



Wei-Chung Wang,
SEM President,
2009–2010

With the tireless efforts of National Meetings Committee, Technical Divisions, SEM Headquarters, and many SEM members, the 2009 SEM Annual Conference, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was a great success. The success started with the enthusiastic inputs from TDs, excellent planning of Track and Symposia, as well as various Committees. We received 603 submitted abstracts for this year's Annual Conference! After careful consideration, the Executive Board made the decision to expand our typical three-day program to four days to accommodate the number of papers and interest. It is the first time we have had a four-day Annual Conference! The four-day program consisted of more than 480 papers in 118 technical sessions and attracted 442 participants from various countries. Sessions were well attended and with very few no-shows. Several people even registered on site to attend the conference on the last morning! We also made several new endeavors this year.

1. We moved the schedule for the prestigious William M. Murray Lecture from the end to the beginning of the conference this year. The very informative and interesting lecture given by Professor Sia Nemat-Nasser on the lesson we learned from ionomeric polymer-metal composites to carbon nanotubes was well received by a full room of attendees.
2. A new distinguished lecture series generously supported by the *Journal of Strain Analysis for Engineering Design* also started this year. This new lecture series emphasizes the recognition of SEM members early in their career whose work demonstrates considerable potential in the field of experimental mechanics. Dr. Eric Brown was the first nominee to deliver the lecture. The topic of his lecture was "High Strain Rate and Shock Effects in Semi-Crystalline Polymers." Warm responses on his lecture were received from the audience.
3. We opened the daily sessions at 9 AM instead of 8 AM. This small but thoughtful change has made the participation to the Chairs'/Speakers' Briefing much more relaxing and may be more "humanistic."

You may recall what Professor Randall Allemang, SEM President 2003–2004, indicated in his September/October 2003 President's Message: "...the Fall Conference is an important part of SEM that we hope will become a regular event as a focus conference for existing or emerging areas of interest to the Society. The idea is that the Society would like to have a Fall Conference on a different topic each year." I fully support his idea on the Fall Conference as the focus conference. Our past Annual Conferences or International Congresses were well-organized. However, I would like to point out that, with few exceptions, they were almost all held inside the US. As the new President of the SEM, the first of my three goals for the year 2009–2010 is to make SEM more international. Since the Fall Conference is essentially a focus conference and its size is rather smaller than the Annual Conference, it would be much easier to hold it outside the US. By doing so, SEM could be more involved with the other international conferences on experimental mechanics. New alliances between SEM and other international societies can thus be established. I am very happy that Professor Eann Patterson has made the first move toward this goal.

The conversation between Eann and me during the Annual Conference this year helped Eann develop the idea of holding the SEM Fall 2011 conference in the UK in collaboration with the BSSM. The conference will be the first SEM Fall Conference to be held outside the US. The topic of the conference he proposed is "Integrating Simulations and Experimentation for Validation (ISEV)." The location of the conference has been tentatively selected in Manchester, UK. Eann will seek NSF and European Union (EU) sponsorship for the conference and seek sessions from the EU FP7 project Advanced Dynamic Validation using Integrated Simulations and Experimentation (ADVISE), which will be concluding in late 2011. We hope to hear back from BSSM soon with their consent to working with us on this conference.

In fact, I mentioned my intention to host the 2012 SEM Fall Conference in Taiwan in the Executive Board Meeting last year. My idea is to hold the 2012 SEM Fall Conference in conjunction with the already scheduled 11th Asian Conference on Experimental Mechanics (ACEM) and the 2nd International Symposium of Experimental Mechanics (ISEM) in Taiwan. I was also the host of the 1st ACEM and the 1st ISEM held in Taiwan in 2002. The experimental mechanics community in Asia has been very active in the last decade. The Steering Committee of the ACEM has already made the arrangements for the future ACEMs up to 2012. I had a nice discussion with Professor Peter Ifju and Professor Nancy Sottos after the Executive Board Meeting. They suggested the main theme for the 2012 SEM Fall Conference as "Experimental Mechanics Challenges for Sustainable Material Systems" to me. The suggestion is based on the continuing efforts on the application of experimental mechanics knowledge for the energy and environment related issues. In both the 2010 and 2011 Annual Conferences, energy and environment issues will also be part of the thematic tracks. In addition, Symposium on the Advances on Optical Methods in Experimental Mechanics under the umbrella of the International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (IUTAM) has been planned to join those 2012 fall events. What about the future Fall Conferences? Right after the Executive Board Meeting held on June 4, Professor Fabrice Pierron helped me organize the country demographics of the SEM members.

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We were surprised to learn that Mexico has 55 SEM members, ranked in 3rd place, just after the UK's 70 SEM members. Spontaneously, Fabrice and I decided to approach our Mexico colleagues. I am very glad to let you know that our Mexico colleagues have agreed to host the 2013 SEM Fall Conference in Mexico! Furthermore, Dr. José Freire mentioned the possibility of holding the 2014 SEM Fall Conference in Brazil. We have 29 SEM members there. José also reminded me that the 2014 World Football Cup will be held in Brazil! It looks like we have the SEM Fall Conferences for the next few years in line. I hope you are happy to see those developments for the future SEM Fall Conferences.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. ■



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