

Meeting Report on 9th ICEM San Francisco, September 2005

We ventured to San Francisco this September with confident optimism for a scientifically, socially, and financially successful 9th ICEM. We have been gratified by enthusiastic reports that the conference was a resounding success in the first two categories, and we will soon know whether it also met the fiscal expectations of the EMS. The statistics include the following: ~1000 registrants from ~ 40 countries, including several hundred students/young investigators, of whom 52 received travel awards; 45 EMS travel awards; ~300 invited speakers; ~550 posters; 24 exhibitors; and last but not least, ~400 participants at the gala closing banquet with joyous dancing at the SF City Hall. Approximately \$150,000 in profit was made from this ICEM, with \$45,000 going to IAEMS. The remainder went to EMS, with \$40,000 of that being set aside for support of EMS members who are invited to speak at the next ICEM in Florence, Italy.

The statistics that we will never know, but which are even more important, are the numbers of new friendships and scientific collaborations that were forged by this grand interaction of scientists from throughout the world. We have little doubt that much of the cutting-edge research that will be published in the upcoming years will be a direct consequence of the 9th ICEM, with its origins traceable to our memorable interactions in beautiful San Francisco.

For four years, and most intensely through the past several years, a troika composed of the two of us and importantly, Tonia Masson, Executive Director of the EMS, formed a central hub around which the planning details of the conference swirled with increasing intensity. We are pleased to reveal the “inside story” of this effort, which

is that we worked effectively together on a frequent basis over the first two years and then virtually on a daily basis (with dozens of emails whizzing past each other over the ether each day and night) for the past two years in the most efficient and pleasant fashion imaginable. We thoroughly enjoyed working together. Although many difficult decisions had to be made, frequently under stressful time constraints, we were able to accomplish our mission without an angry word or serious disagreement.

We had played out the grand scheme of the conference on paper and in our minds a multitude of times. However, seeing it unfold before our eyes—very much in the way we had anticipated, was a great joy and immensely rewarding to us. We thank you for placing your trust and confidence in us to steer the weighty ship of the 9th ICEM safely into the port of San Francisco and for it to become essentially all that we had planned and anticipated.

We express our special thanks to the members of the Organizing Committee, the Program Committee, and the EMS Executive Board for their wise counsel and suggestions for the Program. We especially thank the treasurers of the EMS and the IAEMS for ensuring that our plans for the conference fit within their flexible but sound financial constraints. We thank everyone who helped with the arduous task of fund raising for the conference. We welcomed advice from the International Advisory Board and that from the IAEMS member societies. Finally, we wish to thank the Local Arrangements Committee for their innovative ideas, which helped to make an otherwise excellent scientific meeting a truly memorable one in all respects.

Although we can never assess the full impact of the 9th ICEM upon those who attended it and on the science in our field, we are confident that the 9th ICEM has set the

stage for valuable research and thoughtful regulatory decisions in the coming years. For all elements of the successful 9th ICEM, we have nearly 1,000 people to thank—all of you who helped to organize the conference and who then contributed through your expertise and direct participation. As our Italian colleagues, who are already setting the stage for the 10th ICEM might say: Molto Grazie!

David DeMarini and Phil Hanawalt