

SERMACS 2013

Executive Summary

SERMACS 2013 was held November 14-16th, 2013, at Loews Hotel, Atlanta.

The theme for the meeting was the interaction between Academia, Industry and Government research, SERMACS 2013 being called “Building Chemical Bonds – Academia-Industry-Government”.

This theme builds on three of the ACS Strategic Goals:

Provide Information

Be the most authoritative, comprehensive, and indispensable provider of chemistry-related information.

Advance Member Careers

Empower an inclusive community of members with networks, opportunities, resources, and skills to thrive in the global economy.

Improve Education

Foster the development of the most innovative, relevant, and effective chemistry education in the world.

Lectures, seminars and workshops were solicited and presented to support the theme of the meeting.

However as is usual for ACS Regional Meetings the attendance did not reflect an equal split between the three areas of employment, the final attendance being Academia 92.6%, Industry 5.6%, Government 1.8%.

Part of the reason for the low attendance by Government researchers was the “Sequestration” in effect at that time, limiting travel and conference attendance. I believe the low Industry turn-out was also due to the difficult economic climate.

A total attendance at SERMACS 2013 was 1,754, the highest for any ACS Regional Meeting held in 2013. It was especially gratifying that 500 undergraduate students attended the meeting.

The conference included 23 Symposia, featuring invited speakers, 12 General Sessions, featuring exclusively contributed talks, an SBIR seminar, 5 workshops (2 NSF workshops had to be cancelled due to lack of Government funding) and 11 poster sessions. A total of 1,116 lectures and 223 posters presented.

Two plenary lectures were held and one was broadcast live, video and audio, worldwide, a first for an ACS Regional Meeting.

A special symposium, “Nanochemistry and Spectroscopy”, was held to commemorate the 80th birthday of Prof. Mostafa El-Sayed, Georgia Tech, member of the National Academy and recipient of the National Medal of Science.

A special program for teachers and undergraduates was held on the Saturday, November 16th, consisting of 10 different workshops or events.

Social and networking events included an Early Bird Reception, a WCC Networking Event, a Chemical Business Mixer, an Awards dinner, a MAC luncheon, a YCC social event, an Undergraduate social event, an Undergraduate Lunch with Grad Student Panel, a visit to the World of Coca Cola for students, an ACS Governance Ice Cream Social, a Teachers' lunch and awards and an Undergraduate Awards luncheon.

At the Awards Dinner on Thursday, November 14th, three Awards were presented:
The ACS Stanley C. Israel Award for advancing diversity in the chemical sciences in the SE region.

The ACS E. Anne Nalley SouthEastern Award for volunteer service in the southeast.

The SERMACS Industrial Innovation Award for innovation that has led to commercialization of a new product or technology in the SE region.

At the Undergraduate Awards luncheon on Saturday, November 16th, 14 awards were given for poster and oral presentations.

A SERMACS Committee meeting breakfast was held on Saturday, November 16th.

A Vendor Exhibition was held on Wednesday and Thursday, November 13-14th, at which 34 companies and organizations had booths.

A "Future Fair" was also held on Friday, November 15th, incorporating the more usual Grad Fair with participants from Industry and Government organizations, to offer students a broader view of their future career paths. A total of 29 organizations participated in this event.

Sponsorship was sought from industry, academia, government and the ACS. A total of \$74,683 was contributed.

The choice of Loews Hotel worked out very well, as the registration area, all the meeting rooms and exhibition area were on the 14th floor of the hotel and featured floor to ceiling windows, creating very light and airy ambiance.

The final budget numbers for the conference were:

Income	\$242,743.21
Expenditure	\$179,185.07
Profit	\$44,945.93

One objective for this meeting was to reduce the environmental footprint. To achieve this, no large Meeting Book was printed. A small 4"x8" spiral bound program book was produced. All the abstracts were accessible on-line at the SERMACS 2013 website and the program and room locations were accessible via QR Codes, scannable onto smart phones. For those without this access 6 lap tops were made available in the registration area.