

ACA gathers in Toronto

Toronto, the most populous city in Canada and the provincial capital of Ontario, is the site of the 2009 annual meeting of the American Crystallographic Association, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. All meeting events will take place in the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, centrally located in the city's business and entertainment district. The Sheraton is also connected to PATH, a 16-mile underground network of pedestrian tunnels joining more than 50 buildings and shops—the largest underground shopping complex in the world.

The six-day event, held Saturday–Thursday, 25–30 July, will feature technical sessions, symposia, workshops, and social and networking opportunities. James Britten of McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, is this year's program chair.

The meeting opens on Saturday with a reception at 7:30pm. In conjunction with the reception, the exhibition of crystallography instruments, software, and publications kicks off, and it continues through Tuesday evening, 28 July.

More than 30 technical sessions cover a variety of topics, including supramolecular chemistry, superconducting materials, vaccine design, carbohydrate recognition, detectors, crystallization methods, and green biochemistry. Before the technical sessions begin on Sunday, two workshops are scheduled: Using JANA for Incommensurate Crystal Structures is set for Friday–Saturday, 24–25 July, and Handling Twinning in Protein and Macromolecular Crystallography is scheduled for Saturday, 25 July.

Three evening poster sessions run from Sunday, 26 July, through Tuesday, 28 July. The association's annual banquet takes place on Wednesday, 29 July, at 7:30pm; the winners of the poster prizes will be announced. Winning entries in the 2009 Art in Crystallography contest will be displayed at the meeting; a paragraph explaining the science and the method of producing each image was submitted by the artists.



Three major awards will be presented this year. The Martin J. Buerger Award will be given to Michael James of the University of Alberta for his “long career in protein crystallography during which he has been responsible for the discovery and delineation of many protein structures that were landmark achievements in structural biology.” Shih-Lin Chang of the National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan, will receive the Bertram E. Warren Diffraction Physics Award for his outstanding contributions to the fields of the x-ray phase problem, multibeam diffraction, and x-ray resonance cavities. The Margaret C. Etter Early Career Award goes to Svilen Bobev of the University of Delaware. Bobev's research focuses on the synthesis, structure, and properties of novel compounds formed from the rare-earth metals and selected semimetals.

On Monday, 27 July, an ACA transaction symposium on phase transitions will cover a range of phenomena from soft materials and proteins to hard materials and alloys. Two plenary lectures are scheduled: On Tuesday, 28 July, Ted Baker of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, will trace the historical development of crystallography; on Wednesday, 29 July, Philip Coppens of the University at Buffalo will talk about new developments in x-ray photocrystallography.

Both the annual Young Scientist Mixer and the Mentor/Mentee Dinner have proven to be popular events, where students, postdocs, and early-career teachers and scientists can network and socialize with more experienced people in their respective fields. As of press time, the schedules for the mixer and dinner had yet to be announced.

As a special feature this year, a one-hour documentary film by Richard Rifkind and Carole Rifkind will be shown at noon on Sunday and Wednesday. *Naturally Obsessed: The Making of a Scientist* centers on a group of doctoral students and their mentor at Columbia University Medical Center and on the team's research in x-ray crystallography.

To both go green and economize, ACA will distribute a CD along with a small program book, instead of the full abstract book. Also, no new meeting bags will be provided; participants are asked to bring a bag from an earlier ACA meeting. The association is also focusing on making ACA2009 climate neutral; it encourages attendees to visit the following website to learn more about carbon offsets, find a provider, and make a contribution: <http://www.carboncatalog.org>.

For more information on the meeting and venue, visit <http://www.cins.ca/aca2009>. ■