Thursday Morning, November 10, 2016

Electronic Materials and Photonics
Room 102A - Session EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM

Radiation Detection Materials and Devices

Moderators: Sean King, Intel Corporation, Michelle Paquette, University of Missouri-Kansas City

8:00am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM1 Novel High Energy Resolution Scintillator Detectors**, ***Arnold Burger***, *E. Rowe, L. Matei, P. Bhattacharya, M. Groza,* Fisk University*; K. Stassun,* Vanderbilt University*; A. Stowe,* Consolidated Nuclear Security Y-12*; N. Cherepy, S. Payne,* Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory **INVITED**

This presentation will review the status of bright scintillators for gamma and thermal neutrons applications. The scintillators are based on single crystals of halides or selenides that are activated by rare earth ions or are self activated. The main features that make them attractive for biological, medical, space and national security applications are: (i) high stopping power of radiation, (ii) high energy resolution, (iii) fast decay time, (iv) crystal growability at low cost, (v) good gamma/neutron discrimination via pulse shape analysis, and (vi) good spectral matching with silicon photodetectors for compact and low power devices and instrumentation.

8:40am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM3 Improved p–n Heterojunction Device Performance Induced by Irradiation in Amorphous Boron Carbide Films**, ***George Peterson****, Q. Su,* University of Nebraska - Lincoln*; Y. Wang,* Los Alamos National Laboratory*; P.A. Dowben, M. Nastasi,* University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Amorphous hydrogenated boron carbide films (a-$B_{10}C_{2+x}$:H_y) on Si p–n heterojunctions were fabricated utilizing plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition (PECVD). These devices were found to be robust when irradiated with 200 keV He^+ ions. For low doses of irradiation, contrary to most other electrical devices, the electrical performance improved. On the heterojunction I(V) curve, reverse bias leakage current decreased by 3 orders of magnitude, series resistance across the device decreased by 64%, and saturation current due to generation of electron–hole pairs in the depletion region also decreased by an order of magnitude. It is believed that the improvements in the electrical properties of the devices are due to an initial passivation of defects in the a-$B_{10}C_{2+x}$:H_y film resulting from electronic energy deposition, breaking bonds and allowing them to reform in a lower energy state, or resolving distorted icosahedron anion states.

9:00am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM4 Amorphous Hydrogenated Boron Carbide for Direct-Conversion Solid-State Neutron Detection**, ***Gyanendra Bhattarai****, T.D. Nguyen, S. Dhungana, A.N. Caruso, M.M. Paquette,* University of Missouri-Kansas City

The trade-off between conversion layer thickness and penetration depth of primary reaction products inherently limits the efficiency of conversion-layer solid-state neutron detectors, motivating the need for direct-conversion solutions. Direct-conversion devices, in principle, offer nearly unity detection efficiency, a minimum of fabrication steps, large-area scalability, and high efficiency density, all of which are essential for small-sized neutron spectrometers as well as for large-area detectors. However, to date, there is a lack of well-developed semiconductor materials with high thermal neutron absorption that also lead to energetic reaction products amenable to detection. Amorphous hydrogenated boron carbide (a-B_xC:H_y), a complex disordered semi-insulating material, is a promising candidate because of its high neutron absorption and high resistivity. Additionally, excellent mechanical, chemical, and thermal stability make it suitable for harsh detection environments. The main challenges, however, in the study of a-B_xC:H_y are its low charge carrier mobility, the difficulties associated with making proper electrical contacts for accurate charge transport measurements, and the inefficacy of traditional experimental techniques and interpretations to address the complex nature of the material (i.e., it is a high-resistivity, disordered, molecular solid). This contribution will present an overview of how a-B_xC:H_y may lead to high-efficiency neutron detectors based on theoretical simulations, the study of its charge transport metrics focusing mainly on charge carrier mobility and lifetime, and the development of proper electrical contacts on PECVD grown thin films of this material.

9:20am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM5 Radiation Damage of Low-κ Interlayer Dielectrics Studied with Electrically Detected Magnetic Resonance**, ***Michael Mutch****, P.M. Lenahan,* Pennsylvania State University*; S.W. King,* Intel Corporation

Radiation effects of MOS devices have been extensively studied due to the demand for electronic devices in space applications.[1] The scaling of these MOS devices will lead to an eventual need for low-dielectric constant (i.e., low-κ) dielectrics to reduce parasitic capacitances associated with scaling of back-end-of-line interlayer dielectrics (ILDs). However, little is known about radiation effects of low-κ ILDs. We utilize electrically detected magnetic resonance (EDMR) via spin-dependent trap-assisted tunneling (SDTAT) to study point defects in porous low-κ a-SiOC:H systems before and after exposing samples to radiation damage. SDTAT/EDMR has the sensitivity and analytical power to specifically identify only those defects which are involved in electronic transport. Due to the inherent complexity of the a-SiOC:H systems, multiple frequency EDMR is utilized to better understand defect structure when featureless spectra are present.

