University of Central Florida Chapter Provides Venues to Discuss Materials Research

The Materials Research Society University Chapter at the University of Central Florida (UCF) is one of the most active and growing clubs within the campus. Since its establishment in 1997, the chapter's membership has grown to more than 50 graduate and undergraduate active student members. The chapter is devoted to the advancement of materials science by hosting events, conferences, industrial connections, outreach programs, and other social activities.

One of our major events is “Materials Day,” the chapter’s yearly fellowship and mingling extravaganza where students from various fields come together to learn about the new and upcoming technologies that will affect our everyday lives. This event offers students an opportunity to present their work and interact with faculty and company personnel. This year, the event included a symposium where top students and K–12 school teachers presented their findings from their summer-long nanotechnology research. They conducted their research as part of the National Science Foundation’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF-REU) program, which has a site at UCF. According to Sudipta Seal, the chapter’s faculty advisor, “Materials Day is a great event to get to know more about materials science and engineering research at the campus.” Students, faculty, news reporters, and university administrators, including the vice provost, president, dean, and department chairs, attend this event.

The University Chapter also joins hands with other materials societies on campus. The MRS Chapter and the Florida Chapter of the American Vacuum Society co-organized a spring conference at the University of Central Florida Chapter’s annual conference. Another way is through the chapter’s Hands-on Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF-REU) program. The chapter’s Web site hosts an online listing of job opportunities, and the chapter is developing relations with UCF’s alumni in order to “open the door” for internships and co-op positions. Tours are arranged to companies such as Lucent Technologies, Siemens Inc., Lockheed Martin, and Mitsubishi Power Systems Inc. so that chapter members can experience the corporate environment while establishing contacts for future internship and employment possibilities.

To help students who are seeking employment, the chapter works hand-in-hand with UCF’s career resource center. The chapter’s Web site hosts an on-line listing of job opportunities, and the chapter is developing relations with UCF’s alumni in order to “open the door” for internships and co-op positions. Tours are arranged to companies such as Lucent Technologies, Siemens Inc., Lockheed Martin, and Mitsubishi Power Systems Inc. so that chapter members can experience the corporate environment while establishing contacts for future internship and employment possibilities.

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Chapter President,
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(former president of the University of Toledo), P. Holloway (Florida Distinguished Professor), and N. Gitis (CETR Inc.) have been among the renowned speakers in this series.

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