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Sharon Hernandez

Science

Principal scientist and R&D leader with 18 years in materials chemistry, split between a national lab and industrial R&D. Have built and led teams of 8 to 25 scientists working on battery materials, coatings, and separation membranes. Named inventor on 14 issued U.S. patents.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Materials Science and Engineering, MIT, 2007 |

B.S., Chemical Engineering, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2001 |

KEY SKILLS

- R&D strategy and stage-gate portfolio management
- Battery materials (Li-ion, solid-state, sulfide and oxide electrolytes)
- Coatings and thin-film processing
- Scale-up from lab to pilot
- Electrochemical characterization (impedance spectroscopy, titration techniques, cycling)
- X-ray diffraction, photoelectron spectroscopy, and electron microscopy (interpretation and program design)
- Patent strategy and invention disclosure drafting
- Federal energy program and grant management
- Recruiting and technical hiring at PhD level
- Budget ownership and P&L exposure
- Board and investor technical presentations

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director, Materials R&D
Meridian Advanced Materials, Ann Arbor, MI, | 2019 – Present

- Lead a 25-person R&D organization across three sites, with an annual operating budget near $8.6M.
- Steered the cathode-coating platform from lab-scale proof to a pilot line producing 40 kg per week, now supplying two manufacturer qualification programs.
- Restructured the stage-gate process, cutting average time from concept to pilot decision from about 18 months to 11.
- Sit on the company's intellectual property committee and personally drafted invention disclosures for six of the past year's filings.
- Recruited a computational materials group of four, including two former national-lab staff.

Principal Scientist, Energy Storage
Halcyon Battery Technologies, San Jose, CA, | 2014 – 2019

- Technical lead for a solid-electrolyte program that reached a Series C milestone (measurable cycling at 4.3V in full-cell format).
- Managed a group of 8 scientists and engineers across synthesis, characterization, and cell build.
- Co-inventor on nine issued patents covering sulfide-electrolyte compositions and processing.
- Ran the technical due-diligence sessions with three strategic investors during Series C.
- Represented the company on a federal energy consortium for next-gen battery materials.

Staff Scientist
Lawrence Ridge National Laboratory, Berkeley, CA, | 2009 – 2014

- Led a federally funded project on transition-metal oxide cathodes, including annual milestone reviews and program renewal.
- Built and maintained an in-situ diffraction capability for operando battery measurements at a synchrotron light source beamline.
- Published 22 peer-reviewed papers, including three in Nature-family journals.
- Mentored four postdocs, three of whom moved into industry principal-scientist roles.
- Co-organized a materials research society fall symposium on energy storage materials in 2013.

Postdoctoral Researcher
Argonwood National Laboratory, Lemont, IL, | 2007 – 2009

- Studied phase transitions in layered oxide cathodes using synchrotron diffraction and neutron diffraction.
- First author on five publications during the postdoc.
- Won a lab-wide postdoctoral publication award in 2008.