can match the internet when it comes to publishing dynamic changes, which is the nature of meetings like SERMACS.

In the case of SERMACS 2009, the web site included all meeting information and links,

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including registration, abstracts submission, scientific program, plenary lectures, transportation, housing, sponsorship, workshops, exhibition, graduate school fair, undergraduate program, high school teacher's program, special events, social activities, area and convention center maps, NCW activities, etc. After the meeting, the website included post meeting information, pictures and statistics. In due time, the internet may even eliminate the need for (costly) printed program books. The more comprehensive and inclusive you can make a SERMACS web site the better. The web site will remain active through August 2011. The web traffic was closely followed with Google Analytics. This powerful tool allowed us to continuously (on a daily basis) assess and quantitatively gauge the interest, public awareness, usefulness, relevance, deadlines pressure, and the overall use that the potential participants were giving the website. Between June 11 and November 1, 2009 the website received close to 18,400 visits (with more than 58,000 pages viewed). The final report is included in this report as Appendix 10.

The SERMACS 2009 website was a key element for the overall success of the meeting.

VI Meeting Logo

(d)

The SERMACS 2009 logo and program book cover was created at no cost by Mr. José Terrón, which is a scientific illustrator at University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras Campus. Having a unique logo definitely helped with SERMACS 2009 brand recognition. An electronic copy of the logo may be found in Appendix 11.

VI News Media

(e)

Our efforts to get coverage by general interest news media for SERMACS 2009 were very successful. The meeting was covered by newspapers, TV (Channel 11, Univision) and by three radio stations. One of the programs was held at the Convention Center to interview Dr. Tom Lane and Dr. Roald Hoffmann. The "Festival de Química" was highlighted in a C&EN article about NCW. Also an article was published in InChemistry Magazine.

For Immediate Release

For Information Contact:

Ingrid Montes ingrid.montes58@gmail.com (cell) 787 502 9264 SERMACS 2009
General Chair/ or Iris Riefkohl, imriefkohl@uprrp.edu, 787-504-6746 (cell)

Puerto Rico Chemists Hold "Festival de Química" Oct. 23

Puerto Rico chemists are holding their 61st annual meeting of the Southeastern Region of the American Chemical Society (SERMACS 2009) this week at the San Juan Convention Center

Including a special "Festival de Química" for schoolchildren on Friday, Oct. 23.

The conference, which draws attendees from the Southeastern area, has more than 750 technical presentations scheduled during the official program Oct. 21-24. The symposia

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topics span environment, medicine, energy and nanotechnology. On Thursday, Oct. 22, two Nobel Laureates in chemistry will speak—Dr. Roald Hoffmann of Cornell University and Sir Harold Kroto of Florida State University.

The “Festival” is aimed at educating students more about chemistry and school children from around the island will be hosted by undergraduate student members of the ACS affiliates throughout the region. The Festival expects to draw more than one thousand island school students, including 200 students who are homeschooled. The Festival will focus on information and hands-on demonstrations related to the theme of National Chemistry Week, “Chemistry: Its Elemental” which celebrates the 140 anniversary of the founding of the periodic table. The “Festival” will be held from 8:30 a.m. until Noon in the Paseo de la Fuente, Convention Center District.

Other activities of interest include:

- ACS Career Services Workshop, Thursday, Oct. 22, -- Career Workshops and Individual Résumé Reviews will be offered free to members and will provide a unique insight into the job market. The workshops are designed to help chemical professionals and students at all levels understand the current workplace and take advantage of employment opportunities. The workshops and résumé reviews will be held in room 208-B/C, Convention Center.
- High School Teacher’s Day Program, Friday, Oct. 23 – A series of activities, workshops and interactive lectures that have been prepared for high school teachers. It will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 5:55 p.m. in Room 208 C, Convention Center.
- For more information click on www.SERMACS2009.com

Over 300 volunteers will join efforts. Participating in the event will be the University of Puerto Rico campuses from Aguadilla, Arecibo, Cayey, Humacao, Mayagüez and Río Piedras, the Inter American University at San Juan and San German, the Pontifical Catholic University at Ponce and the University of Turabo. In addition, the Furman University from Greenville, SC; Sewanee: The University of the South from Tennessee and the Clemson University, from South Carolina, will also take part in the event. The activity will also include the participation of the Younger Chemist Committee (UPR-RP Graduate Students Association), four Chem Clubs (Colegio María Auxiliadora, Colegio San José, Escuela de Artes Visuales and University Gardens High School). The UPR-Río Piedras Mathematics and Astronomy Students Associations will be participating in this outstanding event as well.

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Puerto Rico Chemists Hold 'Festival de Quimica' Oct. 23 « Tec...

