

IUPAC President Attends the International Chemistry Olympiad

In early July, Bryan Henry became the first IUPAC president to participate in the International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO) held 2–11 July 2006 in Gyeongsan, South Korea. Henry presented IUPAC Gold Books to the gold medalists at the closing ceremonies and delivered a brief talk and general overview of IUPAC at a farewell dinner that evening.

Organizers of the 38th ICHO awarded a total of 28 gold, 56 silver, and 81 bronze medals in Gyeongsan, which is south of Seoul. More than 250 students from 68 countries competed in theoretical and practical exams that each lasted five hours.

All four members of China's team won gold medals. Taiwan, the Russian Federation, and the host country each won three gold medals and one silver medal. Poland ranked fifth, earning two golds, one silver, and one bronze. Cheng-Yi Kao of Taiwan won an individual award for performance on the practical test, while Lichao Cai of China received recognition for excellence on the theoretical component. Hande Boyaci from Turkey earned the award for Best Female Student. Students also participated in several cultural tours and activities in South Korea.

Henry's visit, from 5–11 July, was arranged by the ICHO-2006 Organizing Committee and Duckhwan Lee in particular. Kook Joe Shin, a past president of the Korean Chemical Society, (KCS) served as Henry's host during his entire stay and organized his itinerary.

The first three days of his visit took place in Seoul, where he had the opportunity to meet many members of the Korean chemical community. On 6 July he met with Eun Lee, the current president of the Korean Chemical Society, and Young Bok Chae, president of the Korean Federation of Science and Technology



A medalist is awarded at the closing ceremonies of the 38th International Chemistry Olympiad.

Societies. That evening he attended a dinner with Korean chemists who are associated with IUPAC in various roles. Korea is very active within IUPAC with 43 Fellows, 10 individuals who are either chairs or members of task groups, 20 subcommittee members, 4 national representatives, and 7 titular members. Notable among this group is Jung-il Jin who is a member of the Bureau and president of the Polymer Division.

On 8 July, Henry traveled to Gyeongsan, in the southeastern region of South Korea, where he had a traditional Korean dinner with several member of the ICHO Organizing Committee, including Daewoon Lee, the committee chair. Over dinner, Henry learned about the history of the Chemistry Olympiad movement and its impressive growth.

According to Henry, 10 July was the highlight of the trip. It began with a visit to Yeungnam University, in Gyeongsan, which was the venue for ICHO. After visiting the Department of Chemistry and meeting with the University President, he was treated to a guided tour of the fascinating university museum with its anthropological focus on the indigenous culture. Next, he met with Jin Soon Cha, the next president of the KCS. He ended the day at the Olympiad. "The closing ceremonies were nothing short of incredible," said Henry.

The International Chemistry Olympiad was detailed in the July-Aug 2005 *CI* <www.iupac.org/publications/ci/2005/2704/1_apotheker.html>. The next Chemistry Olympiad will be held in Russia at Moscow State University in July 2007 under the theme "Chemistry: Art, Science, and Fun." The official web-site of the 39th ICHO is <www.icho39.chem.msu.ru>.



From left: Eun Lee (president of the Korean Chemical Society), Bryan Henry (IUPAC president), and Kook Joe Shin (KCS past president).

For more details about the 2006 event, see <<http://icho2006.kcsnet.or.kr>>.