

### “Solvay: Sustainable Chemistry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”

Solvay Specialty Polymers  
Technology Manager

Host: Tim Long



**Abstract:** Solvay is an international chemical and advanced materials company, headquartered in Brussels, Belgium with over 30,000 employees spread across 53 countries. Created in 1863, its founder, Earnest Solvay, was a pioneer of the ammonia-soda process that resulted in an industrially-viable process to make sodium carbonate. Since its beginning, Solvay has been adapting to an ever-changing World for more than 150 years. It has continuously evolved, always building upon a strong heritage of technical excellence, social responsibility, and a spirit of innovation.

Solvay is driven by proud and committed chemists whose aim is to find answers and respond to the challenges of these major megatrends: evolving demography, resource constraints, greater mobility, and the accelerating pace of information and innovation. Our vision is to participate in the global chemical industry and to build a new model of sustainable chemistry that will address these crucial issues while continuing to drive value creation and growth. Solvay assists its customers in innovating, developing, and delivering high-value, sustainable products and solutions that consume less energy and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, optimize the use of resources, and improve the quality of life. Solvay serves diversified global end markets including automotive and aerospace, consumer goods and healthcare, energy and environment, electricity and electronics, building and construction, as well as industrial applications. This presentation will introduce you to Solvay and its Specialty Polymers business unit, as well as provide a sampling of how Solvay is working towards this vision.

**Bio:** Kermit Kwan began his academic career in his home state, at the University of Southern Mississippi, where he graduated with a B.S. degree in Polymer Science and Engineering (1992) under the direction of Prof. Robert Lochhead. Then, he relocated to Blacksburg, Virginia to become a Hokie and to pursue graduate studies at Virginia Tech. He graduated from

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Virginia Tech in 1998 with a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering under the guidance of Prof. Thomas C. Ward, with an emphasis on polymer physical chemistry. Following his graduate studies, Kermit began his industrial career as a Senior Engineer at Dow Corning Corporation (1998) working with silicones, silicates, surface modification, and elastomer reactive extrusions. In 2004, he joined Solvay Specialty Polymers (Alpharetta, GA) as the supervisor and lead scientist of the mechanical testing laboratory within the Polymer Characterization & Analytical Department. Then, in 2006, Kermit became the R&D Technology Manager of that Polymer Characterization & Analytical Department. He served in that role until 2012, when he was appointed as the Technology Manager of the Foams R&D department that he helped to create and establish. Since the beginning of 2016, Kermit Kwan is currently the R&D Program Manager for Solvay's Stimuli-Responsive Polymers program.

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