

2007 Student Summit Report: Miami University students' road trip recap

- Submitted by the TAPPI Student Chapter members from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, USA

Thirteen students from the Miami University TAPPI Student Chapter attended the TAPPI Student Summit this year in Charleston, S.C. After a wonderful 10-hour drive in the Miami University vans, we arrived to beautiful weather and joined one of the largest groups in several years for the evening activities.

The late afternoon Student Chapter Presidents' Meeting allowed for discussion of the problems students and advisors agreed were the biggest problems facing the industry. Chapter presidents also shared advice amongst themselves on meeting topics, attracting students and finding guest speakers.

Afterwards, all of the students were brought together and divided into teams for the weekend, with the first team challenge being the Scavenger Hunt around downtown Charleston. With clues, a digital camera, and a map we set off to find as many of the buildings, statues and other things the clues described. Everyone enjoyed this because it allowed us to explore the city and get to know our new team members from other schools. The final clue led us to Bubba Gump's Shrimp House where we enjoyed a delicious dinner and had time to relax. We ended the evening with a walking ghost tour of Charleston and learned some history about the area.

On Sunday, we heard from people in industry and TAPPI about what companies look for in new recruits, interviewing techniques and tips, the transition from school to work and networking skills. The presentations about what recruiters look for, and interviewing techniques and tips, were among the most helpful, because some of the students from Miami are planning on interviewing for internships and co-ops for next year.

We ended Sunday afternoon with the engineering competition, an event many people enjoyed and some have said they can't wait until next year's competition to try to win again. Dinner that evening allowed us to use the networking tips we had learned earlier in the day because there were several people from industry joining us.

On Monday morning, we left the hotel for tours of Jacobs and MeadWestvaco. Jacobs is an engineering and construction company that does modular building for industry and governmental clients. The MeadWestvaco tour included a tour of a paper machine, chip yard and boiler areas. Both of these tours were great and allowed many of the underclassmen to experience much more of a paper mill than they had before. Overall, everyone enjoyed the weekend and the worst part was the drive home knowing we were going from 75 degree weather to 35 degree weather!