U.S. – Arab Chamber Organizes “Pumps & Pipes” Seminar in the United Arab Emirates

At the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition & Conference, Innovative Program Combines Aerospace, Medicine, and Oil & Gas Sectors

H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, Chairman of ADIPEC: "The Pumps & Pipes Visit Was Amazing, as Expected."

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates – The National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC), in collaboration with the Houston - Abu Dhabi Sister City Association, recently led a Pumps & Pipes delegation to the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition & Conference (ADIPEC). This is the first-ever visit by Pumps & Pipes to the UAE, a trip that was made possible at the invitation of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

Pumps & Pipes is a Houston-based initiative that brings together professionals in three of that city’s leading sectors – medicine (cardiovascular), oil & gas, and aerospace – and inspires dialogue aimed at identifying concepts that could be of value to these three industries and beyond. The initiative was founded by professionals in seemingly disparate fields: Dr. Alan Lumsden, Professor and Chairman of Cardiovascular Surgery and Medical Director for the Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, and Dr. William Kline, Subsurface and Drilling Manager at ExxonMobil. Doctors Lumsden and Kline were

The Pumps & Pipes delegation and VIP guests included (left to right): Dr. Alan Lumsden, Debakey Heart Institute; Adil Noman, ExxonMobil; H.E. Saif Ahmed Al Ghaflie, Abu Dhabi Gas Development Company; Dr. Joy Kelly, Jacobs; Omar Ahmed Suwaina Al Suwaidi, ADNOC; Jamal Bafagih, NUSACC; and Dr. William Kline and Paul Theys, ExxonMobil.
joined at ADIPEC by Dr. Joy Kelly, Vice President and Deputy General Manager of Jacobs. Dr. Kelly is also Deputy Program Manager with NASA’s Johnson Space Center’s Engineering, Technology & Science Contract.

"The opportunity to bring the collaboration objectives of Pumps & Pipes to the world-class ADIPEC forum is greatly appreciated," said Dr. Kline. "The support of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and the enabling assistance provided by the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Houston - Abu Dhabi Sister City Association were invaluable."

Dr. Lumsden, the medical director, noted, "Pumps & Pipes was founded on the vision of neighbors sharing views and experiences. We appreciate the opportunity to bring these conversations to several forums in the Arab world, including ADIPEC, the Abu Dhabi Higher Colleges of Technology, and the Lloyds Registry (LR) Roundtable. These engagements affirmed that Houston and Abu Dhabi truly are Sister Cities across a variety of common interests."

"The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce was very pleased to serve as an Organizing Partner of this event," noted David Hamod, the Chamber’s President & CEO. "This delegation highlights the work of NUSACC’s office in Houston, headed by Director Jamal Bafagih, and it is the most recent initiative of our Chamber to strengthen the U.S. - UAE commercial relationship."

Groundwork for this delegation was laid back in May during a visit to Houston by senior officials from Abu Dhabi during the annual Offshore Technology Conference (OTC). That oil & gas delegation was headed by H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, ADNOC Director of Strategy & Coordination, and it included the Honorable Michael Corbin, U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, H.E. Saif Ahmed Al Ghafl, CEO of Abu Dhabi Gas Development Company Ltd (Al Hosn Gas), and other dignitaries from ADNOC and UAE agencies. The May visit to Houston also engaged H.E. Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE’s Ambassador to the United States, who walked the floor of the OTC and took advantage of the visit to meet with business leaders in Houston.
Pumps & Pipes Briefing at ADIPEC

The main Pumps & Pipes briefing was held at the Middle East Petroleum Club. The briefing was attended by numerous dignitaries, including but not limited to U.S. Ambassador Michael Corbin, H.E. Saif Ahmed Al Ghafli, CEO of the Abu Dhabi Development Company, Al Hosn Gas, and Mr. Omar Ahmed Suwaina Al Suwaidi, ADNOC’s Deputy Director for Strategy & Coordination Directorate.

Opening remarks were provided by NUSACC Houston Director Jamal Bafagih, who expressed his deep appreciation to ADNOC for the opportunity to present at ADIPEC. The three Pumps & Pipes Directors then outlined their mission of fostering technological innovation through collaboration among the energy, medicine, and aerospace industries. Pumps and Pipes offers a discussion and collaboration platform for companies in these industries to share ideas, applications, and to solve shared challenges.

The visit by Pumps & Pipes to Abu Dhabi was made possible courtesy of a special invitation by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company.

