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SPIE leaders promote optics advances and networking at ICTP Winter College

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More than 100 scientists gathered for the 2011 Winter College on Optics recently at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics.

TRIESTE, Italy, and BELLINGHAM, Washington, USA -- SPIE President Katarina Svanberg awarded Best Paper prizes to students from Mexico and South Africa at the recent Winter College in Imaging Science at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste.

Wilfrid Ndebeka (Univ. of Stellenbosch) and Rosalinda Ortiz (Instituto Nacional de Astrofísica, Óptica y Electrónica) won the SPIE prizes. The Winter College was held 31 January through 11 February.

SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics, supports the Winter College, along with the International Commission for Optics, Optical Society of America, European Optical Society, Società Italiana di Ottica e Fotonica, U.S. National Academy of Science, IEEE Photonics Society and Central European Initiative.

The Winter College provides an opportunity to present scientific advances as well as valuable international networking opportunities for students from around the world. This year, SPIE assisted the U.S. National Science Foundation in recruiting U.S. students to attend the college.

At the college, Svanberg recognized members of the Active Learning in Optics and Photonics team (ALOP) as [winners of the 2011 SPIE Educator Award](#), in recognition of the team's achievements in bringing basic optics and photonics training to teachers in the developing world. Under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the ALOP team has presented 13 workshops since the program's launch in 2003 with support from the ICTP, SPIE, UNESCO, and other organizations.

In conjunction with attending the Winter College, Svanberg and SPIE Past President María Yzuel also visited the nearby ICTP/INFN laboratory for ultrafast laser research, one of several programs supported by the Society in conjunction with ICTP. The lab was launched as an anchoring research program at the frontiers of optics to pursue novel research in spectroscopy with quantum cascade lasers, and is available to participants from developing nations.

Housed at the INFN (Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare) and run in collaboration with the Institute for Nanoelectronics, Technische Universität München (TUM), the laboratory is strongly involved in the development of the ultrafast laser systems for the [Fermi@Elettra](#) project.



Above, SPIE President Katarina Svanberg (Lund University Hospital) and Fernando Quevedo, Director of the ICTP, discuss string theory.



From left, above, SPIE Fellows Vasudevan Lakshminarayanan (Univ. of Waterloo), Zohra Ben Lakhdar (Univ. de Tunis), and ICO President Maria Calvo (Univ. Complutense de Madrid) talk during a break at the Winter College.



Above, Wilfrid Ndebeka (Stellenbosch Univ.) receives his Best Paper award from Katarina Svanberg.



Katarina Svanberg, left, congratulates Rosalinda Ortiz (Instituto Nacional de Astrofísica, Óptica y Electrónica) on her Best Paper award.

[SPIE](#), the international society for optics and photonics, was founded in 1955 to advance light-based technologies. Serving more than 180,000 constituents from 168 countries, the Society advances emerging technologies through interdisciplinary information exchange, continuing education, publications, patent precedent and career and professional growth. SPIE annually organizes and sponsors approximately 25 major technical forums, exhibitions and education programs in North America, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific, and supports scholarships, grants and other education programs around the world.

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