

Preface

This issue of the *Journal of Applied Polymer Science* is devoted to research being conducted by polymer scientists and engineers at Lehigh University, a group that has a tradition of pursuing basic research on issues of interest to industry. A key focus area, suggested by industry, is the study of water-borne and water-derived polymer systems. Increasingly, the research effort is carried out by multidisciplinary teams from the departments of chemical engineering, chemistry, materials science and engineering, mechanical engineering and mechanics, and physics. These teams often use common model polymers to help facilitate the cross-fertilization of ideas and insights among team members who employ their individual expertise in developing fundamental understanding.

Contributions in this special issue are from participants in the **Polymer Interfaces Center (PIC)**, the **Emulsion Polymers Institute (EPI)**, and the **Center for Polymer Science and Engineering (CPSE)**.

The **PIC** is a National Science Foundation sponsored Industry–University Cooperative Research Center (IUCRC) that was established at Lehigh in 1991. Their goals are to develop versatile method-

ologies for characterizing the interphase region between polymers and substrates and to develop a molecular level understanding of the structural, dynamic, kinetic, and energetic characteristics of the interphase region.

Formed in 1975, the **EPI** is a leader in research on the synthesis and characterization of a broad range of latex polymers, from the ultrafine colloidal materials to the very large spherical and uniform particles useful in immunoassay, and from homogeneous particles to particle systems with complex morphologies and compositional heterogeneities.

Polymer scientists and engineers at Lehigh also belong to an umbrella organization that encompasses both polymer research and graduate studies, namely, the **CPSE**, which was established in 1988. The Center permits graduate students whose interests are not fully satisfied by classical departments to pursue a Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy in Polymer Science and Engineering, with a more customized set of course requirements than exist in any given department.

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