

The Second Meeting of the Latin American Crystallographic Association (LACA) in Mérida, Yucatán, México, 22–27 October 2016

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During the last week of October of 2016, a new meeting of the Latin American Crystallographic Association (LACA) took place in Mérida, Yucatán, México. Formally, it was the second meeting of LACA, after this organization was accepted as a Regional Associate of the International Union of Crystallography by the General Assembly of the XXIII IUCr Congress celebrated in Montreal, Canada, in 2014. The meeting was organized in conjunction with the VI Mexican Synchrotron Light Users Meeting and the VIII National Congress of Crystallography of the Mexican Crystallographic Society (SMCr) (see [Figure 1](#)).

The first meeting of LACA was held in São Paulo, Brazil, at the Institute of Physics of the Universidade de São Paulo, in September of 2015, in conjunction with the XII meeting of the Brazilian Crystallographic Association (ABCr). It must be mentioned that the LACA organization was created at a meeting organized by participants from several Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, México, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Perú, Uruguay, and Venezuela) along with the IX Annual meeting of the Argentinean Crystallographic Association (AACr), which took place from 29 October to 1 November 2013, at Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (UNC), in Córdoba, Argentina.

The scientific program of this year's meeting included five plenary lectures, 20 invited lectures, and close to 100 poster presentations by participants from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, México, Uruguay, Venezuela, the USA, Spain, and Belgium. The opening plenary lecture was delivered by Professor Miguel José Yacamán from the Physics Department of the University of Texas at San Antonio. Other invited speakers included Marvin L. Hackert (University of Texas at Austin), President of the IUCr., (see [Figure 2](#)) Santiago García Granda (U. Oviedo, Spain), member of the Executive Committee of the IUCr., Gabriela Aurelio (CAB-CNEA, Argentina), Aldo Craievich (U. São Paulo, Brazil), Miguel and Graciela Delgado (U. Los Andes, Venezuela), Marcia Fantini (U. São Paulo, Brazil), Diego Lamas (U. San Martín, Argentina), Stavros Nicolopoulos (Nanomegas, Belgium), Bruce Noll (Bruker, USA), Oscar Piro (U. La Plata, Argentina), and Iris Torriani (U. Campinas, Brazil). Several distinguished Mexican scientists were also invited speakers, among them Otilio Acevedo Sandoval (UAEH, Hidalgo), Gerardo Aguirre (IT-Tijuana), Sylvain Bernés (IF-BUAP, Puebla), Luis Fuentes Cobas (CIMAV, Chihuahua), Mayra Cuéllar Cruz (Universidad de Guanajuato, León), Gonzalo González (IIM-UNAM, México City), Erick A. Juárez Arellano (U. del Papaloapan, Oaxaca), Rufino Lozano Santacruz (IG-UNAM, México City), Abel Moreno Cárcamo (IQ, UNAM, México City),

María Elena Montero Cabrera (CIMAV, Chihuahua), Teresa Pi Puig (IG-UNAM, México City), and Guadalupe de la Rosa Alvarez (U. de Guanajuato, León).

Professor Hackert presented a nice overview of the activities carried out around the world under the auspices of the IUCr in the last few years, which began during the celebration of the International Year of Crystallography.

The meeting was preceded on the 22th and the 23th of October by six workshops and courses on different crystallographic topics. They were: “Crystallography Databases: I. Introduction to CSD-Enterprise; II. The ICDD's Powder Diffraction File”, a workshop led by Amy Sarjeant and Paul Sanschagrin (CCDC), Thomas Blanton (ICDD), Graciela Díaz de Delgado and Miguel Delgado (ULA) (see [Figures 2](#) and [3](#)); a “Synchrotron Crystallography” course was coordinated by Abel Moreno Cárcamo (IQ, UNAM, México City); a “Physical Properties of Crystals” course was taught by Jacques Soullard Saintrais (IF-UNAM, México City); a “Crystal Growth” course was run by Héctor Riveros Rotge, (IF-UNAM, México City); the instructor of the “Basic Crystallography” course was Alfredo Gómez Rodríguez (IF-UNAM, México City) and of the “Roentgen-Crystallography” was Rubén Alfredo Toscano (IQ-UNAM, México City). The great majority of the participants in these activities, conducted at the campus of the Mérida Unit of CINVESTAV, were graduate students and young scientists.

Three poster sessions were held in the exhibition hall where booths of some of the major manufacturers of X-ray diffraction instruments, microscopes, and electron diffraction facilities were also located. Among them were: Bruker (Bruker Mexicana, S.A.), Micra-Nanotecnología/Nanomegas, PANalytical (PANalytical México), Rigaku (Martek, S.A.), Stoe-Inel (Spectramex, S.A.), Thermo Scientific (Falcón/División Analítica), and Alta Tecnología de Laboratorios, S. A. The International Centre for Diffraction Data (ICDD) also had a booth where the PDF-4+ and PDF-4/Organics databases were demonstrated. Several ICDD members participated in the meeting and spent time at the booth talking to attendants visiting the booth.

In each poster session, the two best posters presented by students were selected. During the farewell dinner, they were given nice gifts created by local artisans. The IUCr and ICDD provided funds to cover the travel and accommodation expenses for about 20 students ([Figure 5](#) and [6](#)).

The local organizing committee headed by Professors Patricia Quintana Owen (CINVESTAV-Unidad Mérida, IPN) and Rudy Almícar Trejo Tzab (Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán) as well as the national committee headed by Professors José Reyes Gasga (IF-UNAM), Lauro Bucio Galindo (IF-UNAM), Jesús Ángel Arenas Alatorre (IF-UNAM), Gustavo



Figure 1. (Color online) Participants of the II meeting of the LACA, Mérida, México, 22–27 October 2106.



Figure 2. (Color online) Dr. Amy Sarjeant, Outreach and Education Manager at CCDC-USA, lecturing during the Crystallography Databases Workshop.



Figure 3. (Color online) Dr. Thomas Blanton, ICDD Principal Scientist and Database Manager, lecturing during the Crystallography Databases Workshop.



Figure 4. (Color online) Prof. Marvin Hackert, President of the IUCr, addressing the audience during the opening ceremony of the LACA meeting.



Figure 5. (Color online) The students supported by ICDD along with Tom Blanton, Graciela and Miguel Delgado at the ICDD booth.



Figure 6. (Color online) A view of one of the three Poster sessions, which took place at the II LACA.

Tavizón Alvarado (FQ-UNAM) with the superb support of a team headed by Ms. Gabriela García Rosales, Secretary of SMCr, did a wonderful job in the organization of all the aspects of these events. They all worked very hard and succeeded at organizing a very successful meeting.

At the general assembly of the meeting, a new board of LACA was elected. The members of the new board are Diego Lamas (President, Argentina), José Reyes-Gasca (Vice-President, México), Graciela Díaz de Delgado (Secretary, Venezuela), and Iris Torriani (Treasurer, Brazil).

An additional member of the board will be elected soon after consulting the national crystallographic organizations not yet represented in the board.

The next meeting of LACA will take place in Valparaíso, Chile, in 2018, since the 24th Congress and General Assembly will take place in Hyderabad, India next year. Colombia is the main candidate to host the 2019 LACA meeting. Professor José Antonio Henao (Universidad Industrial de Santander, Bucaramanga) would be the head of the local organizing committee.