Pumps & Pipes was born out of the realization that the cardiovascular and oil & gas disciplines are both technically in the flow assurance business (human body and earth). Fortunately for experts in both industries, they do not compete with each other, allowing a unique opportunity for collaboration. Experts in both disciplines work through long, thin tubes, depend on imaging and navigation, and place a high priority on keeping their respective conduits clean and intact.

The cross industry collaboration introduced by Pumps & Pipes has contributed valuable business results since its founding. Some examples of successful innovation resulting from these cross industry collaborative efforts include a new mitral valve simulator (oil & gas assisting cardiovascular researchers) and real time imaging of flow through a simulated gravel pack (cardiovascular innovators assisting oil & gas).

Yet another example is when Baker Hughes’ discussion of open-hole swell packers at a Pumps & Pipes meeting led to the idea of using swelling polymers to stop leaking from
aneurism repairs. Other past meeting participants have also traded ideas on multi-lateral junctions, pipeline inspection, visualization, and navigation.

“We invite more cross-industry collaboration,” said Saif Al Ghafli, CEO of Al Hosn Gas, “and I would like to thank the National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Houston Abu Dhabi Sister City Association for arranging these presentations and discussions. These entities have always showed tremendous support to ADNOC in both Houston and Abu Dhabi.”

Later, Dr. Kline also gave a presentation to visitors at the ExxonMobil stand at ADIPEC. Noted Paul Theys, President of Exxon (Al Khalij) Inc., “The NUSACC initiative to showcase Pumps & Pipes in Abu Dhabi enabled attendees to grasp the importance of combining research and technology into innovative opportunities, strengthening U.S. and Emirati business and economic cooperation.”

About ADIPEC

ADIPEC, held under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, is ranked among the top three energy events in the world. One of the most prominent energy officials involved with ADIPEC since its founding, H.E. Ali Rashed Al Jarwan, CEO of Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Company (ADMA-OPCO), said, “The first ever ADIPEC event was held 30 years ago, hosting around 200 attendees only, including exhibitors. Today, ADIPEC has grown exponentially, drawing around 2,000 exhibitors and more than 70,000 local, regional, and international visitors from around the world. We are very proud to be associated with this event from the very beginning.”

During ADIPEC 2013, some $5 billion worth of business deals were signed. Figures are not yet available for ADIPEC 2014, but similar or higher numbers are expected.

“ADIPEC is a great annual opportunity for attendees who come to renew their commitment to the industry, meet with business partners or future ones, or just to keep themselves up to date with the latest technologies available in the energy industry,” noted H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, Chairman of ADIPEC 2014 and Director of Strategy & Coordination at ADNOC. “Our people at ADNOC work around the clock to ensure that each year’s show meets and exceeds attendees’ expectations.”
The U.S. Pavilion at ADIPEC recorded the largest ever number of companies exhibiting at the event, with over 100 companies registered from around the United States – compared to 62 U.S. companies last year.

ADIPEC-Related Events

The Pumps & Pipes delegation attended ADNOC’s welcome reception on the eve of ADIPEC’s opening day. H.E. Abdullah Nasser Al Suwaidi, Director General of ADNOC, welcomed top energy executives from around the world.

The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Abu Dhabi held a kickoff breakfast on opening day that included the Pumps & Pipes delegation. Mr. John Habib, Secretary of AmCham Abu Dhabi, gave welcoming remarks and introduced the keynote speakers, including Hon. Michael Corbin, U.S. Ambassador to UAE, Mr. Maurizio La Noce, CEO of Mubadala Oil & Gas, and Khaled Al Marzouqi, Senior Vice President of Technical Services at Dolphin Energy.

The official inauguration of ADIPEC was led by H.H. Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, National Security Advisor and Deputy Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council. Sheikh Hazza conducted a tour of the exhibition, accompanied by H.H. Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Court, H.E. Abdullah Nasser Al Suwaidi of ADNOC, and senior UAE and foreign dignitaries. The official entourage also toured the U.S. Pavilion, led by Ambassador Michael Corbin and Ms. Joan Williams, Deputy Director of Programs with Kallman Worldwide, the U.S. Pavilion organizer.

A highlight of ADIPEC for the Pumps & Pipes delegation was the ADIPEC Awards Gala Dinner, sponsored by ADNOC, at the seven-star Emirates Palace Hotel. Awards were presented to winners in seven categories under the overall theme of “Celebrating Innovation and Commitment to Excellence in the Energy Sector.”

