

Conference Summary
Surfaces in Biomaterials: BioInterface 2005
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Overall, this conference was fantastic. I thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from the presentations, the people, and the whole experience. The conference included a one-day workshop and two days of talks and research symposia.

The workshop was entitled "Cardiac and Vascular Devices of the Future: Where Interventional and Surgical Interventions Meet". This topic could not have been any more well-suited for my personal research interests and objectives. My project involves developing an in vitro system for evaluating intravascular devices, and thus the clinical perspectives and real-life applications discussed during the workshop were invaluable to me. The morning session included back-to-back talks by a cardiologist and a cardiothoracic surgeon, which compared the different approaches that each takes in combating coronary artery disease. Each speaker also gave great insight into the current developments and state-of-the-art technology in each field. Hearing the perspective of two well-respected M.D.s was both beneficial and inspiring. The afternoon included a talk by two lawyers regarding the legal implications of off-label use of medical devices. Regardless of whether my career is in academics or industry, an awareness of the law and an understanding of our litigious society will be necessary.

The next two days of the conference included a variety of symposia on bioadhesion, vascular diseases and devices, material characterization, inventions, and tissue-based therapies. Speakers were from both the academic and industry setting, and presented a variety of perspectives on everything from pure basic science to device implantations in humans. One of my favorite sessions was on tissue-based therapies. The talks focused on the use of adult stem cells for clinical treatments of bone disease, myocardial infarction, and peripheral vascular disease. Since our laboratory utilizes a variety of cell sources and cell types for tissue engineering, it was interesting to learn how others are using adult stem cells.

Another major component of this conference for me, in addition to attending the workshop and symposia, was presenting my own research. My poster was titled "Stent Evaluation in a Blood Vessel Mimic". It was on display all three days, and I had the opportunity to present it and talk with people about it for two hours on the 25th. Although I have previously given a talk at a conference, this was my first experience presenting a poster. It was really exciting to have one-on-one conversations with people about my work, and to show them some of my results. I received lots of positive feedback, as well as some very good questions and ideas. I also presented my poster to a panel of judges, and was evaluated based on the scientific merit of my work, my oral presentation, and the visual appeal and organization of the poster. I was awarded 2nd place, which was quite an honor for me.

Finally, the conference overall provided a great opportunity to interact with people from industry. Researchers from a variety of companies, including Gore, St. Jude, Medtronic, and SurModics attended the conference, in addition to those from

universities and hospitals. This mix of people made it very interesting for me as a student to see the different approaches taken in different sectors. The conference even organized a “student town hall” lunch for students like me to sit down and talk with scientists from industry. I enjoyed this lunch very much, and met some really interesting people who were able to share some very valuable insights.

In conclusion, this conference was truly a great experience. I presented my own research, learned from the research of others, and met a whole new group of really great people. Therefore I would like to sincerely thank the Herbert E. Carter Travel Fellowship for contributing to the financial side of this experience. It made a great contribution to my trip and made this opportunity possible.