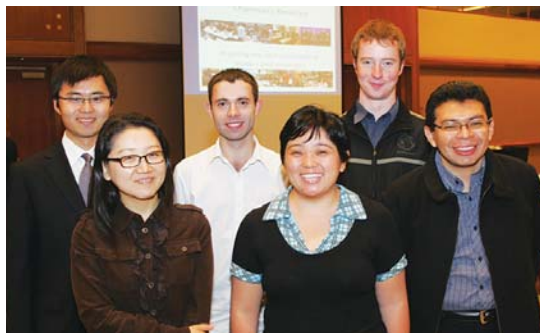


## Optical Society of Chicago Family Science Expo — A Great Success!

The Optical Society of Chicago received some wonderful press for their amazing work at the second annual Family Science Expo, held in Des Plaines, Illinois, USA, on Saturday, 16 October 2010. The Expo drew a crowd of over 400 attendees. Des Plaines Public Library Board President George Magerl, a member of the Optical Society of Chicago, initiated the program at the library, after he noticed the lack of science resources in northern Cook County. He explains, “My experiences participating in similar expos at other venues were excellent. I’ve seen that hands-on experimentation is the key to exciting young children and encouraging them to explore science and engineering as a career. We wanted to give the children of Des Plaines that opportunity, so we started this fair.” In 2009, Mr. Magerl approached the library about hosting the Science Expo. He spoke with exhibitors from the Science Expo put on by the Illinois Institute of Technology, and asked them to participate in the Des Plaines event.

Attendance in 2010 was nearly double that of last year. Mr. Magerl attributes the growth to economic factors and increased television promotion of the event. The exhibit featured displays from the American Institute of Chemical Energy, the Illinois Society of Civil Engineers, the Chicago Section of Women in Engineering, the Optical Society of Chicago, the Structural Engineering Association, Math Counts, and Travel Midwest. Mr. Magerl said that the staff at the Des Plaines library has been wonderful, even selecting books for each exhibit that have similar content so that students have an additional resource when they want to learn more. What a victory for science education!



Front row left to right: Jooeun Im, Lucia Saito, Adalberto Alejo Molina; Back row left to right: Ding Ma, Aram Zeytunyan, Alexander Yulaev.

## Travel Grants Provide Opportunities for Students in Developing Nations

Over thirty students from developing countries, including Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, India, Latvia, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Turkey and Ukraine, were awarded funding in 2010 to assist with travel expenses associated with attending OSA technical meetings. One of these students was **Adalberto Alejo-Molina** (pictured at left), who is pursuing his Ph.D. in Photonic crystals, solitons and Quantum optics at the Instituto Nacional de Astrofisica Optica y Electronica (INAOE) in Puebla, Mexico. Adalberto traveled from Mexico to Rochester, NY, USA to present his paper, “Omnidirectional Band Gaps in a Ternary Metallo-Deilectric Stack” at Frontiers in Optics 2010/Laser Science XXVI (FiO), held 24-28 October 2010. Of his experience at the conference, Adalberto

said, “The opportunity to attend a conference where hot topics in optics are presented is very important, because it helps you to identify possible directions in your own investigations or changes in your line of research. Also, talking with professors who give to you new ideas or enlightening comments about your work is an invaluable experience. On a personal level, you meet other students who could be possible collaborators in the future, and in this way you start to build a network.” Adalberto concluded, “I hope that in the future I can donate to the OSA Foundation, so that other students can travel to conferences or receive grants and have the same experience that I had.”

## Awards

### Inaugural Jean Bennett Memorial Student Travel Grant Presented

**Tongcang Li** of the University of Texas at Austin, USA, was named the first winner of the Jean Bennett Memorial Student Travel Grant for his research paper entitled “Optical Trapping and Cooling of Glass Microspheres.” The grant provides \$1,000 to cover travel expenses to FiO. This new award program was established in memory of Jean M. Bennett, a highly decorated research physicist renowned for her contributions to the studies of optical surfaces and who served as OSA’s first female president. Upon receiving the grant, Tongcang said, “It is a great honor for me to receive the Jean Bennett Travel Grant. This is a great recognition of our research on optical trapping and cooling of glass microspheres toward the quantum limit, and the opportunity to present at FiO provides an important opportunity for me and will help me to become a better scientist. I’ve always wondered if there is anything new at the



Tongcang and Mike Morris, OSFAF Chair