

## **The US East Coast Convention, Washington, DC**

9th and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2010

The theme of the US East Coast convention was 'US-India Collaboration: KIAP and Beyond'. In keeping with the spirit of the theme, the alumni convention showcased and celebrated IIT Kanpur's 50 years of contributions to academia, industry and entrepreneurship in India and the USA. On this occasion, IITK honored and acknowledged the collaborations and contributions of the US government and other institutions towards its creation and success.

The convention explored emerging opportunities to extend this symbiotic relationship between the US and India on globalization of Education, Energy, Environment and Entrepreneurship. There was a very enthusiastic and energetic group of participants, from the earliest of the KIAP participants and KIAP-era Indian faculty members, to current IITK faculty members and administrators to representatives of the Indian and the US Governments, and students from the first batch to almost the most recent graduates.

The first part of the program was hosted by Prof. Sanjay G. Dhande, Director, IITK. In the opening session, Prof. Dhande and Prof. Anandakrishnan felicitated the representatives of all the nine universities who formed the KIAP consortium. It was a privilege to have the second KIAP program director, Dr. Robert Green, present at the event. This was followed by several very engaging panel discussions.

The Indian Ambassador to the United States, Mrs. Meera Shankar hosted a lunch at the Indian Embassy for the KIAP participants, KIAP-era faculty members, IITK representatives, and Distinguished Alumni and select invited guests, including representatives of the US Government.

The highlights of the alumni event included: a) recorded messages from the MIT President, Dr. Susan Hockfield and by the Secretary of State, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, b) keynote addresses by Mrs. Meera Shankar; Ambassador; Robert Blake, Assistant Secretary of State; Mr. Aneesh Chopra, CTO of the US Government; Mr. Jim Moran, Representative from Virginia; and Dr. John Hamre, former Deputy Secretary of Defense, c) honoring of KIAP participants and KIAP era faculty members, d) honoring of IITK's Distinguished Alumni, e) honoring of IITK@50 awardees, f) discussion of Vision 2020 and g) the Saturday evening entertainment by The Capitol Steps.

"I thank you and your colleagues for organizing such a marvelous conference, reunion, and celebration. I was delighted to reconnect with several of my old friends from the IITK faculty, KIAP visiting faculty and students of the late 1960s -- and also to make new friends. I also really enjoyed meeting some former KIAP visiting faculty who were at IITK before me or after me. And I appreciated the perspectives on IITK's current status and the outlook and diverse plans for its future. All the conference sessions were excellent."

- Prof. Don Wilhelm

"The convention was as memorable for the super-annuated faculty as their stay at IITK. All our remembrances of the Old Era flashed in front of our mental screen like a dream-video. It was wonderful to meet our good old friends and colleagues as well as students who are flourishing in their academic as well as social careers. We, the faculty, are indeed extremely grateful to the Alumni Association for organizing such an event, an event which will remain in our heart for all our lives."

- Prof. Y.R.  
Waghmare

"Having so many former students come and introduce themselves and their families and reminisce about me having taught brought a lump to my throat. At least two alumni wives could not believe how good my Hindi was! I enjoyed participating in the program; the sort that I expect only IITK alumni capable of organizing! The arrangements were excellent, as was the food. And to have my hotel expenses taken care of and to be picked up and dropped off at the airport was the icing on the cake."

- Dr. Vijay Stokes

The convention has already produced some results. All the panelists of the Entrepreneurial Panel, led by Mr. Pradeep Wahi, have been meeting regularly since the convention and plan to propose, in the near future, a series of activities to promote Entrepreneurship among IIT alumni. Dr. Sanjeev K. Aggarwal, DRPG, is creating Google groups for the KIAP participants and KIAP-era faculty and Distinguished Alumni to help connect them with each other. Several alumni and faculty members have provided feedback for Vision 2020 and have indicated their willingness to contribute to it. Mr. Satish Kulkarni continues to keep us informed on how we can work with the Department of State on the Indo-US collaboration in education. Mr. Sudhi Kulkarni, Mr. Raj Bhattarai and Mr. Arun Kumar are working with Dr. Vijay Stokes to help fill out the missing sections of the IITK history book project.