

International Conference on Engineering Education

ICEE-2006

Opening Plenary

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Chancellor Velez, Dean Vasquez, Rector Cermak, Dr. Bement, Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good Morning.

I bring you greetings from the iNEER Secretariat.

Welcome to San Juan. It is very nice to be with you here on the tropical island of Puerto Rico.

iNEER-Sponsored Conferences, July 2006

ICEE - 1994:	Taipei		
1995:	Taipei		
1997:	Chicago/Carbondale		
1998:	Rio de Janeiro		
1999:	Ostrava/Prague		
2000:	Taipei/Tainan		
2001:	Oslo/Bergen		Workshops:
2002:	Manchester		2002: Taipei; Nanjing
2003:	Valencia		
2004:	Gainesville	iCEER-2004:	Olomouc
2005:	Gliwice	2005:	Tainan
2006:	San Juan	2007:	Malbourne
2007:	Cambodia	2008:	Montreal
2008:	Pecs-Budapest		
2009:	Seoul/Chonan		
2010:	Buenos Aires		

ICEE-2006 is the 17th meeting of the iNEER Network, which has been expanding its outreach to different parts of the world.

My congratulations and thanks to Chancellor Velez and his colleagues, especially Dean Ramon Vasquez and Prof. Sandra Cruz-Pol for their leadership in making this possible.



This meeting of the iNEER Network follows two that we held last year.

The first, iCEER-2005, was held in Taiwan in March.



We certainly appreciate the excellent work done by Prof. Ou Shan-Hwei, the conference General Chair.



The 2nd meeting was ICEE-2005, held in August in Gliwice, Poland.



We thank Prof. Wojciech Zielinski for his leadership in that memorable conference.

We will not present all of these letters of congratulations written by leaders of engineering education around the world on the opening of ICEE-2006.

Because of the press for time, we will present them at the banquet tomorrow night.



But it was in Norway at ICEE-2001 that I first met Chancellor Velez.

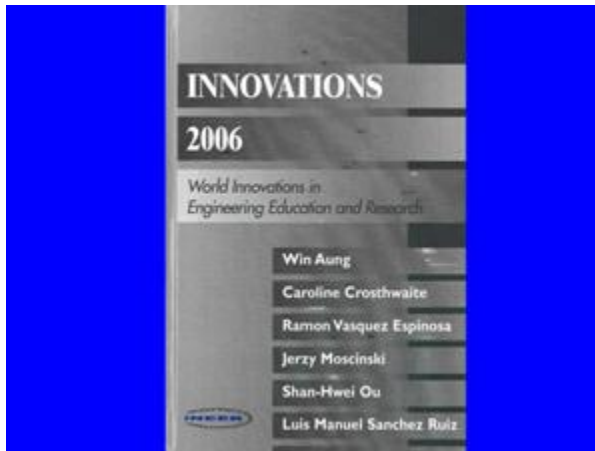


And, we met again two years later in 2003 in Valencia, Spain during ICEE-2003.

Now, he welcomes us all to his ICEE, ICEE-2006.

I remember speaking with Chancellor Velez in Valencia and the many nice things he said about iNEER, the ICEE and iCEER conferences, and especially about the 2003 iNEER book: “Innovations 2003” which was distributed at the conference there just like the 2006 book is handed out at this conference.

Since then 3 more books in the iNEER Innovations Series have appeared, each highlighting innovations around the world in education and research.



And now, the 6th book in the series, “Innovations 2006,” has come out just in time for this conference.

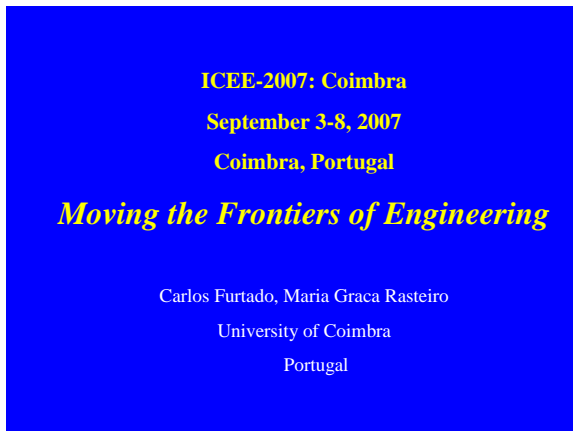
If you have registered, you should have received a copy of this new book which has 53 chapters and close to 650 pages, almost doubling the size of the 2003 book.

I hope Prof. Velez will like this book even more than the 2003 book.

Ladies and Gentle, we have started work on “Innovations 2007” which will be published next year just in time for ICEE-2007.

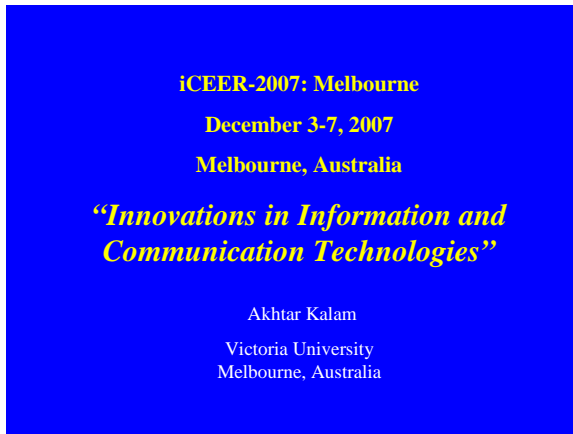
I invite all of you to submit a paper for possible inclusion in the book.

