

Young Ambassadors for Chemistry (YAC)

Dr. Lida Schoen, the Netherlands
Educational consultant

Titular member of the Committee on Chemistry Education (IUPAC)

Team member of the Science Across the World programme



Young Ambassadors
for Chemistry in Taiwan



Young Ambassador for
Chemistry in Argentina



Young Ambassadors for
Chemistry in Russia



Young Ambassadors for
Chemistry in Korea

Young Ambassadors for Chemistry (YACs) is a joint project of two global organisations: IUPAC (International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry), the Committee on Chemistry Education (CCE) and the Science Across the World (SAW) programme

(www.scienceacross.org). The collaboration started in



2003 with the organisation of the poster competition 'It's a Chemical World!' for students, aged 10-16, which attracted 402 entries from 24 countries



(www.iupac.org/publications/ci/2003/2506/1_schoen.html).

Building on this successful experience the YAC project was initiated. The aim is to develop public understanding for chemistry through chemistry celebration events for young people in public locations as part of a learner centred approach to chemistry teaching in contexts.

In this project IUPAC and Science Across the World provide the costs for two trainers (a scientist and a linguist) in four countries: Taiwan, Argentina, Russia and South Africa. The visited countries facilitate the local organisation. As the project is just as much about communication than as science the British Council is often interested to take part and/or support.



We train a group of teachers during four days to use the ready made Science Across the World resources around human chemistry to start international collaboration on every day life chemistry: students discuss their results with students in other countries. As the school often is at the hub of the community, opinions shared during learning may filter

well beyond the student and the classroom. We use the practical work in the resources to perform practical work during the public event. The teachers involved are supposed to spread the idea and organise local exchanges and events in the future: **train the trainers model**.

We carried out YAC projects in three locations: Taiwan (Taipei: www.iupac.org/publications/ci/2005/2702/pp2_2003-055-1-050.html), Argentina (Buenos Aires) and Russia (Krasnoyarsk, Siberia: www.iupac.org/publications/ci/2006/2802/pp2_2003-055-1-050.html). We trained 25

(average) teachers (science and language), after which 50 (average) unprepared students performed in a public venue experiments belonging to our two subjects: 'Chemistry in our lives' (three cosmetic products in a coherent line) and 'Talking about genetics around the world' (a long edible DNA model). Roving student reporters asked the public for their opinions about the event and about (their) chemistry education. All three locations were a enormous success, spectacular venues for the YAC event, chemistry in every-day-life contexts, enthusiastic students and teachers, facilitated by dedicated local organisers. As an additional result (international) teaching resources are now available in Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Korean.

Attracted by the Young Ambassadors for Chemistry success, Korea started a YAC event last February in Gwangju, facilitated by the Korean Chemical Society to celebrate the Year of Chemistry (2006). For IUPAC's International Conference on Chemistry Education (ICCE 19) in Seoul, Korea we organised a new poster competition around the conference theme: **Chemistry for Humanity**. This poster competition attracted around 600 entries from all over the world! The winning posters will be on show during the conference. The picture shows a prize winning poster from 2003.

We hope to find more countries interested in the project Young Ambassadors for Chemistry!



Rikako Yoshida
(age 10), Japan
"My World – A
Chemical World"

Taiwan

The first YAC event ever was very successfully organised in November 2004 at NTNU by Prof. Mei-Hung Chiu



and her staff. During the public event under Taipei 101 storm and rain couldn't stop the enthusiasm of 70 students from three different schools. They worked on the chemistry experiments under difficult circumstances as real YACs! The end of the day was spectacular. The students spontaneously started to sing and yell under the eyes of many officials: NTNU,

NSF, Chemical Society, British Council and GlaxoSmithKline. The *United Daily News* published a report of the event!

Last March Prof. Chiu organised an update meeting for teachers that took part in November 2004. Two of the present teachers will host a new two day course in Yi-Lan coming August.



We also worked with 40 teacher students for Science, the next generation teachers that can educate new Young Ambassadors for Chemistry!

Dr. Lida Schoen
Groenburgwal 57
1011 HS Amsterdam
tel: home 0031 20 6225860, mobile: 0031 6 10704697
email: amschoen@xs4all.nl