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IPST Holds Members’ Meeting

IPST will host “Leveraging Emerging Technologies To Advance Forest Biomaterials Business”, a meeting of members to be held April 10-11 in the IPST Paper Tricentennial Building. About thirty company representatives are expected to attend in addition to affiliate association and government representatives. Sessions will focus on IPST’s three strategic thrusts—operational excellence, biomaterials, and biorefining. Additional sessions will examine novel coatings and opportunities involved in combined heat and power (CHP). Intellectual property management and facilitating collaboration with Georgia Tech will be featured topics. A dinner speaker will address cyber-security.

Last year, IPST held an executive conference, led by IPST director Norman Marsolan, titled, “Remaining Competitive in an Evolving Industry: Seizing Emerging Forest Industry Opportunities in Operations, Process, and Product Innovations.” Twenty representatives from fourteen manufacturing companies and nine people from five supplier companies were on hand, along with six government agencies and industry association representatives including the Agenda 2020 Technology Alliance, TAPPI, the US Department of Agriculture-US Forest Service Forest Products Lab, and others. Fifteen faculty members of the Institute and Georgia Tech discussed recent research endeavors, opportunities and results.

“I can’t say which one session was most valuable,” one participant commented. “All of it was—and so was the networking, and the people I’ve met.” For last year’s conference highlights click here.

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IPST Will Host PPERA Meeting in June

IPST will host a conference during June of the Pulp and Paper Education and Research Alliance, a network for the benefit of education and research programs in the industry. The Alliance consists of the major pulp and paper schools IPST/Georgia Tech, NC State, the University of Minnesota (whose director currently heads the Alliance), the State University of New York, Miami University of Ohio, Auburn, the University of Maine, the University of Washington, the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, and Western Michigan. Georgia Tech professors Jeff Hsieh and Norman Marsolan will host the meeting.

IPST Goes to Washington

IPST Director Norman Marsolan spent several days in Washington, DC, this month, visiting with several government officials to spread the word about industry’s research needs and IPST, and attending the forest products industry’s Agenda 2020 Technology Alliance meeting.

In a session with Deputy Agriculture Undersecretary Butch Blazer and Deputy Forest Service Research Chief Jim Reaves, Norman stressed the need for balance between the two Forest Service goals of forest restoration and support for the forest products industry. He emphasized the benefits that would accrue to the achievement of national goals like rural job creation, energy independence and security from research to support sustainable forestry and the development of new products from forest biomaterials. “A healthy forest products industry is an effective defense against forest fires,” Dr. Marsolan pointed out, “and creating new products to meet the needs of growing populations and economies would also protect and create rural jobs.”

Agenda 2020 is a partnership of member companies, government agencies, and research institutions seeking to transform the industry through innovation. The Institute is an affiliate member. The March meeting was the quarterly session of chief technology officers, featuring an update on progress in the Alliance’s four work group platforms: sustainable forestry, sustainable manufacturing, new products from forest biomass, and novel materials.

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Art Ragauskas To Hold Global Earth Day Poster Session

Professor Art Ragauskas will hold his third annual global Earth Day poster session on his web site http://www.ipst.gatech.edu/poster_session.html dealing with the education, science, and technology of converting bioresources to biofuels, biopower, bio-based materials, and chemicals. The student-focused poster session will open Earth Day and be available to the general public. Authors may submit more than one poster if desired. Posters, which must be in English, should be in pdf format and include the title, authors (with affiliations), two to four key words, and the poster focus area—Biofuels, Biomaterials, Biochemicals or Bioresources. Data must be published and in the public domain. Posters should summarize research or education, and not contain advertising or marketing materials. American Chemical Society guidelines will be followed.

Posters should be sent to Bob Davies (bob.davies@ipst.gatech.edu), who can help with any further questions.

Member Value Survey Conducted

An IPST member value survey reported in January found that member companies are eager to find additional ways to interact with PSE students, want to broaden and deepen their relationships with IPST, and would welcome increased levels of communication.

The study involved telephone interviews with eighteen individuals from ten companies. Originally intended to focus on a few initiatives being designed to increase the benefit of membership in IPST and increase awareness of Georgia Tech capabilities, the conversations yielded a wider range of input and perspectives driven by company participants’ eagerness to contribute their ideas. The survey information is rich with insights about the interests of our member companies and the opportunities they see for us, working together, to create a vibrant future.

The input will be used in strategic planning and program development.
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Marsolan Leads Manufacturing Panel Before Georgia Sci-Tech Commission

A panel of industry representatives from IPST member companies Friday, October 28, urged the Georgia Study Commission on Science and Technology to recognize the strategic value of Georgia’s unique resources and the industries that develop their economic potential, and to create a welcoming environment for venture capital investments and job creation. IPST Director Norman Marsolan, who also appeared as chair of TAPPI, led the panel. Other panelists were Dan Floyd, operations manager of Renmatix; Phil Jones, Georgia Mining Association and director of new ventures and disruptive technologies for Imerys; and Randy McRae, Georgia Paper and Forest Products Association and senior regional government relations manager of International Paper. Georgia Tech Executive Vice President-Research Steve Cross is a member of the Georgia Commission.

Speaking at one of a series of Commission field hearings on developing a plan to enhance science and technology in Georgia, the Traditional Industries in Technology Growth panel called attention to the importance of maintaining and nurturing existing industries, on which rural communities depend, and in which technologies are developing innovative products to compete in world markets. The panelists also stressed the need for a high-level forum to develop priorities for research and development and the encouragement of new business investment.

Panelists urged that Georgia’s investment priorities should reflect the strategic value of its forests and unique mineral resources in rural communities. For more on the event, click here.