

Dear Dean Yortsos, Maja,

We are writing to thank you for supporting our organization of a workshop on wireless networks, and to give you a brief report on the event, which we believe was a great success.

The first USC Invited Workshop on Theory and Practice in Wireless Networks was held here on campus on May 20-21, supported primarily through the VSoE Research Innovation Fund, and in small part through the Philip and Cayley MacDonald Early Career Chair Funds.

There were 35 participants that we identified as some of the leading experts in the domain of wireless networks, invited on the basis of their contributions to the field. Highlighting the Viterbi School's unique strengths in this area, John Heidemann from ISI and Urbashi Mitra and Michael Neely from Electrical Engineering participated in the event, besides the organizers (Konstantinos Psounis, Ramesh Govindan and Bhaskar Krishnamachari). Other institutions represented at the workshop included MIT, UC Berkeley, CMU, Michigan, Princeton, Cornell, UCLA, UCSD, Rice, Columbia, EPFL, and Microsoft Research.

The funds for the workshop were used to cover all local expenses for the participants, specifically hotel accommodations, and meals. Participants were charged no registration fee, and only assumed responsibility for their own travel expenses.

The workshop had an unusual format, in that participants were encouraged not to merely report on their own latest research, but rather to participate in a series of discussions on topics of fundamental interest with the aim of closing the gap between theory and experimental work in this area. The theme of this year's workshop was "Trouble in the Air – Dealing with Interference". The workshop included six discussion panels, four of which were devoted to technical issues around this theme - collision-free scheduling, efficient random access, cooperative communication, and medium access in new applications. We also had two panels to debate the questions "what constitutes a useful theoretical result?" and "what constitutes a useful experimental result?". Besides these panels, we had four keynote speakers presenting both theoretical and experimental perspectives - Jean Walrand from UC Berkeley, Ed Knightly from Rice, John Baras from University of Maryland, and Peter Steenkiste from CMU. We also had a brief poster session along with a reception where USC Ph.D. students got to present their work to the visiting participants. The full detailed program of the workshop along with videos, audio and slides from the event are available online at <http://anrg.usc.edu/tpwn>

We collected some feedback from the participants. Here are some of the comments we received from them:

"Very interactive and informative ... a great format"

"...an extremely fun and informative experience"

"[I] liked the fact that it was a group of senior/experienced people, raising the talks to a much higher level than on regular conferences/workshops" "Great crowd of people."

"The basic idea of a 'discussion space' between the two communities is extremely useful"

"I like the idea of using such workshops to bring communities within networking that have been historically disparate"

"... great initiative. I liked very much the panel format, which allowed us to have many discussions."

"Excellent workshop.... Do it again!"

(There were also several constructive suggestions for the format and content of future workshops if this series were to be continued.)

What particularly facilitated the amazing interactive participation from the attendees was the venue - the Ming Hsieh Boardroom in RTH. The round-table seating permitted a free-flowing active conversation throughout the event.

Beyond helping to advance research in the area by bringing theoreticians and experimentalists together, the workshop also clearly raised USC's already high profile and visibility within the community as well. For some participants, it was their first visit to our campus. Several commented on how amazing it was that the event was funded and supported by the Viterbi School.

With your support, we hope be able to continue this workshop as an annual event. We also believe this event might offer a possible model/template for workshops in other areas that can bring visibility and prestige to our school.

Sincerely,

Bhaskar Krishnamachari, Konstantinos Psounis, Ramesh Govindan