

**Khong Choy Hung**, Tunku Abdul Rahman University, Malaysia, for her poster on *Effect of carbon nanotubes in polyaniline nanocomposites on heavy metal removal*;

**Muchao Qu**, Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, for her poster on *Conductivity of melt spun poly(methyl methacrylate) composites with aligned carbon fibers*.

Four IUPAC Fellowships were offered by IUPAC for the support of graduate students and young scientists from developing countries, which were awarded to Chayaporn Pareseecharoen (Thailand), Jyoti Giri (Nepal), Lau Kam Sheng (Malaysia) and Manus Sriring (Thailand).

POLYCHAR 26 will return to Kathmandu, Nepal—the site of the very successful POLYCHAR 19—in March 2019. A POLYCHAR satellite meeting, TISAT 2018, is planned for Tbilisi, Georgia, in 2018.

Finally, the 6<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Scientific and Laboratory Equipment Exhibition and conference (LabAsia 2017) was held in conjunction with POLYCHAR2017 and QSEL 2017. This biennial international trade exhibition for laboratory equipment and services serving the ASEAN scientific community was jointly organised by IKM and ECMI ITE Asia Sdn Bhd. More than 6,000 visitors attended the three-day exhibition. LabAsia 2017 featured 154 exhibitors and principals from ten countries, including China, Germany, France, Britain and the United States, showcasing new products and services.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chris Fellows was IUPAC Representative and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Melissa Chan Chin Han was Secretary of Organizing Committee of POLYCHAR2017



*Recipients of POLYCHAR Prizes, IUPAC Fellowship, members of POLYCHAR Scientific Committee, IUPAC Polymer Division and POLYCHAR2017 organizing committee*

held from 27 to 29 September 2017 at the University of Konstanz and, thus, for the first time in Germany. It was jointly conducted with the **Konstanz Symposium Chemical Biology**, which is hosted bi-annually by the Konstanz Research School Chemical Biology (KoRS-CB), a top-level graduate school funded within the framework of the German Excellence Initiative.

“We have merged the two conferences although both have their own tradition”, emphasized Andreas Marx, head of the local organizing team. In his welcome speech he pointed out the history of and the link between the two conferences: The ISBOC series of meetings was inaugurated in 1986 in New York and has moved around the world at three year intervals. Ten symposia have been held till now in places like Biarritz (France), Pune (India), Sheffield (England), Toronto (Canada), Beijing (China) and Torino (Italy). The Konstanz Symposium Chemical Biology, however, is quite younger. It started in 2010 with the aim to bring early stage researchers in contact with experts in the research fields of Chemical Biology: Synthetic Chemistry, Cellular Biochemistry, Biophysics, Biomedicine, and Computational Life Science. Since its inauguration, the symposium has become a bi-annual event which has been held four times till date.

By linkage of the two conferences, the organizers were able to line up an excellent list of speakers comprising two keynote lectures by Nobel Laureates, 16 plenary lectures by invited speakers from across the globe as well as short talks by postdoctoral and doctoral researchers, and poster presentations. The plenary lecturers were as follows: Jürgen Bajorath (Germany), Matthew Bogoy (USA), Aaron Ciechanover (Israel, 2004 Nobel Laureate), Ulrike Eggert (UK), Michael Famulok (Germany), Dorothea Fiedler (Germany), Philipp Holliger (UK), Claudia Höbartner (Germany),

## Bioorganic Chemistry in an Interdisciplinary Context

by **Andreas Marx** Chair of the Local Organizing Committee of ISBOC-11

One of the great challenges of the future is to explain the process of life in chemical terms. This ambitious task requires a strong interdisciplinary cooperation and mutual understanding of scientists from both Chemistry and Biology. The **11th International Symposium on Bioorganic Chemistry (ISBOC-11)** focused on this interdisciplinary task by exposing Chemical Biology as important research field. The conference was

## Conference Call

Linda Hsieh-Wilson (USA), Shang-Chen Hung (Taiwan), Yamuna Krishnan (USA), Richard Payne (Australia), Floyd E. Romesberg (USA), Thomas Steitz (USA, 2009 Nobel Laureate), Hiroaki Suga (Japan), Helma Wennemers (Switzerland), and Wei Yang (USA). Keywords of the talks were: Chemical Biology of aptamers and DNA nanostructures, Synthetic genetics, Specific interactions of cell surface carbohydrates with proteins, Controlling supramolecular assemblies with proline-rich scaffolds, as well as Learning from Big Data at the interface of Chemistry and Biology.

Margaret Brimble (New Zealand), who served as IUPAC representative, gave a talk on “Synthesis of cysteine-rich antimicrobial peptides and proteins”. As highlights, the Nobel Laureates summarized their broad experiences on “The ubiquitin proteolytic system” (Aaron Ciechanover) and “The structure and function of the ribosome complexes with various protein factors and antibiotics” (Thomas Steitz).

ISBOC-11 attracted about 250 participants from 22 countries. It could not have been realized without considerable support by both industrial and academic partners. IUPAC itself endorsed the conference and, moreover, financially supported it within the funding line “New Directions in Chemistry”. By this support, travel grants could be offered to early stage researchers and, thus, PhD students from across the globe could be attracted. The organizing team is also grateful for the support from industrial sponsors like BD Biosciences, Böhringer Ingelheim, Bruker, myPOLs, Thermo Fisher and Zeiss, whereof some also acts as exhibitors during the conference. Crucial support was also given by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), the German Chemical Society (GDCh) and the Collaborative Research Centre (CRC 969): “Chemical and biological principles of cellular proteostasis”. Furthermore, BioLAGO as a regional but transnational network supported the communication and marketing of the conference.

Along with the symposium, an Autumn School for graduate students took place over a time period of five days. The first days were dedicated to courses where experts from Konstanz introduced in fundamental methods, techniques, and concepts. Topics like bioconjugation chemistry, combinatorial and high throughput technologies, optical spectroscopy, and computational life science exposed the PhD students to state-of-the-art research. Subsequently, the participants joined the ISBOC-11, where most of them presented posters or gave short talks. Finally, poster prizes donated by Dynamic Biosensors, Roche, and Wiley contributed to award nine



*Top: Keynote-lecture by Nobel Laureate Aaron Ciechanover Above: Poster Award Winners with Chair of Programme Committee Andreas Marx. From L to R: Andreas Marx, Joachim Lutz, Susanne Ermert, Heike Kropp, Lena Amelie Wurmthaler, Regina Wirth, Elias Arturo Halabi Rosillo, Madeline Kavanagh, and Frank Eggert (picture credits: University of Konstanz / Inka Reiter)*

out of 90 posters presented by early stage researchers. Last but not least, social events like a welcome reception, a joint dinner, and a guided city tour in Konstanz enhanced the scientific communication and networking.

ISBOC-11 was a highly successful scientific event that treated advanced research topics, gave insights in future research fields and contributed to build up a network especially between senior and early stage researchers. Photos albums have been added to the conference website at: <https://www.uni-konstanz.de/isboc-11/impressions/>.

The next ISBOC is expected to be held in 2020 in China.