Preface

The Sino-US chemistry professors conference: history and outlook

On June 29–30, 2009, the Fifth Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, co-organized by Lanzhou University and the Chinese-American Chemistry & Chemical Biology Professors Association (CAPA, USA), was held in Lanzhou. About 150 professors from China, USA and other countries participated in this conference, and 65 research presentations were delivered. At the conclusion of this meeting, it became clear that this conference series had moved into a mature state, generated wide-spread interest especially in China, and become a premier international conference at the highest level. The conference has also been a tremendous catalyst during the past five years in facilitating the interactions and exchanges among chemists in China and the US, especially those in the fields of organic, bioorganic, and medicinal chemistry and chemical biology. With three more meetings planned out for future years, the conference series has grown past its infancy. This is time to reflect and ponder future moves. It is also very gratifying for the three of us to see that the meeting series that we started together with others have flourished this way.

In 2002, the three of us started discussing the ideas of

forming a Chinese-American Chemistry & Chemical Biology Professors Association and organizing a meeting series involving chemistry professors in China and US. The first large scale discussions involving additional people coincided with the 2002 Spring American Chemical Society National meeting in Orlando, Florida. During the meeting, there were extensive discussions involving several Chinese chemistry professors, including Professors Bing Gong, Xumu Zhang, Peng George Wang, and others. From there, active preparation work started.

The inaugural meeting took place on the beautiful campus of Tianjin University with the sponsorship of its College of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Biotechnology on June 13–14, 2005. This meeting had about 70 participants from various institutions and was quite a success, which was in large part due to the superb organizational work of the local host and meeting co-chair, Professor Kang Zhao, and his team including many capable and dedicated undergraduate and graduate students. Subsequent meetings took place on the campus of Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry with Professor Dawei Ma as the local host and meeting co-chair

HUANG Zhen

WANG BingHe

PU Lin

(This picture was taken on Dec. 26, 2004, at Zhen Huang's home, Marietta, Georgia)

(July 8–9, 2006), Wuhan University with Professor Xiang Zhou as the local host and co-chair (June 1–2, 2007), Beijing University Health Sciences Center with Professors Xinshan Ye and Lihe Zhang as the local hosts (June 12–13, 2008), and Lanzhou University with Professors Pengfei Xu and Yongqiang Tu as the local hosts (June 29–30, 2009). In all five meetings, two senior members of CAPA, Xumu Zhang and Peng George Wang, were also organizing committee members and key supporters.

While the meeting series was going well and strong, CAPA's organizational work was proceeding well too. The conference series generated synergy for the further growth and expansion of CAPA because of the many opportunities these meetings created for extensive interactions and discussions. In late 2006, Lin Pu flew to Atlanta to visit Zhen Huang and Binghe Wang and to create an opportunity for the three of us to discuss the association bylaws, which Zhen Huang had drafted. Extensive discussions and revisions took place around the dining table at Binghe Wang's home in December 2006. Subsequent discussions involving a large number of core initiating members including Peng George Wang, Xumu Zhang, Xiangming Guan, Longqin Hu, Guigen Li, Qian Wang, Wei Wang, Xi Chen, Xilai Wang, Bing Gong, Chuan He, Wenbin Lin, Weihong Tan, and others led to the official registration of CAPA, in USA, in 2007 with the three of us as the founding officers. After completing essentially all the preparation and organizational work and recognizing the need to bring in junior members into the organizational work of the association, Lin Pu and Binghe Wang resigned from their officers' positions, and new officers were elected in 2008 with Zhen Huang, Wei Wang, and Qian Wang as the President, Director and Treasurer, respectively. The Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference series was subsequently turned over to CAPA for formal management and oversight. In addition, CAPA has also initiated a new meeting series to be held in the US and two award series: one for professors in China and one in the US, which is a mechanism of recognizing excellence in research among junior members. During the last few years, CAPA has served as an important bridge for scientific communications among/between Chinese scholars overseas and in China. Currently, CAPA has about 300 members holding faculty positions in research universities throughout the USA.

Below is a list of past meetings:

- 1 First Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Biotechnology, Tianjin University, June 13–14, 2005; Co-chairs: Kang Zhao (local host) and Binghe Wang
- 2 Second Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry, July 8–9, 2006; Co-chairs: Dawei Ma (local host), Lin Pu, and Binghe Wang
- 3 Third Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, Wuhan University College of Chemistry, June 1–2, 2007; Co-chairs: Xiang Zhou (local host), Xumu Zhang, and Binghe Wang
- 4 Fourth Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, Beijing University Health Sciences Center, June 12–13, 2008; Co-chairs: Lihe Zhang (local host) and Binghe Wang
- 5 Fifth Sino-US Chemistry Professors Conference, Lanzhou University College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, June 29–30, 2009; Co-chairs: Yongqiang Tu (local host) and Qian Wang

Looking into the future, we recognize that the meeting series need to have a formal oversight mechanism. There have been extensive discussions involving many of the same people, who helped to start this conference series. Discussions centered on the need to set up a Gordon Conference type of organizational structure to ensure continuity, stability, and proper oversight. Work along this line is in progress. We hope that the meeting series will enjoy increasing support among colleagues and continue its role in promoting exchanges and interactions among chemistry professors in China and the US.

Lastly, we are very grateful that *Science China Chemistry* gives us this opportunity to publish selected work from these conferences in this special issue.

WANG BingHe

HUANG Zhen

PU Lin

July 12, 2009