Student Life

FY 12 Fellowships Awarded; FY 13 RFP Issued

IPST awarded 9 fellowships for FY 2012 to conduct research relevant to the needs of our industry. The IPST Foundation proceeds are used to support Paper Science and Engineering Master of Science and Ph.D. degree students. These students are conducting research in our strategic theme areas and are being supervised by IPST-engaged faculty in chemical and biomolecular engineering, materials science and engineering, mechanical engineering, and chemistry and biochemistry. Faculty are awarded these students based on a competitive evaluation of proposals. For FY 12, we received 20 proposals, of which 9 were awarded. For more on these students, please see the listing on the IPST website. On March 2, we issued the request for proposals to the faculty for FY 13 awards, and expect to sponsor ten additional students. IPST’s total graduate student population is usually around fifty students.

IPC Foundation Grant Supports Student Community

The IPC Foundation board has provided a grant this year to support the IPST student community. Plans are being developed to use the funds to increase exposure of IPST students to companies in the industry and to promote the sense of community among IPST students who study in four different schools of Georgia Tech. The Institute benefits from engagement of the Foundation through annual contributions to the students and the Institute to cultivate a rich environment for student interaction around the theme of pulp and paper sciences. Foundation funds have supported student travel to the TAPPI Student Summit in Jacksonville, FL, this past January, career promotion through networking with companies, and enhanced the student experience in PSE with celebrations like Chinese New Year and orientation pizza parties (see related article).
Research by Ramanan Sekar and a team under the direction of Dr. Rachel Chen has led to the discovery of novel cellobiose and cellodextrin transporters that enabled microbial catalysts to take up cellodextrin for intracellular metabolism. This discovery is important as it engenders a new platform of microbial technology which requires only partial hydrolysis of lignocelluloses. Ramanan’s research examined the use of consolidated bioprocessing to integrate the production of saccharolytic enzymes, cellulose hydrolysis, and biofuel productions into a single process.

Two US provisional patents were filed. In addition, a manuscript describing the first engineered cellobiose assimilation through a phosphorolysis mechanism, a more energy-efficient alternative to hydrolysis route, was accepted for publication in Applied and Environmental Microbiology.

Ramanan is currently in the doctoral degree program in the School of Biology at Georgia Tech, and is a recent recipient of a Master’s degree from Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering with a minor in Paper Science and Engineering.
Students will again present posters showcasing their research at a reception during this year’s members meeting in April. The poster session at last year’s executive conference was very popular with the attending company representatives and has led to several company contacts with the students. To view last year’s posters, click here. To review this year’s posters be sure to check on the website (http://www.ipst.gatech.edu) after the conference.

As a result of the interest, students have been offered the opportunity to post their resumes on the IPST website, and many have taken advantage of this opportunity. Students have also presented posters in the past year at the Next-Generation Manufacturing Conference on campus last October.

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IPST Students Usher in Chinese "Year of the Dragon"

In Chinese culture, it is believed that dragons scare away evil spirits and bring happiness. Based on the Chinese calendar, January 2012 began the year of the dragon.

To celebrate this unique event and bring together professors, staff, students and scholars from different nations and cultures, IPST held a party January 20 with traditional Chinese foods and performances in the cafeteria.

Oriental music played in the background and Chinese artwork and decorations covered the walls. During lunch, members of IPST's Chinese community performed opera, comedy acts, and even some spirited Kung-fu. In addition to ample portions of 10 traditional Chinese foods, several Chinese families donated home-cooked dishes, adding to the authenticity of the event.

This marks the third year that IPST has celebrated this event. As in both previous years, the festivities were organized by professors Yulin Deng and Zhong Lin Wang for the purpose of bringing together all employees of all races from different departments in the IPST building for a unique experience that dives deep into authentic Chinese culture. Last year celebrated the Year of the Rabbit.

To see more photos click here.