

Adonyi Welding Consultants Newsletter, August 2010

What is new?

As mentioned before, I was invited to the “Future of Materials Joining” conference and workshop organized Aug 2-4 by EWI and AWS near Columbus, OH. About 80 people came from industry, Government Labs and academia, with universities being under-represented (9 out of 80). Mr. Timken, former CEO of the famous Timken Company and also former Ambassador to Germany was the keynote speaker. Following presentations from EWI, AWS, GE, Emerson Electric, Ohio State University, NASA Huntsville and Los Alamos National Labs, participants discussed in breakout sessions topics of interest to the welding/joining community in the next decade. After prioritizing these topics where Education, Training and workforce development was # 2 priority of ten general categories, while barriers and solutions were discussed for each in breakout sessions.

My most important contribution to the conference was proposing revival and distance delivery of the NEMJET initiative after 15 years (the National Excellence in Materials Joining and Engineering Technology teaching modules were developed at OSU under AWS and NSF funding). I proposed content update and novel delivery methods for 2-yr, 4-yr and graduate level without the trouble of licensing, perceived as a past barrier in path of widespread use of these teaching modules.

What have I learned?

Human ambition and competitive spirit still drives most of the self-centeredness of my peers in the welding industry. Only the opinions of a few faculty from OSU were presented, even the names of faculty from other universities such as MIT and SMU were misspelled. While speaking of national cooperation, constant putdowns of competitive institutions were uttered. Unless the attitude of the industry changes, outsiders will continue to see us as ego-maniacs who want to carve out a niche in Manufacturing. I believe that only acute need – even less resources and fierce competition from Asia – will drive the welding industry to a true cooperation. Past example is the ‘marriage’ between AWS and SME in 2005 when the Fabtech and AWS Shows had to merge facing low attendance and high costs.

What are my future plans?

In my 15th year of full-time academic career, I am excited about starting as Graduate Committee Chair for our new MSc in Engineering program at LeTourneau University. This new interdisciplinary Master of Science program will build on an applied research component (no non-Thesis option allowed) and on dual-credit courses that should draw on internal enrollment for a five-year plan for a MSc degree, similarly with the Bologna model accepted by the European Union.