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## IUPAC Forum

*Two National Adhering Organizations reacted to Dr. Pryzbylowicz's essay published in the previous issue of CI (Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 7-9, January 2002), regarding the U.S. Young Observer Program. The Japanese NAO describes how the programs can challenge an old stigma, and invites young scientists to attend IUPAC General Assemblies. On a somewhat different note, the Canadian NAO favors young participation in broader IUPAC-related activities by offering travel awards to IUPAC-sponsored conferences. Please send your comments to <edit.ci@iupac.org>.*

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### Breaking Away from the Old Three Ss

by **Hitoshi Ohtaki**

The contributions of Japanese scientists to various international communities became quite significant in these decades. At almost all international conferences, the names of Japanese scientists are listed as plenary and invited lecturers. They often appear in organizing committees and advisory boards. Their presentations at conferences are usually quite satisfactory and the standard of their science is high enough to be at the world-leading level.

In contrast to their significant contributions to, and involvement with, international scientific communities, Japanese scientists at international meetings are often said to behave according to the three Ss: *smile, silence, and sleep*. The reasons for such behavior are varied. For one, it may be rather difficult for many Japanese members to join debates among Europeans and Americans because of a language barrier and their traditional philosophy that "Silence is Golden." Therefore, it is often difficult for them to present new proposals at international meetings, and in most cases they gently smile and say "I agree." Since the contributions of Japan to IUPAC, as well as to other international organizations, are very important, we would like to remove the barrier of the three Ss from international meetings.

When we look at the involvement of Japan in IUPAC, more than 50 Japanese chemists are Titular and Associate Members and National Representatives in various committees and commissions. The national subscription of Japan is the second largest after that of the United States. However, it is sometimes critically commented that Japanese members are rather quiet, do not easily join discussions, and scarcely propose new issues. However, such problems caused by the language barrier can be solved in the near future by young scientists of Japan.

IUPAC members have occasionally criticized the role, importance, and visibility of the IUPAC organiza-

tion and the General Assemblies (GAs). However, the increase in the activities of IUPAC, supported by the improved financial situation after the movement of the Secretariat to North Carolina, USA, makes the contribution of IUPAC to individual countries and members more visible than before. The IUPAC prize for young chemists and the financial support program for international conferences organized in developing and economically disadvantaged countries are just some of the examples.

The GAs are essential forums for chemists to learn about the latest ideas and developments in the field. The problem is that the financial support for participation in the GA is not adequate for all people who wish to contribute to the meeting. Associate Members and National Representatives do not usually receive financial support when they attend the GAs.



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In order for all members to play their necessary roles in IUPAC and other international organizations, they need to have face-to-face discussions at meetings, something that can help to establish mutual understanding among members. From this point of view, the National Committee for Chemistry of the Science Council of

Japan, which is a National Adhering Organization of IUPAC, developed a program about 10 years ago through which financial support is given to chemists under 45 years old, to attend commission meetings of divisions at the GA. Financial support is also extended to Associate Members, National Representatives, and chemists who want to attend the GAs as observers.

The budget of the program has been supported by the Company Associates of IUPAC in Japan through the efforts of Japanese Committee on Chemistry and Industry (COCI) members. The selection of awardees is made by the Subcommittee of International Relationship of the National Committee for Chemistry. After careful consideration of applicant's scientific activities, four young chemists are chosen for each GA. Efforts are made to evenly distribute the awards through different areas of chemistry. The award amount is usually enough to cover their travel. The subcommittee requires awardees to submit their reports after coming back from GA meetings. Through this program we believe that the contribution of Japanese chemists to IUPAC will be improved and their participation in meetings will be much more active and significant. We expect that Japanese scientists will establish a new philosophy of the Three Ss: *speak* at meetings, be *sincere* in behavior, and *serve* the world.

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## Young Chemists Travel Far with Canadian National Committee Awards

**by Vedene Smith**

In 1982, the Canadian National Committee for the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (CNC/IUPAC) established a program of Travel Awards whose purpose is to help young Canadian chemists and chemical engineers (within 10 years of gaining their PhDs) present papers at IUPAC-sponsored conferences outside continental North America.

The annual awards are financed by a trust fund and funding from CNC/IUPAC's Company Associates. The criteria used in making these awards include evidence of an independent research program, a high-quality publication record, and the ability to attract high-quality research funding.

Normally, five or six of these awards are given each year, but an individual can only receive an award once. Although the amount of an award covers only a portion of total travel costs, it can help to catalyze additional support. Within the chemistry community, the CNC/IUPAC Travel Awards are considered prestigious. Numerous past winners are now established and prominent researchers.

*Vedene Smith is a professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and is a member of CNC/IUPAC.*



[http://www.sao.nrc.ca/sims/upac\\_e.html](http://www.sao.nrc.ca/sims/upac_e.html)

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## IUPAC News

### Chemical Nomenclature and Structure Representation

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**by Alan McNaught**

This year sees the birth of a new division of IUPAC. Its conception dates from a survey carried out in 1998 for the Organic Division, in which the chemistry community was asked for opinions on future nomenclature requirements. Comments received highlighted the increasing need for a body to oversee IUPAC nomenclature development across all disciplines, to ensure compatibility with previous work, and to coordinate related activities. The resulting report<sup>1</sup>

drew attention in particular to the need to integrate nomenclature standards with computerized facilities, and to push ahead with efforts to define for each unique structure a single preferred IUPAC name, correlated with other names in common use.

This report stimulated further consultation. A strategy roundtable in March 2000, involving people from many professions with a need for standard chemical identifiers, reinforced the views from the original survey and added some important new items.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the need for a IUPAC standard for computerized representation of a chemical structure was recognized.

The roundtable recommendations led IUPAC's Executive Committee to establish a temporary Committee on Chemical Identity and Nomenclature