



Preface

The following Special Issue of *The Journal of Molecular Catalysis A: Chemical* consists of the Proceedings of The Fourth San Luis Symposium on Surfaces, Interfaces and Catalysis, a Pan-American Advanced Studies Institute, which took place in Cuernavaca, Mexico, on April 14–23, 2007. This was the fourth in a series of symposia designed to strengthen the links between Latin American and US and European scientists in the areas of surface science and catalysis. The concept was born at a conference in August of 1994 organized to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city of San Luis in Argentina. The conference was mostly financed by the State of San Luis with supporting funds from the Argentinean National Government. The meeting was deemed a great success, more than fulfilling the expectations of the organizers and included attendees from the US, UK and Mexico (as well as from Argentina itself). The quality of the work presented there is reflected in the publication of the conference papers in the leading international journal *Langmuir* (12, 1 (1996)).

A Second San Luis Symposium was organized in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in April of 2000 with financial backing from the US National Science Foundation. There was a substantial increase in international participation, with people attending from the United States, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Japan. New collaborations were established and the proceedings were published in *The Journal of Molecular Catalysis A: Chemical* (167, 1–2 (2001)).

Following the success of these meetings, in particular in successfully bringing together scientists from Latin America and the US and Europe, a permanent Organizing Committee was established to make the San Luis Symposium a periodic event. With the financial help of the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy under their PASI Program, and with additional support from University of Los Andes, Mérida, Venezuela, the Third San Luis Symposium on Surfaces, Interfaces and Catalysis, was held in March of 2004 in Mérida, Venezuela with approximately 70 participants from fourteen countries. The proceedings of this conference were again published in *The Journal of Molecular Catalysis A: Chemical* (228, 1–2 (2005)).

The tradition was continued in Cuernavaca, Mexico where the Fourth San Luis Summer School and Conference on Surfaces, Interfaces and Catalysis, which attracted over 120 attendees from fifteen countries (United States, Canada, Japan, Israel, United Kingdom, Denmark, Spain, Germany, France, Mexico,

Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Venezuela). This was again supported by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy under their PASI Program with additional support from the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos and the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana. In recognition of the support from the PASI program, over 30 PASI Fellowships were awarded to students and junior faculty from Latin America as well as students from the United States to allow them to travel to and attend the conference.

These Proceedings provide a representative sample of the breadth and quality of those contributions. It includes papers in surface physics and chemistry, the properties of interfaces, and the synthesis and characterization of heterogeneous catalysts. The studies illustrate the capabilities of a diverse array of experimental techniques and theoretical methods. In general, they cover problems that involve gas–solid and liquid–solid interfaces, with topics that are at the cutting-edge of catalysis, materials science, environmental chemistry, geochemistry and biophysical chemistry.

The Fifth San Luis Symposium has been scheduled to take place in Brazil in 2010. For more information, please contact the local organizer, Dr. Pedro Nascente (Brazil).

Committees

General San Luis Symposium Organizing Committee:

- Professor Wilfred T. Tysoe (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA)
- Professor Francisco Zaera (University of California, Riverside, USA)
- Professor Giorgio Zgrablich (Universidad Nacional de San Luis, Argentina)

Fourth San Luis Symposium Organizing Committee:

- Professor Wilfred Tysoe - US representative
- Professor Fernando Rojas - Local organizer
- Professor Elsa C. Menchaca-Campos - Local organizer

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