The a-SiOC:H films are grown via PECVD, and exhibit carbon dangling bonds prior to porogen removal via UV-annealing.[2] After porogen removal via UV treatment, it has been shown, via multiple frequency EDMR, that silicon dangling bonds are the dominating defect center responsible for SDTAT in these films.[2] The porous a-SiOC:H systems were subjected to a 15 Mrad total dose via a cobalt-60 dry cell gamma-ray source while simultaneously applying either positive, negative, or no bias. We find that the post-radiation IV curves are a strong function of the biasing conditions which were applied during radiation. This likely indicates that electron and hole traps will both play a role in radiation damage effects in these systems. We find that the EDMR response amplitude is greatly increased (by a factor of 4 or greater) after irradiation for all biasing conditions. This result indicates a substantial increase in the density of defects involved in electronic transport. Multiple frequency EDMR measurements suggest that the generated defects are primarily silicon dangling bonds.

[1] J. R. Schwank et al., IEEE Trans. Nuc. Sci. **55**, 1833 (2008).

[2] M. J. Mutch et al., J. Appl. Phys. **119**, 094102 (2016).

9:40am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM6 Modeling Unit Displacement Damage in Amorphous Silicon Oxycarbides**, ***Hepeng Ding****, M. Demkowicz,* MIT

Amorphous silicon oxycarbide (SiOC) is of great technological interest. To study its potential application as a radiation-resistant material, we present *ab initio* modeling investigations of unit displacement damage processes in it using density functional theory. We model 0.1 keV primary knock-on atoms (PKA) in SiO_2, SiOC, and hydrogenated SiOC (SiOCH) with different hydrogen levels. We find that PKAs affect the carbon-clustering tendency in both SiOC and SiOCH. Our results also suggest that SiOCH is irradiation indifferent, i.e., upon PKA, the potential energy does not increase and there is no major structural change.

This work was funded by the DOE Office of Nuclear Energy, Nuclear Energy Enabling Technologies, Reactor Materials program, under contract No. DE-NE0000533. Computational support was provided by DOE-NERSC and DOE-OLCF.

11:00am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM10 Position-Sensitive 3D CZT Gamma-Ray Detectors with Thickness Up to 50 mm**, ***Ralph James****, A.E. Bolotnikov, G.S. Camarda, Y. Cui, G. De Geronimo, J. Fried, A. Hossain, G. Mahler, U. Roy, E. Vernon, G. Yang,* Brookhaven National Laboratory **INVITED**

High-granularity position-sensitive detectors allow for accurate charge-signal corrections to overcome non-uniformities in the devices' responses caused by crystal defects. The operational principle of position-sensitive detectors is analogous to the well-known drift ionization chambers used for tracking charged particles and detecting the interaction events generated by gamma rays. Advantages of the position-sensitive designs were realized in a number CZT detectors, including CAPture™, hemispherical, Frisch-ring, capacitive Frisch-grid and even pixel detectors in which pixel contacts act like shielding electrodes. In our virtual Frisch-grid (VFG) devices, the sensing strips are separated from the crystal surfaces by a thin insulating layer, as it was originally done in other Frisch-grid designs. The amplitudes of the signals readout from the strips are used to measure the coordinates of the interaction points and correct the response non-uniformities. The drift time and the cathode-to-anode ratio were used to independently evaluate the location of the interaction points in Z directions, correct for electron loss, and identify and reject the events for which the charge losses caused by defects are so great that they cannot be corrected accurately. Combining these two techniques allows us to significantly enhance the spectral responses of position-sensitive VFG detectors, and to significantly improve their performance. Such high-granularity position-sensitive detectors open up the opportunity for using thicker, less expensive crystals. We demonstrated that today's CZT material is suitable for detectors with up to 40-50-mm drift distances, provided that the detectors have the ability to correct their response non-uniformities on a scale comparable to the sizes of electron clouds, which is ~100 m m. We employed an ASIC and data-acquisition system developed by BNL's Instrumentation Division for arrays of VFG detectors. For each detector we used 6 ASIC channels to read the negative signals from the cathode and from four position-sensing pads, and the positive signals from the anode. For each interaction event, the anode signal correlates with the *X* and *Y* values converted from the 4 strip signals and Z coordinate evaluated from the cathode signal. This relationship allows us to correct each anode signal in accordance with the location of the interaction point. We selected the voxel sizes to achieve the best performance, typically ~30x30 pixels in *XY*-space and ~100 segments in the Z-direction. The performance of thick position-sensitive VFG detectors fabricated from CZT crystals will be reported for a variety of radioactive sources and testing conditions.

