Dr. Xiaoping Guo, Senior Associate Research Fellow at Abbott Laboratories, Inc., discusses his career path since graduating from the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering and how the Polymer Engineering program has contributed to his success.

**How has the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering (CPSPE) influenced your career choice?**

My graduate education in the CPSPE greatly expanded my vision to broad fields of polymer engineering and science, not only through advanced course studies in the classroom and highly regarded seminars on frontline polymer research, but also via academic collaboration with visiting scholars around the world. These invaluable educational experiences showed me versatile applications of polymer materials as well as the values that I, as a well-educated polymer engineer, can possibly offer when seeking a professional career. To help people live fully and healthier with life-changing healthcare technology, I chose to focus my lifetime career in the rapidly evolving medical device industry. I was very confident that I could make an impactful difference through my professional work in polymers and processes based on what I had learned and gained from the world-renowned polymer graduate programs in the CPSPE.

**How has CPSPE prepared you for your career?**

Dating back to the early 1990’s, I began to explore my interdisciplinary, academic research interests in polymer processing and machinery when I was a university faculty member of mechanical and materials engineering in China. In addition to my previous academic credentials in applied mechanics of polymer materials and polymer rheology and processing as well as plastic machinery, my graduate education in the CPSPE significantly enriched my fundamental knowledge in polymer chemistry and physics, thermal analysis, and structural characterization of polymer materials, which were complemented by a myriad of essential experimental skills for applied polymer research. More prominently, my doctoral research under the guidance of distinguished professor Dr. Avraam I. Isayev made me conversant with a variety of modeling theories of polymer processes, proficient with advanced numerical analysis and computational fluid dynamics, and adept in state-of-the-art instrumental characterization techniques for scientific discovery of the process-structure-property relationships of polymer materials as imparted by different polymer processing operations. All this invaluable scientific knowledge and research experience that I fortunately harvested from my doctoral study in the CPSPE are directly applicable to the work that I have been conducting at Abbott Labs over the past twenty years and which I hope to continue for many more years to come.

**What has your journey been like since graduating from CPSPE?**

As a rising graduate student awaiting degree conferment, I worked as a technical director in process technology and development at a plastics and rubber machinery company in Canton, OH, for about half a year. Soon after my official graduation, I was hired as a senior research engineer in polymers and processes by St. Jude Medical, Inc. and relocated from Akron, OH, to the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area, MN. Since then, I have had the rewarding privilege to observe and experience numerous organizational changes due to acquisition and merger, decentralization or centralization, and business integration in response to rapid changes in a highly competitive marketplace amid constantly changing governmental regulations. Fortunately, I have been able to sustain and excel in my industrial career through quick
advancement from a senior engineer to a principal engineer, and then a promotion to the highest technical position of senior principal engineer within St. Jude Medical, Inc. In 2017, Abbott Labs completed its acquisition of St. Jude Medical, Inc., which at the time was a relatively smaller Fortune 500 company. I now feel very blessed and proud to be part of Abbott’s integrated Electrophysiology and Heart Failure business.

**What is your career path now?**
Abbott Labs is a world-renowned Fortune 500 company in the healthcare industry and has 103,000 worldwide employees across a variety of healthcare businesses primarily comprised of established pharmaceuticals, nutrition, diabetes care, medical devices, and molecular diagnostics, etc. As one of the best science-based healthcare companies in the world, Abbott Labs offers two professional tracks for its scientists and engineers: technical and management. I am on the technical side and in 2018 I was nominated as an Abbott’s Volwiler Fellow based on notable professional achievements (e.g., patent inventions, scientific publications, impactful business influences, etc.) as well as a consistent work performance of excellence. In 2019, I was honored to be officially inducted into Abbott’s prestigious Volwiler Society -- the highest honor awarded to only a handful of scientific and technical personnel. To continue seeking satisfaction in my industrial career, I am looking forward to taking advantage of some intra-track positions to bring more value to and meaningful influence on the company’s global businesses in the medical device sector.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about yourself or your family?**
My wife obtained her doctorate degree in chemical engineering from The University of Akron. She currently works for an international medical device company in St. Paul, MN. We have two sons. The elder son is finishing up his doctorate degree in biomedical engineering and the younger one is a high school senior. In my spare time, I actively play tennis or pickle ball with my wife and friends. From time to time, I love to volunteer for community events and school activities.