

Symposium focuses on oxides for energy

Cornell University

By [Anne Ju](#) [1]

There's no time to lose to create a world with better, more efficient and renewable sources of energy, said Harriet Kung, Ph.D. '91, the Department of Energy's (DOE) associate director of science for basic energy sciences, during a conference at Cornell.

"It takes a while for new science and technologies to be enacted by the marketplace," said Kung, the keynote speaker at the Energy Materials Symposium, Aug. 12.

The Energy Materials Center at Cornell (EMC²) invited several speakers to give sessions on a wide range of topics dealing with the conference's theme, "Oxides for Energy Applications." Subjects ranged from novel inorganic and organic electrode materials for sustainable and greener lithium-ion batteries, to combinatorial searching for semiconducting oxides.

Kung thanked Cornell for its numerous scientific partnerships that design energy-efficient technologies. She gave an overview of the DOE's role in this process, and also shared data on everything from the greenhouse effect to the increase of carbon dioxide emissions.

Speakers included two Cornell experts in energy-related fields. David A. Muller, professor of applied and engineering physics, talked about his work in chemical imaging of fuel-cell catalyst nanoparticles, with the goal of atomic-level understanding of how fuel cells can be made more stable and longer lasting.

Geoff Coates, professor of chemistry and chemical biology, described his research into improving a key component of fuel cells called the polymer electrolyte membrane, an ion conductive medium separating two electrodes. Coates is exploring the relatively new alkaline anion exchange membranes.

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