<http://zikkir.com/tech/9763>

zikkir

Technology News

Puerto Rico Chemists Hold 'Festival de Quimica' Oct. 23

Posted by Maggie Guo | 22 October 2009, 4:08 am

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, — Puerto Rico chemists are holding their 61st annual meeting of the Southeastern Region of the [American Chemical Society](#) (SERMACS 2009) this week at the San Juan [Convention Center](#), including a special "Festival de Quimica" for schoolchildren on Friday, Oct. 23.

The conference, which draws attendees from the Southeastern area, has more than 750 technical presentations scheduled during the official program Oct. 21–24. The symposia topics span environment, medicine, energy and nanotechnology. On Thursday, Oct. 22, two Nobel Laureates in chemistry will speak — Dr. Roald Hoffmann of Cornell University and Sir Harold Kroto of [Florida State University](#).

The "Festival" is aimed at educating students more about chemistry, and school children from around the island will be hosted by undergraduate student members of the ACS affiliates throughout the region. The Festival expects to draw more than one thousand island school students, including 200 students who are home-schooled. The Festival will focus on information and hands-on demonstrations related to the theme of National Chemistry Week, "Chemistry: Its Elemental," which celebrates the 140th anniversary of the founding of the periodic table. The "Festival" will be held from 8:30 a.m. until noon in the Paseo de la Fuente, Convention Center District.

The American Chemical Society is the world's largest scientific society with more than 154,000 members worldwide. — American Chemical Society

1 of 2

10/24/09 8:49 PM

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VI **Exhibits**

(f)

A number of flyers were used to promote the meeting. An example may be found in Appendix 12.

VI **Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned**

(g)

The organization for the web site design and hosting as exhibited by SERMACS 2009, the speed and flexibility and cost savings realized cannot be overemphasized. SERMACS 2009 should serve as a model for future meetings in this regard.

Science in general remains uninteresting to the general public when compared to sports or entertainment for example. Generating interest (in a positive way) in chemistry is the biggest challenge to overcome when it comes to marketing and generating PR for a SERMACS meeting.

VII **Arrangements**

Submitted by Agnes Dubey and Carlos Ruiz, Local Arrangements Co-Chairs

Committee Members:

Agnes Dubey, Chair

Carlos Ruiz, Chair

María de Lourdes Rivera, Special Events Chair,

UPR Graduate Student Association, Tour Coordinator

Timothy Hanks, Awards Chair

VII (a) **Data**

The Local Arrangements Chairs were responsible for coordinating room usage for all special events and technical sessions, coordinating all banquets and receptions, signage, set up and break down of poster sessions, room setups for each session and transitioning from one room use to another, and were the point persons with hotel personnel for anything that needed attention. Each item will be explained below. A listing of room assignments may be found in Appendix 13.

A/V: this has already been addressed in section II(e).

Room usage: Working closely with the Program Chair, an initial spreadsheet was generated that included each special event, the type of room needed, and AV needed. As the technical program came together we again worked together to assign spaces for each of the special

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events. The spreadsheet with all the final details is provided Appendix 13.

Banquets and receptions: As a group, the steering committee made the decision that any event involving food would be on the special events spread sheet. If the food and beverages were being paid for by SERMACS the Local Arrangements Chair worked with the sponsoring group to select the menu and finalize the order when budgets and head counts were available. If the food and beverages were being paid for by an outside group, such as a college drop-in or an event sponsored by ACS National, those groups were referred directly to the catering staff of the Convention Center. Those groups had independent billing and made their own arrangements except for an ACS National sponsored breakfast that we paid and were later reimbursed. Before the Convention Center began working with these groups they required a clearance from the General, Program, or Finance Chair to insure that only authorized groups were using the rooms during the conference. Two weeks prior to the meeting all menus were finalized for all events, and seven days prior to the conference all final head counts were set. However, the convention center was willing to accommodate changes to head counts up to 72 hours in advance and we took advantage of that since many people registered for events onsite.

Signage: ACS arrived with reusable signs that could have a landscape legal size document quickly inserted behind a piece of clear plastic. Easels were also provided for these signs. These signs were used for technical sessions, a few special events and for last minute information. Signs were up before every session began and changed out at lunch and before leaving in the evening.

Poster sessions: Poster boards were rented from the company providing the booths for the Exposition and the Graduate School Fair. However, on the night before the start of the meeting and the first poster session, we notice that the company setting up the Exposition Hall was setting poster boards of reduced size of the one specified on the contract. Therefore, we would have not been able to accommodate all scheduled posters for the meeting. Since this company informed us that they could not provide more poster boards, we immediately place an emergency order to another company, which was able to deliver the additional poster boards next morning. The amount paid for those additional poster boards was discounted from the standing balance with the original company. We bought signage for each poster board number and they were placed by the members of the Puerto Rico ACS Student Chapters under the supervision of the Local Arrangements Co-Chairs. They also set up and broke down all poster sessions. These groups

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helped greatly with the poster sessions. Since we scheduled an additional poster session on Saturday and the Exhibition Hall was rented until Friday, the poster boards were moved on Friday night by the company to another Convention Center room in the first floor.

