Superconducting gap anisotropy in LuNi$_2$B$_2$C by point-contact spectroscopy$^1$ XIN LU, WAN KYU PARK, LAURA H. GREENE, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, JUNG-DAE KIM, SUNMOG YEO, SUNG-IK LEE, Pohang University of Science and Technology, Korea — The superconducting gap anisotropy in non-magnetic members of the intermetallic borocarbide family still remains controversial. Several scenarios have been proposed including the s+g pairing symmetry and multi-band/multi-gap superconductivity. In order to address this issue, especially the puzzling existence of point nodes along $a$- and $b$-axis, we apply the point-contact spectroscopy technique to investigate the superconducting gap structure of single crystals LuNi$_2$B$_2$C ($T_c$ $\sim$16.5 K) along three different crystallographic orientations. $ab$-plane surfaces are prepared by embedding and polishing crystals and their orientations are confirmed by X-ray diffraction. Our preliminary conductance data, analyzed by the one-band Blonder-Tinkham-Klapwijk model, show anisotropic gap values, $\sim$1.6 meV and $\sim$2.6 meV, along (001) and (110) directions, respectively. We will discuss the possible origin for the gap anisotropy.

$^1$This work is supported by the U.S. DoE Award No. DEFG02-91ER45439 through the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory and the Center for Microanalysis of Materials at UIUC.