



John Bergin

Sr. VP Global Specialty Paper (retired) Stora Enso, Managing Director of the Paper Technology Foundation at WMU
[linkedin.com/in/john-bergin-372a292](https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-bergin-372a292)

- 30+ years of coated paper experience in sales, manufacturing, operations and business development
- Also served on steering committees for energy, profit enhancement, labor negotiations, purchasing and IT
- Served as director of Research and Development for Consolidated Papers
- Co-author of several film coater patents
- Tappi member since 1968—served in many capacities including president of Research Management Committee
- Member Pima Leadership Council
- Member of Packaging Boards Strategy and Leadership Team

Randy Branston

Technical Specialist Paper Coatings at BASF
[linkedin.com/in/randy-branston-2214a115](https://www.linkedin.com/in/randy-branston-2214a115)

- Over 25 years experience in paper coating applications and product development, encompassing the full range of coating components and processes
- 2014 recipient of the Charles Engelhard Award by TAPPI for his outstanding contributions which have advanced our industry's technology
- Patents and publications encompass a wide range of technical topics, including the preparation of new organic macrocycles, the development of high temperature styrenic thermoplastics and the application of amphoteric cobinders in paper coating

Gordon Bugg

Senior Paper Making Expert (Coatings) for Kemira
[linkedin.com/in/ggb01](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ggb01)

- 30 plus years of coated paper and board experience
- Worldwide responsibility providing technical support for paper and paperboard coatings to current and potential Kemira customers
- Responsibilities include site support, process development and troubleshooting, training and new business development—Areas covered include papermaking, coating and printing/converting
- Tappi Fellow
- Retired military—30 years reserves

Brad Fadden

Manager, Customer Solutions for Ingredion Incorporated
[linkedin.com/in/brad-fadden-77a7623b](https://www.linkedin.com/in/brad-fadden-77a7623b)

- Prior to joining Penford as an applications specialist, spent 18 years in the paper industry working for Graphic Packaging at the Kalamazoo Board Mill
- Worked as a process engineer, supervisor and department superintendent before taking the R&D position in Kalamazoo
- Career highlight was installing the curtain coater in Kalamazoo and working on the project from conception through installation and implementation

Meggan Hostetler-Schrock

Technical Service Manager, Industrial Ingredients for Tate & Lyle
[linkedin.com/in/meggan-hostetler-schrock-52161414](https://www.linkedin.com/in/meggan-hostetler-schrock-52161414)

- Over 10 years of experience in the industrial starch industry
- Spent her first years as a process engineer, team development manager and lab and quality manager for a Liquid Packaging Operation working on projects focused on improvements in safety, quality, reliability and cost
- In 2006 began her work with Tate & Lyle, a leading starch supplier to the paper industry, supporting the entire Industrial Starch business unit in the areas of paper (wet end, size press, coatings) and specialty (building materials, adhesives, other) applications
- Current team is responsible for technical support and development in areas such as lab studies and analyses (starch, wet end, coatings, adhesives, rheology modification, etc.), trial support, troubleshooting and problem resolution, as well as new product and applications development project pipeline for the Industrial business unit

Jeremy Iwanski

Technical Service Chemist, Industrial Ingredients for Tate & Lyle
[linkedin.com/in/jeremy-iwanski-61203666](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jeremy-iwanski-61203666)

- Principal responsibilities include identifying and qualifying industrial starch products for both paper (wet end, size press, coatings) and specialty applications (building products, adhesives, rheology modification)
- Four years starch experience related to industrial/specialty applications backed by 15 years within the paper industry
- Past work includes technical support for coating application and R&D related to qualification of carbonless paper in digital printing applications
- Transitioned to senior development chemist for a specialty paper where areas of responsibility encompassed production process support and development of specialty products that were tailored for converters to meet end use requirements



Dr. Kecheng Li

Chair of the Department of Chemical and Paper Engineering at Western Michigan University

