

Report on the 54th ASMS Conference on Mass Spectrometry

The 54th ASMS conference on mass spectrometry was held in the city of Seattle, Washington. I arrived in Seattle on the Saturday. Sunday morning was spent sightseeing around the city taking in the aquarium, the Experience Music Project and the Space Needle. We registered on the Sunday afternoon, but the conference was not officially started until the next day.

The conference was held at the Washington state convention and trade centre. The centre was very impressive and so large that even though there were approximately 7000 attendees the events rarely seemed crowded.

The format of each day was as follows. A plenary lecture was followed by poster presentations. After that there were seven parallel running oral presentations followed by lunch. During lunch a series of small presentations and interest groups were held. After lunch, the schedule included another poster session and more oral presentations. The day ended with workshops taking place.

The conference talks were opened by a plenary lecture from Lisa Randall. The title of the talk was: "Warped Pasages: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Universe's Hidden Dimensions". It was a very interesting introduction to multidimensional theory and proposed techniques to probe the existence of different dimensions.

The first oral session I attended was on Ion Mobility, there were six very interesting talks, many of them presenting the latest developments in ion mobility technologies and techniques.

At lunchtime myself and other colleagues new to mass spectrometry went to the "Young Mass Spectrometrists" interest group. It was an amazing experience with a number of short talks presented by some of the inventors of modern mass spectrometric techniques.

The poster sessions for Monday hosted a large number of posters relating to fields of particular interest for my work: ion mobility and carbohydrates/oligosaccharides. These sessions gave the opportunity to read more about the current state of these two research areas and to obtain ideas of new techniques to use.

Tuesday morning started with the plenary lecture, presented by Graham Cooks, recipient of the award for a distinguished contribution in mass spectrometry. His talk focused on his recent research into the development of desorption ionization techniques for rapid analysis of samples. These methods included the development of ambient mass spectrometry with ionization and, to a certain degree, molecule fragmentation before the source of the mass spectrometer.

Both the morning and afternoon sessions I attended on Tuesday were directed heavily towards glycomics and carbohydrate analysis followed in the afternoon by an Ion Mobility Workshop titled "What Can Ion Mobility Do for your Mass Spectrometry". The workshop consisted of a number of short 5-10 minute talks about a small area of research carried out in the past year. I was interested to find that an American group

were performing experiments similar to my own and made the effort to find the speaker later in the week during their poster presentation to discuss their work.

Wednesday morning began with the presentation of the Biemann Medal awarded to recognize “a significant achievement in basic or applied mass spectrometry made by an individual early in his or her career”. This year it was presented to David Clemmer for his contributions to integrating ion mobility spectrometry, to mass spectrometry using a number of technologies.

Thursday was the last day of the conference breaking the format of the previous days by having no plenary lecture in the morning. My poster was presented in the morning poster session. There seemed to be a lot of interest in my poster topic and the whole hour and a half was spent talking to people, answering their questions and hearing their comments about my work. The feedback obtained from talking to my peers in my field of research has led to developing new ideas and experiments which would not have been thought of previously.

The finale of the conference was a buffet meal at the Museum of Flight, the original site of the Boeing plant.

I would like to thank the British Society for Mass Spectrometry for partially funding the cost of my attendance at this important and memorable meeting.

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