Let me know if you are interested, so I may send you more information.



ICEE-2007 will be held in Coimbra, Portugal.

It will be hosted by the leaders of the U. of Coimbra, with Prof. Carlos Furtado and Prof. Maria Graca Rasteiro serving as General Co-Chairs.



Current plans are for the iNEER Network to assemble in Melbourne in December, 2007 for iCEER-2007, which will be hosted by Victoria U. under the leadership of its Vice Chancellor.

Representing the Vice Chancellor today is Prof. Akhtar Kalam, the Deputy Dean of Engineering at Victoria U.

He will be with us throughout this week. I hope you will have a chance to speak with him.



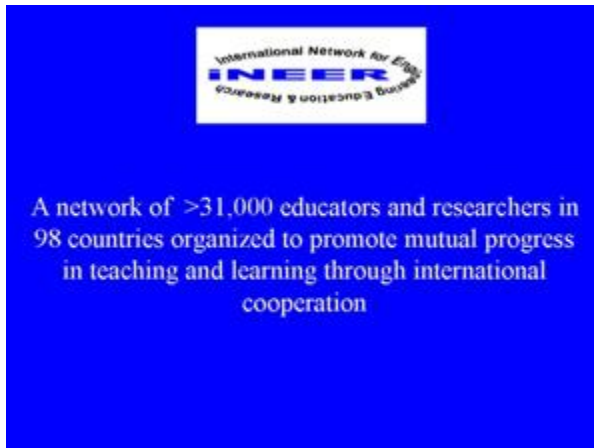
And, in August 2008, we will meet in Budapest and Pecs, Hungary.

We are making plans to hold ICEE-2009 in Korea and ICEE-2010 in Argentina, and will give more details in due course.

These conferences are organized for you and I hope you will take part in them.

Please contribute your expertise and time as authors, session chairs and organizers, paper reviewers, or just as an attendee there to learn and to observe.

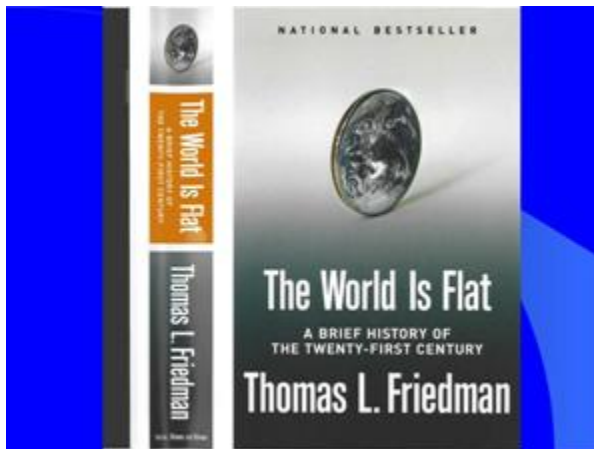
We need you. And, we do have a lot to offer you.



There are over 31,000 members in the iNEER Network spread around the world.

Our main purpose is to promote future advancement of engineering education through international cooperation.

We believe that, as the economies of nations advance, international cooperation is becoming a very important instrument and driver for further progress in engineering education.



The popular American journalist and author, Tom Friedman, has talked about how the world is getting smaller, and what it means for all of us. He said:

“The flattening of the world...has presented us with new opportunities, new challenges, new partners...”

Today at ICEE-2006, we represent about 50 countries.

As educators from these countries, we must work together to find ways to educate the next generation of the world's global engineers.

None of us can do it alone.



In closing, I must tell you recently as I watched on television the matches of the recently concluded 2006 World Cup Soccer Competition.

As I watched the matches spread over a 1-month period, it set me thinking, I thought of the parallellism between the world of soccer and the world of engineering education.

Let me illustrate what I mean by Dr. Henry Kissenger, the famous American Secretary of State, social commentator, and life-long soccer fan.

Just the World Cup started in June this year he wrote an article that appeared in Newsweek magazine.

The article was not about international diplomacy, or the crisis in the Middle East, but about the 2006 World Cup...

And he provided very interesting and highly insightful comments about the World Cup.

He said in the article, and I quote:

“Manipulating a ball by foot...into an opposing goal requires skills...

Teams that concentrate on individual skills...astonish with their virtuosity and abandon...

[but] they sometimes...forget to score goals...

Only the rarest players – like Maradona for Argentina – dribbling past 4 or 5 English players in the 1986 World Cup – are able to score essentially by solitary efforts.

Typically, games are won by team efforts.”

Well, I believe that what is true in soccer is also true in engineering education.

And, I would like to use that parallelism as an encouragement, in fact, a driving force, for us to work together.

If we work alone, we may be able to score if we are a Maradona or a Pele...

But if we work together, we are bound to score many goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

I must especially thank Dr. Arden Bement, the Director of the U.S. National Science Foundation, for his presence here.

Since becoming Director in 2004, Dr. Bement has started a number of important initiatives that have created a lot of excitement at NSF.

He has become an inspiration for all of us.

**Dr. Bement, on behalf of the more than worldwide members of the iNEER Network:
Thank you! Thank you for your support.**

We look forward to your keynote remarks this afternoon.

Thank you.