FROM HOUSTON TO HAWAII: TWO CULLEN COLLEGE PH.D. STUDENTS SPEAK AT PRESTIGIOUS CONFERENCE

Two Cullen College of Engineering Ph.D. students, studying under the direction of Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering Stanko Brankovic, are back from Honolulu, Hawaii, where they presented talks on their groundbreaking work at the biggest conference in the electrochemistry field.

Kamyar Ahmadi and Dongjun Wu were not only invited to share their scholarly works, they were also awarded travel grants from the Electrodeposition Division of the Electrochemical Society to attend the 230th Electrochemical Society Fall Meeting in Honolulu Hawaii from Oct. 2-7.

Wu presented his paper "Electroless Deposition of High Quality Co Films on Cu Polycrystalline Substrate Assisted by Pb UPD Monolayer," where he demonstrated for the first time a new approach to high quality cobalt thin film growth using lead atomic monolayer as a surfactant, to lower tension between layers. This could have a direct impact on nanofabrication of metallic interconnects for future microchip technology development.

Ahmadi's lecture, titled "Thin Film Surface Chemo-Resistivity Tuning Using Metal Deposition via SLRR," describes his work on a design of new thin-film sensors to measure the concentration of corrosive chemicals in water-oil slurries. This work could be most helpful in the oil and gas industry to measure content of hydrogen sulfide, a chemical which could destroy the expensive tools used for drilling.

Both students were overwhelmed with the opportunity to attend the meeting.

"It was great for me, my first experience at a big conference and a good opportunity because it's the biggest in the field," said Ahmadi. "We met the biggest experts in the field.

Wu concurred. "All the people in the electrochemistry field are there and you can network with them and gain
opportunities, he said. Also you meet other students from all over the world and see what they’re doing and compare yourself to them.

Their proud professor Brankovic will tell you that there is no comparison to their success, which increases his own.

“My personal opinion is that one’s success is measured by the highs reached by his students,” said Brankovic. “I always try to motivate my students to dream big, and to never subjugate to mediocrity and compromise their high standards no matter what. For this reason, I am very proud that two of my students are awarded travel grants to attend the most important meeting in the year in our field. Both of them are exemplary Ph.D. students, and I hope that their success serves to other students as a motivation to work hard and keep their goals high in their career and personal pursuit of success.”

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