- Prior to joining WMU, Dr. Li was a professor and university research scholar in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of New Brunswick, Canada where he served as the director of Graduate Studies for 10 years
- Recipient of UNB Merit Award (2008) and was appointed university research scholar by the UNB Board of Governors in 2011 and then 2016
- Areas of research interests include lignocellulose biorefining for biofuels and biochemicals; nanofibres and advanced biomaterials for flexible electronics and roll-to-roll processing; green and clean manufacturing technologies; state-of-the-art surface and nanoscale techniques and pulp and paper manufacturing technologies
- Dr. Li and his students have authored more than 100 refereed papers and book chapters and delivered numerous conference presentations - has developed several proprietary technologies with six US patents awarded
- Currently serving as an executive editor, editorial board member and a guest editor for four journals and is a regular reviewer for more than 50 academic journals in North America and Europe in bioenergy, chem-eng, materials science, nano-technologies, surface sciences, environmental and pulp and paper fields
- Has been admitted as a Fellow of Royal Society of Chemistry (UK) and has been invited to serve on the NSERC Discovery Grant EG Committee and on the Research Excellence Program Panel of the Ontario Research Fund
- Received the honorary professor title at Guangxi University and Shaanxi University of Science and Technology

Dr. Tony Lyons - IMERYS

Global R&D Director for the Imerys Kaolin Division
[linkedin.com/in/tonylyons55](https://www.linkedin.com/in/tonylyons55)

- Over 33 years of experience in the areas of fluid mechanics, paper coating, paper finishing and mineral pigments for paper coating, paper filling and other specialty applications
- Responsibilities at IMERYS have included: research, innovation, new product development, customer technical support management as well as being a member of business unit management and merger teams
- Became a TAPPI Board of Directors member in March of 2016 and will serve a three year term—has been a very active member of TAPPI since 1985 and has held the Chair for the Finishing and Converting Division, the Coating and Graphic Arts Division, the Calendaring Committee, the Coating Fundamentals Committee and the Futurists Committee
- Chaired the 2003 TAPPI Advanced Coating Fundamentals Symposium held in Chicago—has regularly published and presented at TAPPI and Pira conferences and in trade journals
- Holds patents in coating pigments, coating applications, coated inkjet papers, agricultural applications and vapor barrier coating
- Is also a member of the American Chemical Society, (ACS), the Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration (SME) and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE)

Charles P. Klass

President, Klass Associates Inc.
[linkedin.com/in/charles-klass-8449691](https://www.linkedin.com/in/charles-klass-8449691)

- 55+ years of paper industry experience include technical and operating positions
- In 1986 he became a consultant to the paper industry specialized in coating, surface sizing and development of value-added papers
- Active in TAPPI and has served as chairman of the Paper and Board Manufacturing Division, the Coating Process Committee and on the TAPPI Board of Directors
- TAPPI Fellow and has received the Paper and Board Manufacturing Division Award, the Coating & Graphic Arts Division Leadership & Service Award, the TAPPI Distinguished Service Award and the TAPPI Gunnar Nicholson Gold Medal
- Has seven patents on papermaking and paper coating—research interests include development of recyclable barrier coatings, digital printing papers, high graphic quality containerboard and lighter weight paper-based packaging
- Inducted into the Paper Industry International Hall of Fame in 2016

Jim Niemiec

Product Innovation Manager, Verso Corporation
[linkedin.com/in/jim-niemiec-8865378](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jim-niemiec-8865378)

- Responsible for Digital Printing Product Development—project leader for production inkjet initiative and launched the TrueJet® Digital Coated Papers product line which received a PIA InterTech Award in 2011 for its contribution to the advancement of the printing industry
- Also developed several coated paper grade lines for the production color laser market
- TAPPI PaperCon 2016 Steering Committee Chair and past chair of the Coating and Graphic Arts Division, Technical Program and Printing and Converting Committees
- Holds several patents involving printing technology including inkjet papers
- 2012 election to the Gravure Association of the Americas' Gravure Cylinder Society which recognizes individuals who have rendered outstanding or extraordinary contributions to the gravure industry and the association
- Received the TAPPI Coating and Graphic Arts Division's Leadership and Service Award and the DuPont Soy Polymers Prize in 2015
- 2017 election as TAPPI Fellow

