

**2006 Society of Physics Students New England Regional Conference – Final Report**  
*Hosted by the Southern Connecticut State University and Yale University SPS Chapters*

On Friday, April 7th and Saturday, April 8th, 2006 the Society of Physics Students New England Regional Conference was hosted at Yale University and Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), respectively. Over 120 students, faculty and guests from New England, New York and New Jersey attended the conference. The Society of Physics Students (SPS), a division of the American Institute of Physics (AIP), is an organization of undergraduate students in physics and related fields. Membership is open to any college undergraduate with an interest in physics, not merely physics majors.

The schedule for the two days included talks by noted physicists, an informal panel discussion with industry and academic professionals, a student poster presentation, and informal discussions among members of the participating SPS chapters as well as other activities.

The conference opened on Friday afternoon at Yale with the first event being an informative Question and Answer Session on preparing for and applying to graduate school lead by Dr. Steven Girvin, Yale. This was followed by an interesting presentation by Dr. Douglas Stone, Yale, entitled “Genius and Genius<sup>2</sup>: Planck, Einstein and the Birth of Quantum Theory”. On Friday evening a Pizza “Get-Together” was held at SCSU, where the movie “Elegant Universe” was shown with Dr. S. James Gates in attendance. Dr. Gates is one of the featured physicists in the “Elegant Universe.”

The Saturday program contained the majority of conference activities and thus ran from the morning to the late afternoon. The day began with two welcome addresses. The first was delivered by Dr. Selase Williams, the Provost of SCSU. This was followed by a very entertaining address, with student participation, by Dr. Gary White, the Society of Physics Students National Director. After this, the first Keynote Speaker, Dr. S. James Gates Jr. spoke on "Is Cosmic Concordance in Concomitance with Superstring/M-theory?" Dr. Gates is currently the John S. Toll Professor of Physics at University of Maryland, College Park. He is known for his work on supersymmetry, supergravity, and superstring theory. The second Keynote Speaker, Dr. Michio Kaku followed immediately with a talk entitled “Parallel Worlds: The Multiverse, Time Travel, Hyperspace, and Escaping the Big Freeze.” Dr. Kaku is currently the Henry Semat Chair and Professorship in theoretical physics at City College of New York. He has written nine books including several New York Times Best Sellers and is the co-creator of string field theory, a branch of String Theory. Both of these speakers are nationally renowned physicists and were a huge draw for many of the students who visited from across the Northeast. After Dr. Kaku’s talk, there was a working lunch, where regional chapters discussed their past, present, and future activities in an open forum. In the afternoon, Dr. Mark Reed, Yale, gave a talk on “The Future of Electronics.” Saturday’s events closed with an Industry and Academic Panel presentation on “Careers in Physics” followed by an engaging Question and Answer Session. Throughout the course of the Saturday program, a student research poster presentation was held with 18 presentations being displayed.

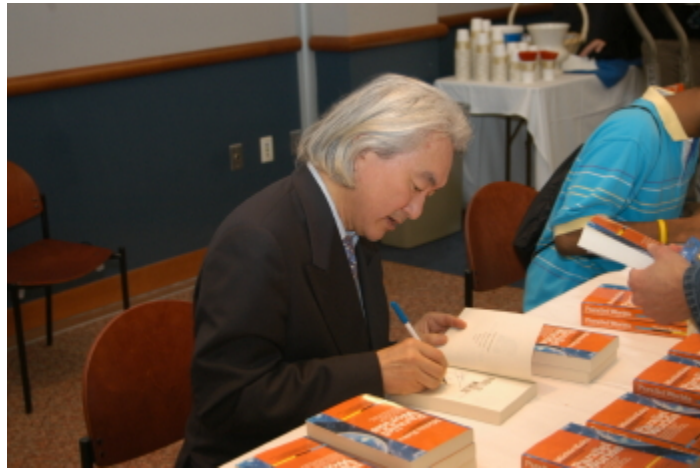
The two-day event was planned, organized, and implemented by the SCSU Physics Club, a chapter of the Society of Physics Students. It took approximately seven month of intense work to go from the initial ideas to the realization of the conference. Through

several fundraising events and the help of many other SCSU organizations, the SCSU Physics Club was able to raise over \$8,000 to fully fund the event and allow all participants to attend the conference without cost. Several student members and faculty associated with the SCSU Physics Club were crucial in seeing the fruition of the conference including Dr. Christine Broadbridge, the New England Regional Councilor for SPS, Dr. Matthew Enjalran, the SCSU Physics Club Advisor, Thomas Sadowski, co-chairperson of the conference planning committee, Charles Tirrell, co-chairperson of the conference planning committee, Jacquelynn McGuinness, past president of the SCSU Physics Club and Daniel Urban, current president of the SCSU Physics Club.

### **2006 SPS New England Regional – Photos**

Larger versions of all photos can be found at

<http://www.southernct.edu/departments/physics/SpsZone1/conference.php>



Dr. Michio Kaku signing copies of his book for SPS members



Dr. S. James Gates giving his keynote address



SPS Members participating in the Research Poster Presentations



An overall view of the 2006 SPS New England Regional Conference



The Industry and Academic Panel on "Careers in Physics" followed by a Question and Answer Session



Dr. Gary White, the SPS National Director, giving his opening address on the “Physics of Spandex”



Dr. Christine Broadbridge, the SPS Zone 1 Councilor, welcoming the visiting schools and guests