H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, ADIPEC 2014 Chairman, noted, "The ADIPEC awards offer an excellent representation of the ground-breaking work in the region. Winners of the awards
have demonstrated innovation and excellence, and by recognizing these achievements, we disseminate valuable information to all stakeholders in the energy sector."

The Pumps & Pipes delegates participated in an ADNOC-supported roundtable hosted by LR Energy.

Educational Programs

On the sidelines of ADIPEC, the Pumps & Pipes team was invited to a Roundtable Breakfast hosted by LR Energy on Crossover Technologies. The discussion focused on "Integration of 21st Century Silicon Valley Dynamics into a 20th Century Hydrocarbons Industry." Industry experts – representing such groups as ADNOC, Mubadala, Global Foundries, Lockheed Martin, Maersk, and SEHA, the Abu Dhabi Health Services Company – discussed crossover technologies, collaboration, innovation, and the potential personnel crisis facing the energy industry with rising numbers of experienced workers retiring in the next ten years.

The Pumps & Pipes delegation was also invited to deliver a lecture to over sixty engineering students at the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT). HCT operates as a system of separate campuses for male and female students in urban and rural locations across five emirates, with its headquarters in Abu Dhabi. Approximately 20,000 students attend 17 technology-enhanced campuses in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Dubai, Fujairah, Madinat Zayed, Ras Al Khaimah, Ruwais and Sharjah. HCT programs are designed to meet the employment needs of the UAE and to support Emirati students in becoming innovative and work-ready.

Dr. Salem Salem, Chairman of Mechanical Engineering Technology at HCT, said, "It is not always that we get such opportunities for our students, and I would like to thank the U.S. -
Arab Chamber and the visitors from Houston for sparing time to visit HCT to deliver this lecture. We hope that our students will be inspired by what they have learned today.”

Noted H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, ADIPEC Chairman, ”The UAE places great emphasis on continuing the path towards a diversified, knowledge-based economy. Therefore, programs such as Pumps & Pipes are the type of initiatives that we seek to integrate into our future outlook. We are hoping especially that the Pumps & Pipes educational briefings for students will help spark a desire in our youth to pursue the technical fields our country needs for the future.”

Visit to ADMA-OPCO

The Pumps & Pipes delegation made presentations at an ADNOC subsidiary, the Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Company (ADMA-OPCO), where delegation members were received by the CEO, H.E. Ali Rashed Al Jarwan.

At the conclusion of the Pumps & Pipes presentation there, Al Jarwan stated, “On behalf of ADMA and my team, I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Jamal Bafagih, Director of the National U.S. Arab Chamber of Commerce in Houston, and the Pumps & Pipes team...
for organizing the visit to our offices. This was a tremendous opportunity for me and my team to learn from the visiting experts about collaboration among three important and different industries.”

Al Jarwan continued, “The energy sector is an ever growing industry, and collaborative initiatives such as the Pumps & Pipes program help to introduce new ideas to develop new technologies.” He concluded, “Innovations foster on the boundaries of variations in several professionals’ thoughts and are strongly bounded by a one-team concept to solve major challenges in a faster time frame with amazingly cost effective solutions. Pumps and Pipes examples are all around creative thinking.”

The UAE’s Cultural Heritage

The United Arab Emirates boasts a rich Islamic heritage that has been strongly influenced by its unique desert and oasis environment, so no trip to Abu Dhabi would be complete without a visit to the world-famous Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and a desert safari trip. The visitors from Houston were offered a glimpse of the local culture and expressed their admiration for the culture, diversity, and tolerant nature of the Emirati people.

Dr. Joy Kelly, Vice President and Deputy General Manager of Jacobs, noted, "I am deeply appreciative of the generosity and hospitality shown to us throughout our visit. The
Chamber’s efforts to arrange the visit and to show us some of the local culture were delightful. Everyone was very welcoming, and the exchange of ideas was very motivating.”

Concluded H.E. Ali Khalifa Al Shamsi, ADIPEC Chairman, “We respect what Houston has done to revolutionize the energy industry since its very early days. ADNOC, as a leading world energy producer, will continue to engage industry leaders in that city and elsewhere to keep abreast of the latest available technologies. I would like to extend my deep gratitude to the Pumps & Pipes team, the National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce, and the Houston - Abu Dhabi Sister City Association for helping to organize this program in Abu Dhabi. We look forward to future collaboration between ADNOC and these partner organizations.”