



Students: The Movers and Shakers of EMBS Student Leader Event Description

Student Chapter: IEEE-EMBS Student Chapter at the University of Southern California, USA

Student Leader: Winston H. Tran

Title of Event: 9th Annual Grodins Graduate Research Symposium

Approximate Number of Attendees: 230-250

FUNDING:

Total Budget: \$13,000.00 US

Fund Raising: \$18,500.00 US

Funding Sources: Biomedical companies, research institutes & centers, BME department, and student leadership groups

Expenses: Radisson Hotel, breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee breaks, printings, parking for VIPs

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT:

A forum for biomedical engineering graduate students to present their current research work and future plans. This full day symposium features additional functions including:

1. An opportunity for the faculty, fellow students, and industrial partners / representatives to exchange ideas on the various areas of on-going research.
2. Interactions aim to create new applications from existing technologies, develop new solutions through interdisciplinary research, and initiate collaborations with industry to accelerate the commercialization of new products to the marketplace.
3. An excellent opportunity for research institutions and industry partners to recruit our outstanding BME students and graduates for internship, post-doc training, and job placement.
4. An exceptional opportunity for students to network and learn from those employed in the field.
5. A student competition in top paper, poster and oral presentations; and Grodins Graduate Research Award recognition to the most accomplished graduating student.

NAME ONE MAJOR HURDLE OF THE EVENT AND HOW IT WAS OVERCOME:

Fund raising to support the budget of this event was one of the most difficult challenges. We approached the problem with design of several sponsorship packages tailored to the interest of our potential academic and industry sponsors. With the help from our local Buenaventura IEEE-EMBS Chapter and local IEEE sections (LA coastal and Metro), we were able to reach a network of many biomedical companies and research institutions and develop a relationship with them to share the mutual benefits from the functions of this event.

WHAT WAS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF THIS EVENT?

We learned from our students, faculty, sponsors and important guests that the symposium had accomplished its goals and delivered its initiatives exceedingly well. Our Viterbi School of Engineering wrote a news article to celebrate our impressive success. We are pleased that the students gained experience preparing their paper and poster presentations, received helpful feedback on their research work from the audience, and were introduced to a network of potential colleagues or future employers. The sponsors and industrial representatives enjoyed the event filled with presentations of innovative research conducted by the faculty and their graduate students and had the opportunity to initiate fruitful discussion with the faculty.

HOW DID THIS EVENT CONTRIBUTE TO LEADERSHIP SKILLS?

The committee consisted of six graduate students, who gained leadership skills and learned how to manage and organize every aspect of a full-day symposium – including the need to motivate students to participate, manage the review and publication process, and market the symposium to a variety of customers for fundraising purposes. This priceless experience empowers these young leaders to take on bigger future leadership roles in their chosen career path – be it in academia or industry.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Although organizing a symposium is a lot more work, it is a very nice alternative to the monthly seminar series. Our lessons learned: Start early – plan at least 7 months in advance. Plan thoroughly – a backup for the backup plan is required. Good communication – sharp, persuasive, and well-informed dialogue is needed both within and outside the team. Great teamwork – delegate positions and work in parallel. Don't be afraid to ask for help – you can always count on your local IEEE-EMBS or other similar IEEE society for help. Be persistent.