Alexandra Pekarovicova

PhD.—Professor at Western Michigan University, Department of Chemical and Paper Engineering
[linkedin.com/in/alexandra-pekarovicova-26677a7](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexandra-pekarovicova-26677a7)

- Teaching courses in rotogravure, color management, printing inks and printability analysis—research is focused on ink formulations, ink and substrate interactions, rotogravure and flexo printing and printability
- Works in printed electronics and functional inks formulations and is serving as PhD and MS chair for graduate students
- Recently supervised MS and PhD thesis in coating formulations
- Authored and co-authored over 150 papers, conference proceedings and eight patents
- Has served as a vice president of research papers in TAGA, Technical Association of Graphic Arts
- TAGA board member for eight years



James M. Rennes

President, Global Technologies LLC, Consulting Services for the International Pulp & Paper, Converting and Nonwovens Industries

- Recognized as an expert in drying systems and the application of innovative technology to the paper, converting and nonwovens industries
- Three plus decades of industry experience include technical, operating and sales/marketing management positions with Trane Company, American Can, MEGTEC, Advance Systems and Spooner prior to organizing Global Technologies LLC
- Has numerous publications on drying technology in the coated paper and paperboard technologies
- Instructor for various TAPPI short courses, Introduction to Pigmented Coating Processes, Metering Size Press Processes and Coated Paperboard

John A. Roper III

Fellow in the Formulation Science Group in Dow's Core R&D

- John joined The Dow Chemical Company in 1983 and in 1986 he started working in the area of paper coatings which has continued to the present time
- He holds nine issued US patents and is an inventor on seven other published patent applications
- Served in all of the Coating and Graphic Arts Division leadership positions
- Named a TAPPI Fellow in 2004
- Received the 2012 Coating and Graphics Art Division Technical Award
- Charles Englehard Medallion recipient in recognition of his many technical contributions to the coated paper industry

Mark A. Sorenson

Andritz Pulp & Paper

Sales Manager for Paper and Board Machines

[linkedin.com/in/mark-sorenson-33744210](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mark-sorenson-33744210)

- Professional work began at Beloit Corporation primarily in the calender and reel areas where his primary duties included start-up of new equipment, troubleshooting equipment and process related problems, process review of R&D results and design engineering of specialized areas
- In 1996, Beloit formed a joint venture company with Eduard Küsters of Krefeld, Germany and Mark became director of Operations for Küsters Beloit, LLC continuing the engineering of the ex-Beloit product lines for the joint venture and working as liaison to the German operations
- Joined Andritz in 2006 when Küsters was acquired by the Andritz Group
- Current chairman of the Coating and Graphic Arts Division at TAPPI, a former chair of the Calendering Committee and Calendering Common Interest Group; and former vice-chair for TAPPI Coating and Graphic Arts Division

Dan Varney

Technical Service Manager for OMYA Inc.

[linkedin.com/in/daniel-varney-4526541a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/daniel-varney-4526541a)

- Over 30 years of coated paper industry experience
- Spent his first 10 years in the Sappi Tech Center in Westbrook, Maine working in the process development and graphic arts groups.
- He's been with Omya for over 20 years based in Proctor, Vermont. His roles have included technical service (for coatings), product development (involved with development of Omyajet pigment), lab management and sales.
- He has presented at numerous Tappi conferences.

Don Ventresca

Senior Development Specialist for Trinseo LLC

[linkedin.com/in/donato-ventresca-35a63131](https://www.linkedin.com/in/donato-ventresca-35a63131)

- 34 years of coating experience
- Specializing in synthetic binders for paperboard coatings—led or assisted in the development of new binders and works with paperboard producers to optimize or improve their coating formulations
- Past 16 years in the Binders Technical Service and Development group, spending many hours and late evenings on customer's paper machines—previous to this current role
- Has also worked in research and manufacturing roles in various plastics and elastomers businesses
- 6Sigma Black Belt