



Ricardo Santos: Applied Technology Specialist

Editor's Note: This month, we continue our series of columns profiling the background and expertise of TJ's editorial board members. These volunteer members spend long hours overseeing the peer review process and contributing to TJ. TAPPI would like to express its gratitude to the editorial board members for their hard work and willingness to share their expertise with the forest products community.

– Monica Shaw, Editorial Director

TAPPI and the *TAPPI Journal* (TJ) editorial staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome the newest member of the TJ editorial board, Dr. Ricardo Balleirini Santos. An Applied Technology Specialist with MeadWestvaco (MWV), Ricardo is part of the company's corporate group and is assigned to all mills in the USA and abroad. His main focus for the past two years has been MWV's bleached paperboard mill in Covington, VA, USA.

A native of São Simão, São Paulo state, Brazil, Ricardo holds a B.S. in Forest Engineering (2006) and an M.S. in Pulp and Paper Production (2008) from the Universidade Federal de Viçosa in Brazil. He next studied at North Carolina State University (NCSU) in Raleigh, NC, USA, where he received a Ph.D. in February 2012, with a dissertation titled "Influence of lignin structure on chemical bioconversion processes."

As an Applied Technology Specialist at MWV, Ricardo focuses on troubleshooting and optimization of pulp mill, bleaching, and recovery processes. He has been published in a variety of journals, including TJ, on topics that include wood chemistry, biofuel production, and kraft pulping. His expertise is directly related to fundamental understanding of kraft pulping chemistry and biofuels production

TAPPI involvement

Ricardo joined TAPPI as a doctoral student at NCSU in 2010 to pursue networking and technical development



One of Ricardo's favorite hobbies is riding his motorcycle, as he is about to here at MWV's Covington, VA, mill.

opportunities. In addition to becoming a new member of the TJ editorial board this year, Ricardo currently serves as president of the Virginia Local TAPPI Section.

"TAPPI has given me access to a highly technical group of people," said Ricardo of his experience with the association. "The networking has been great."

Ricardo has also participated in TAPPI's PEERS and IBBC Conferences as a reviewer, section chair, and speaker. At TAPPI's 2012 PEERS Conference, he and co-authors Hasan Jameel, Hou-Min Chang, and Peter W. Hart received the David Wetherhorn Award for Best Pulping & Bleaching paper. A version of this paper, "Impact of lignin and carbohydrate chemical structures on kraft pulping processes and biofuel production," also appeared in the July 2013 special issue of TJ featuring other best papers from 2012 PEERS.

Industry perspective

Ricardo sees the biggest challenge for the pulp and paper industry in discovering developments beyond the kraft pulping process. "We need to ask what will come next to fill kraft process gaps, such as yield losses and the process's high energy intensity," he said.

As for industry opportunities, Ricardo views process optimization as the greatest prospect. "There is still a large opportunity to maximize assets and operations, and to reduce operating costs, in North America," he said.

On a personal note, Ricardo resides in Fincastle, VA, and enjoys riding his motorcycle along the nearby scenic Blue Ridge Parkway. **TJ**