Each month ACN asks a team member to provide a profile of themselves that takes us behind the scene on what are the influences that encouraged their career choices.

**September 2014**

**Q&A with Eh Hau Pan**

Eh Hau Pan (Pan to all) was born in Malaysia, shifted to Singapore. He first visited Australia in 1999 to undertake an Overseas Exchange program at the School of Chemistry at the University of Melbourne. It would be another five years (2004) until Pan would leave Singapore to establish his life in Sydney Australia.

It was to UNSW’s Faculty of Engineering (Industrial Chemistry) that Pan undertook his Bachelor of Engineering, building on from the Diploma in Chemical Process Technology he had completed in Singapore. In 2006 Pan attained a UNSW Summer Scholarship and studied at the Centre for Advanced Macromolecular Design. Completing this, Pan moved to the University of Sydney as a research assistant at the Key Centre for Polymer Colloids (KCPC) under the directorship of Professor Sébastien Perrier. In 2013 Pan returned to UNSW to take up the position of Technical Officer for both the Australian Centre for NanoMedicine and the Centre for Advanced Macromolecular Design.

**What was your inspiration in becoming an industrial chemist?**

When I was young, I liked tearing things apart (some would say “breaking things”) to see the inside and how it worked. Luckily, the many things I “investigated” were easily repaired (or repurchased!). Curiosity is in my blood, I want to know how things work and why it works in a certain way. I’m very systematic, rational and inquisitive! These are great traits for an industrial chemist.

**What inspires you about ACN?**

The people of ACN are inspirational, and committed to finding solutions for hard to treat diseases. The diversity of research and the application of the research undertaken at ACN is brilliant. For example, in the Chemical Engineering part of ACN, I work closely with A/Prof Cyrille Boyer and Dr Hien Duong. They in turn work closely with ACN researchers in medicine and science. The multidisciplinary teams and the outcomes produced is inspirational. In the twelve months I’ve been in this role, I’ve had the opportunity to associate with remarkable people regardless of them being part of the Faculty of Engineering, Science or Medicine.
Tell us about your work as a Technical Officer:
When I was in KCPC, I was working with paint formulations and encapsulations of iron oxide particles with industrial collaborators. Apart from industrial research projects, I also managed the chemical inventory of the group, ordering equipment and chemicals for the lab.

At my current job at ACN and CAMD, I am in charge of both the research and instrumentation labs for the Chemical Engineering group. I pretty much look after most of the instruments, especially the Gel Permeation Chromatography (GPC). Successes in troubleshooting research or mechanical problems are some of the most satisfying moments. When a piece of equipment is down, there are significant repercussions, especially in large groups. Getting the equipment back-up and the researchers back to the bench is a great outcome. I am also in charge of the TGA and DSC machines that belong to the School of Chemical Engineering. I have responsibility to train new users and ensure they are confident to use the machines independently. Purchasing chemicals and equipment are also part of the job.

I do lab inductions for new students, postdocs or staffs that join the CAMD and ACN families. Thus, I always have to be up to date with the OHS at both the school and university level.

At which upcoming conferences have or are you attending in 2014/2015.
This year (2014) I was part of the organising committee for ACNs 5th International Nanomedicine conference held in July. I very much enjoyed meeting researchers from the 22 countries that attended the three day event at beautiful Coogee Beach. In August I was fortunate to visit Santa Barbara (California) to meet with the team at Wyatt and spend time looking at the light scattering equipment they have developed and how we at ACN and CAMD can get better outcomes from our research. In 2015 I’m looking forward to again heading to Coogee Beach for NanoMed. This is such a good conference and given its small, it’s easy to chat to all attendees...including the plenary.

How do you spend your spare time?
Cooking, eating, travelling and playing badminton! I love food and love trying the food of different countries. In Sydney, or Australia generally, we are bless with fresh produce and have so many opportunities to try different cuisines. It’s great that the ACN and CAMD members are very social so there is often a social activity at a new restaurant, or a BBQ down the beach. The only thing better than the Sydney restaurant scene is travelling and enjoying the food first hand! But Tuesday night and Sunday afternoon, that’s all about badminton.

Which profession would you choose if you were not a scientist?
Oh I have a few options. It would be so much fun to be a travel “reporter” for a company like Lonely Planet. What fun travelling the world and exploring new places. Or maybe a career in the diplomatic service. The reality is, I’m working in a great job with great people.