

Cornelius Holness
Travel Report

Remote Sensing is the study of an object from a distance and without direct contact. The 36th annual International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS) was held from July 10-15, 2016. The conference, hosted by Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS), took place at the China National Convention Center (CNCC) in Beijing, China. The theme for the conference was “Advancing the Understanding of Our Living Planet”. The purpose of this conference was to promote and discuss new findings and to advance our knowledge of the planet from remote sensing. Remote sensing is the study objects or areas not from a physical location, typically from aircraft or satellites.

The conference was the host to thousands of participants including students, mentors, and professionals from all around the world. There are 56 GRSS chapters around the world and the numbers of members are growing frequently.



Figure 1. The locations of GRSS chapters are shown above. As depicted, GRSS chapters cover several continents.

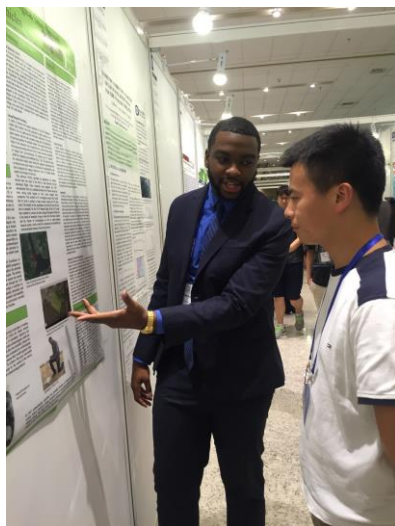
There were 2025 abstracts that were accepted to be presented at IGARSS of these 2025, about 1032 oral and 993 posters that were displayed. Among the researchers, there were about four students from the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) in Ocean, Marine, and Polar Sciences that presented poster presentations. They are Cornelius Holness (Elizabeth City State University), Kamberlin King (Mississippi Valley State University), Ryan Lawrence (University of New Hampshire), and Jenna Seaver

(Haskell Indian Nations University). Dr. Linda Hayden (Principal Investigator of Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research) and Jerome Mitchell (Indiana University) served as session chairs for the conference. I also had the opportunity to meet the former president of IEEE-GRSS Mr. Charles Luther.

Upon arrival in China, we attended the GRSS welcoming reception. During the reception, we were able to network with conference attendees, eat local cuisine, and view a Attending the reception also gave the opportunity to complete and finalize registration along with networking with other colleagues. The plenary session was held on Monday, July 11, 2016. The plenary session gave a formal welcome and gave

distinctive awards to professionals that have been successful in their research. We had four speakers during the plenary session all giving very informal lectures but my personal favorite was Dr. Michael H. Freilich (Director of NASA Earth Science Division) named “From Science to Societal Benefits: NASA’s Earth Observation and Research Programs”. Dr. Freilich spoke about the satellite debuts and the different system diagnosis. Dr. Freilich also explained the four different sectors of NASA’s Earth Science division research, flight, applied sciences, and technology. One interesting topic was how sea level was rising at 3.2mm per year and why did the sea level drop 5mm in 2011. On Tuesday I attended the exhibition session. I was given the opportunity to walk around and network with professionals about their current and previous work and put networking skills to use, some of the industry participants were National Aerospace and Space Administration (NASA), European Space Agency (ESA), and Headwall Photonics. Wednesday was an interesting day as well as I got to see my colleagues present their poster presentations. On that evening, the Technical Committee and Chapter Chairs Dinner were held. The dinner entailed the recent and upcoming events of the GRSS chapters worldwide as well as presenting awards to the members who have tremendously gave contributions to IGARSS.

Thursday was the big day for me because it was my presentation session. Walking around exchanging information among peers as well as explaining my research to other professionals really was the highlight of my day. Thursday evening was the awards banquet. Friday was an adventurous filled day



IGARSS 2016 was an awesome experience. Sharing our travelling experiences with others can motivate action. By expressing our positive insights and educational opportunities, we can influence others on the rewards of hard work. China was definitely an eye-opening experience. I would like to thank the CERSER program and Dr. Linda Hayden for allowing me this opportunity.