

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Wei-Chung Wang, SEM President



Wei-Chung Wang,  
SEM President,  
2009–2010

Each year, during the Awards Luncheon at the Annual Conference, SEM confers a number of awards to recognize our members' outstanding achievements in education, research, and application in experimental mechanics. Thus, the Awards Luncheon has become one of the most important events at each SEM Annual Conference. I am very happy to announce that two new awards will be in our award series soon.

The first new award is the Sia Nemat-Nassar Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual for distinguished, innovative, and outstanding work that has realized the impact of experimental mechanics on other scientific and engineering fields through an integrated multidisciplinary research. The award will be given bi-annually. In addition to a plaque, an amount of \$5,000 USD will be presented to the recipient at the Awards Luncheon. This award is funded by the donations from Eva and Sia Nemat-Nasser. You may all recall that Professor Sia Nemat-Nasser delivered the prestigious William M. Murray Lecture at the 2009 SEM Annual Conference. His lecture excellently described the journey from ionomeric polymer-metal composites to carbon nanotubes. The Lecture, and his work itself, truly demonstrates the type of work this Award is intended to recognize.

The second new award is the Professor Gary L. Cloud Scholarship. The purpose of the award is to encourage a student either wishing to pursue (recently accepted into an Experimental Mechanics [EM] graduate program), or already pursuing, a graduate degree in experimental mechanics. We will soon announce that we are accepting applications for this scholarship which will consist of a check for \$2000 USD. We intend to offer this scholarship every other year. To recognize his significant contribution as an educator in the field of experimental mechanics, Professor Cloud was the recipient of the SEM Frocht Award in year 2000. In addition, to date, Professor Cloud has completed 37 columns in the "Back to Basics - Optical Methods" Series in *Experimental Techniques*! My graduate students and I have enjoyed reading his columns very much. Professor Cloud is one of the best role models in the experimental mechanics educational community. I personally believe that the establishment of this Award will attract more young students to work toward an experimental mechanics graduate degree. Thanks for the initiative of Kristin Zimmerman for this Award.

Our Annual Conference includes another very important activity, i.e. the International Student Paper Competition (ISPC). The ISPC is organized by the ISPC Committee which is chaired by Prof. Mark Tuttle. A group of SEM Past Presidents works with Mark to administer the competition. Students who are chosen to make oral presentations not only have the opportunity to receive the awards; they also receive complimentary registration for the Annual Conference and \$200 travel subsidy.

Students who are not chosen for the oral presentation competition may be invited to present their work as part of a poster competition. Those students who attend the poster competition receive only complimentary registration for the Annual Conference. This Poster Competition actually began last year when the SEM Research Committee suggested that an award for the best poster would be appropriate and agreed to organize the judging.

According to the information from SEM Headquarters, from 1998 to 2009, the number of participating students in the ISPC ranged from 9 (oral only) to 24 (14 oral and 10 posters). For a variety of reasons, we are limited in the number of oral presentations to the number that can occur in a single, one-day session. This is usually around 15.

While we limited in the number of oral presentations we could accommodate, couldn't we try to increase the number of students participating in the poster session? In Indianapolis 2010, the 19<sup>th</sup> ISPC will be held in the Annual Meeting. Could we target attracting 5-10 more students to participate? At the same time, we may need more volunteer judges and more funding. The next time Mark Tuttle invites you to become a judge, please help him. Regarding the funding, we are actively working to resolve these issues.

As the 2009-2010 SEM President, one of my three goals is to establish a funding mechanism for encouraging young people to attend SEM conferences; in particular, for those who participate in the ISPC. Indeed, since VIII International Congress, we already have used the SEM Education Fund to encourage our students to participate in the ISPC. However, the fund is still limited. Correlated Solutions Inc. has provided a grant which will sponsor the ISPC for the next 5 years. We are also pursuing other funding opportunities to enable us to expand our

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support for students to attend our conferences. Please ask your graduate or undergraduate students to get ready to participate in the future ISPC!

Of course, the Annual Meeting is not our only conference. At our IMAC Conference each year we offer the DJ DeMichele Scholarship, which is totally funded by member donations. Each year a student who has a paper accepted for presentation at IMAC is selected to receive the scholarship which covers all expenses for the student to attend the conference. The recipient is selected by the IMAC Program Planning Committee from among the pool of applicants based upon the application and the proceedings paper submitted.

Finally, SEMEF continues to encourage student involvement by supporting the various Graduate Student Seminars being organized as well as providing funds to assist 14 students in attending the 2009 SEM Fall Conference in Columbia, SC.

So, you can see we are very busy. We want to do more. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. ■



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