11:40am **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM12 Understanding the Electrical Properties of U_3O_8 for Direct Conversion Neutron Detectors***, **Brandon Shaver**, S. Lawson, B. Musicó,* The University of Tennessee Knoxville*; S. Dhungana, G. Bhattarai, M.M. Paquette, A.N. Caruso,* University of Missouri-Kansas City*; T. Meek,* The University of Tennessee Knoxville

With a high neutron fission cross section for ^{238}U, U_3O_8 is one of a series of uranium oxide semiconductors that may be suitable for direct-conversion neutron detectors. However, the electrical transport properties of U_3O_8 are not well-characterized: the literature that does exist reports largely inconsistent resistivity values, and similarly contradictory values for work function. One of the reasons for these wide ranges is that slight changes in stoichiometry in urania-based systems, UO_2 for example, can have a tremendous influence on electrical properties; however, the details of these effects are not well-understood. We seek to rigorously characterize the electrical transport properties in U_3O_8 to understand the range of values that can be achieved and—importantly—their relationship to fabrication method as well as composition/microstructure. Samples of U_3O_8 pellets have been made by uniaxial pressing of U_3O_8 powder and subsequent sintering under various conditions. These samples have then been characterized to determined their microstructure, exact stoichiometric composition, and electrical properties. By carefully studying the relationship between sample preparation and electrical properties, we aim to establish the ability to control and optimize the electrical transport metrics of U_3O_8 critical for detection applications.

12:00pm **EM+AC+SS+TF-ThM13 Radiation Damage in 4H SiC nMOSFETs Detected by Electrically Detected Magnetic Resonance***, **Ryan Waskiewicz**, M.A. Anders, P.M. Lenahan,* Pennsylvania State University*; A.J. Lelis,* U.S. Army Research Laboratory

Metal oxide semiconductor field effect transistors (MOSFETs) based upon 4H-SiC have great promise in high power and high temperature applications. An area of substantial interest is in outer space, where the devices will be subjected to ionizing radiation. The effects of ionizing radiation have been well studied in Si-based MOS devices, where E' and Pb centers play dominating roles as oxide and interface traps respectively. Very little is known about the types of defects created in radiation damage in SiC MOSFETs. In order to develop a fundamental understanding of ionizing radiation effects, we have performed a study utilizing electrically detected magnetic resonance (EDMR) via the bipolar amplification effect (BAE) [1]. We observe several changes between the pre- and post-irradiation EDMR results, which strongly indicate change in the structure of the SiC/SiO_2 interface region but relatively little change in the number of observed interface defects.

The devices used in this study had 50 nm thick thermally grown gate oxides in N_2O. After oxidation, the devices were subjected to the standard post-oxidation NO anneal at 1175°C. The n-channel 4H-SiC MOSFETs have been subjected to 6MRads of gamma radiation from a 60Co gamma source while a 10V bias applied to the gates. Standard transistor characteristic measurements made on the devices before and after irradiation indicate a threshold voltage shift of approximately -4V. We observed several significant changes in the EDMR response, the most obvious EDMR differences are in the amplitude of the BAE EDMR measurements as a function of applied gate voltage. The maximum EDMR amplitude increased by a factor of 7 as a result of the irradiation, and the gate bias at which the peak occurred shifted by approximately -4V, consistent with the approximate -4V shift in threshold voltage. BAE measurements measure spin dependent recombination due to deep level defects at and very close to the SiC/SiO_2 interface. We find significant change in the EDMR line shapes, observing significant post-irradiation broadening of the spectra. Surprisingly, we are unable to observe either silicon or carbon dangling bond defects in these preliminary measurements. It is clear from the measurements that both the pre-irradiation and post-irradiation measurements are dominated by silicon vacancies on the SiC side of the interface. EDMR measurements as a function of microwave power show quite significant changes in the saturation behavior of the magnetic resonance. These results suggest significant structural changes in the interface region.

[1] Thomas Aichinger and Patrick M. Lenahan, Appl. Phys. Lett. **101**, (2012)

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