

Over 170 attendees from a dozen countries attended the **Forest Products Society's International Convention June 26-28 in Starkville, MS USA**. The 71st annual event was hosted by the Mississippi State University's Department of Sustainable Bioproducts, and event focused on industry advancements and the latest research in support of economically and environmentally sustainable use of wood and renewable cellulosic materials.



[View the images from the FPS 71st International Convention in Starkville](#)

"The Convention provided great networking among Industry leaders and great chance to get a glimpse of the future of wood science and marketing by interacting with top researchers and educators in our field," said Rich Vlosky, FPS President.

### **Industry Speakers**

A big Southern welcome was given by Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, who emphasized the importance of the forest industry to Mississippi. "We generate \$12.79 billion economic impact from our forest products industries" said Bryant. He went on to cite the global impact of Mississippi's forest products industry, with wood and wood pulp products accounting for \$866 million in exports from the state.

Other plenary speakers included Roy O. Martin, CEO of a family-owned OSB producer located in Louisiana and Texas, Pat Thomasson, CEO of Thomasson, a pressure treated lumber company and Richard Peberdy, Vice President of Drax Biomass, a major wood pellet provider. Each shared some of the challenges faced by their businesses and how continued wood science research will support them. In addition, Winston Plywood and Veneer and Biewer Lumber hosted tours of their facilities nearby.

### **Research Innovations**

Many research innovations in wood science were highlighted in Starkville. Trevor Raymond Stuthridge, executive vice president of Canada's FP Innovations shared some of their work as did several speakers from the USDA Forest Products Lab. Sessions focused on the latest in bioproducts, nanomaterials, CLT and green building research. Fundamentals such as harvesting, wood protection, adhesives and wood composites were also covered in the program. Over 40 posters were featured in a poster session with student participants from around the world.

MSU Showcased "The FPS IC is a great opportunity to showcase the work being done at Mississippi State University," said MSU Department Head and Program Chair Rubin Shmulsky. "We were excited to show off our facilities, research and hospitality to industry and potential graduate students." MSU hosted a tour of their facilities and many students participated in the planning of the program and social events.

### **Leaders Recognized**

The Society's Annual Excellence Awards were presented during the conference, recognizing student research, service to the Society, and individuals who are developing technologies that are changing the face of the forest products industry. Dr. Joseph Jakes of the USDA Forest Service Forest Products Lab received the Wood Engineering - Young Engineer Award (sponsored by the American Wood Council), and Dr. Kevin Cheung of Western Wood Products Association received the Fred W. Gottschalk Award for service to the Society.

Plans are already being made for the **72st FPS International Convention**, which will be held **June 12-15, 2018** in Madison, Wisconsin, USA. If you are interested in helping plan, sponsor or speak at the convention please contact Scott Springmier, Forest Products Society Executive Director at [scott@forestprod.org](mailto:scott@forestprod.org).