

This Just In...

Late breaking news from the global geothermal community

GRC Finds Their Passports

by Steve Ponder, Interim Executive Director

It has been almost ten years since the GRC last travelled to foreign soil to present a workshop. That was to Morelia, Mexico, in 2003. This changed in March when the GRC was asked to present a workshop in **Bandung, Indonesia**.

The GRC received a referral via Dr. Roland Horne, the president of the International Geothermal Association (IGA), to contact Dr. Suryantini at the Institut Teknik Bandung (ITB) in west Java. This university has an active geothermal program and a graduate program for geothermal scientists. We jumped at the chance to present a two-day GRC Workshop before the 2nd ITB Geothermal Workshop on March 6th.

This format was ideal for a GRC presentation since the infrastructure for our workshop was already in place. We expected 30-50 attendees but were very pleased with a final count of 110 attendees, including many students and corporate representatives, exceeding our expectations. This was about half of all attendees at the larger ITB meeting.

The workshop "Exploration Drilling and Early Stage Geothermal Reservoir Characterization" was presented by Tony Menzies of Chevron, Paul von Hirtz of Thermochem, Paul Brophy of EGS, and Louis Capuano, Jr. of Capuano Engineering. I attended the meeting as the team administrative leader and chief cheer leader for the GRC. This was a very talented group with over 173 years of geothermal work experience. They all did a great job presenting their material, answering numerous questions, and getting to know the ITB students and the representatives of the Indonesian geothermal community.

Travel for this 8-day trip was brutal; 21 hours of air travel, ten hours in airports and 4 hours of surface travel. Double those numbers to complete the round trip. Did I mention going through a 15 hour time

change twice in one week?

Bandung is the third largest city in Indonesia (population of 2.5 million) and is located 110 miles southeast of Jakarta. Traffic congestion makes this a 3-4 hour drive each way from the Jakarta airport to Bandung. In the end it was all worth it.

Most of the student attendees at the GRC workshop were students of the ITB Geothermal Masters Program, which has been tasked with educating their students in order to support geothermal development in Indonesia. This program is supported in part, by United States Agency for International Development (USAID)



Attendees at the 2nd ITB Geothermal Workshop with the GRC representatives. PHOTO COURTESY ITB.



The organizers of the ITB Workshop and the presenters of the GRC course. Back row: (left to right) Dr. Ali Ashat, Steve Ponder, Paul Brophy, Paul von Hirtz, and Tony Menzies. Front row: Dr. Nenny Miryani Saptadji, Lou Capuano, Jr., and Dr. Eng. Suryantini). PHOTO COURTESY ITB.

scholar awards, the University of Auckland, and the Indonesia state-owned oil and gas company PT Pertamina.

I must say the most exciting part of the whole trip was the interaction with the Master students. Indonesia is almost 80 percent Muslim and most of the women’s dress reflects their religious beliefs. Watching a few minutes of an ITB intramural all girls basketball game, I noticed some players wore a burqa with headscarf while others wore more traditional basketball uniforms.

The students were very attentive and had many lively questions. At a minimum they learned many of the basic lessons in geothermal energy despite English being a second language. In the future, an alternative to his two-day event could be a longer GRC workshop to allow for more detailed presentations and a chance to cater to students’ need and abilities.



The distinctive rooftop of the Institut Teknik Bandung. PHOTO BY PAUL BROPHY.

We agreed with the ITB leadership that we should explore ways in which to collaborate. In addition to future workshops, we thought that student exchanges and scholarships should be considered and there could be a special session at the GRC Annual Meeting dedicated to Indonesian geothermal development. The GRC could also put on a similar program at the Indonesia Geothermal Association Annual Meeting. The key to this collaboration will be getting to know each other better and looking for opportunities to work together.

I want to thank our primary hostess from Indonesia, Dr. Eng. Suryantini and on-site leader, Dr. Nenny Miryani Saptadji for making this event a success and for making our team feel so welcome. Also thanks to the student helpers



GRC Board member Paul Brophy with some of the students attending the Institut Teknik Bandung (ITB) conference. PHOTO BY PAUL BROPHY.

who were assigned to each of the team members to help us get through each day. Thanks to our team of presenters who were always responsive to deadlines and made great presentations. GRC Board member Joe Moore helped develop the program and was always available for advice prior to

our departure. Finally, thanks to all the ITB Master students; without them we are just a bunch of old guys sitting around talking to each other. You are the future of the geothermal industry.

There are important lessons to be learned from our travels. The trip to Indonesia is another step in our mission to educate and learn from our world wide membership. There is potential for future GRC workshops/educational missions in developing geothermal markets like Chile, Kenya and Turkey. We need to develop a group of speakers to communicate the benefits of geothermal energy around the world. ■



For more photos from the GRC workshop in Indonesia go to: <http://goo.gl/8aYfU> or scan this QR code.