Room setup and transitioning: in the final weeks prior to the meeting the General Chair, Program Chair, Finance Chair and Local Arrangements Co-Chairs went through the entire program and identified any activity that might need a room set up other than the traditional theater style. Organizers were contacted for any sessions where it was not clear what type of seating arrangement was desired. Once we knew what room setups were desired we made the arrangements with our Convention Center conference coordinator.

VII (b) **Special Needs**

At two of the luncheons we do not have individuals who require any special needs.

VII (c) **Additional Comments/ Lessons Learned**

We were lucky that the Local Arrangements Co-Chairs had previous experience with this responsibility for conferences of the Puerto Rico Chemists Association. The Co-Chairs worked excellently together and ease the burden of the General Chair, Program Chair and Finance Chair who were able to attend their responsibilities without worrying too much about local arrangements.

The Organizing Committee was given some parking space permits to be able to park at the loading dock area of the Convention Center starting two days prior to the meeting, That way we were able to leave materials in the assigned office room that were later distributed throughout the meeting.

Final Reflection:

For the first time, SERMACS was held outside the U.S. mainland. We found this a unique opportunity for participants to learn more about our chemistry related endeavors and about our culture. In addition to the extensive scientific/technical program, we had a series of social events enriched with artistic performances or shows. These cultural activities were sponsored by local higher education institutions, government dependencies or private entities.

On Wednesday, October 21 at the Opening Ceremony, we had the chorus *Coralia*-from the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras Campus Choir, Directed by Prof. Carmen

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Acevedo Lucio. At the Poster session that followed the opening ceremony, we held a reception sponsored by Rums of Puerto Rico that was enlivened by the musical performance of *Cuerdas en Si bemol* directed by Dr. Gilberto Marrero.

On Thursday, October 22, we had the Luncheon with Nobel Laureates and undergraduate students. This offered an excellent opportunity for students to hear an inspirational talk by a Nobel laureate and exchange ideas with the Nobel Prize winners in an informal setting on important issues and the opportunities available for them in the chemistry profession. The artistic part was provided by the Chorus of the University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo Campus, directed by Prof. Jorge Muñiz. After a full day of scientific presentations, we had the Puertorrican Night (social), also sponsored by Rums of Puerto Rico. Finishing the night a Folkloric Show by *Guateque*, sponsored by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company was presented. After the show, we danced with latin music by the PVC orchestra, directed by Amet Irizarry Quintero. The music was sponsored by the Puerto Rico Convention Center.

On Friday, October 23 we had the Awards Luncheon. The artistic show was presented by the Tuna Interamericana from Interamerican University-Metropolitan Campus. Participants enjoyed a wonderful meal during the presentation of the awards. At the evening, we had a *Night in Old San Juan Mixer*, at the "Casa Olímpica". This activity was sponsored by Rums of Puerto Rico and a group of children presented the show "*Ballet Municipal de Trujillo Alto-Conjunto de Trovadores*" directed by Prof. Ruth Collazo.

At the *Night in Old San Juan Mixer*, an undergraduate student, Michelle Morales, who is a member of the UPR-Rio Piedras ACS Chapter, delighted all attendees with her Show-Indian nights. We also danced with the music of the "*Conjunto de Bomba y Plena*" sponsored by the Interamerican University, Metropolitan Campus.

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Appendices

In addition to the Appendices cited in the text, copies of the complete program book, the abstract book and the details of post-meeting survey are also attached in Appendices 16-18.

- 1) Descriptive template of received Hotel Bids and Analysis of two finalist hotels.
- 2) Attached document of the final hotel contract.
- 3) Organizing Committee membership and contact information
- 4) Attached spreadsheet listing of special events and technical session
- 5) Attached document of the Awards Luncheon brochure
- 6) Attached document detailing the Undergraduate Program
- 7) Attached spreadsheet of the meeting budget, meeting expenses and list of exhibitors
- 8) Attached graphic of the exhibit hall floor plan
- 9) Attached documents showing the Exhibitors brochure and contract
- 10) Attached Analytic web page report
- 11) Attached graphic of the meeting logo
- 12) Attached document of meeting advertising brochures
- 13) Attached document of the room assignment template
- 14) Attached spreadsheet of room usage and setup
- 15) Attached document of articles published in C&EN and InChemistry Magazine
- 16) Attached document of the final program book
- 17) Attached document of the final abstract book
- 18) Attached document of the post-meeting survey result

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