

# Chemistry Alumni Newsletter

Keeping you in touch with  
alumni, faculty, and current  
students

Volume 7, Spring 2012



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## Connect with alumni

The Department of Chemistry has been updating its Facebook page as a place for alumni, faculty, and students to connect. From now on, alumni newsletters will be uploaded to the page, and postings of events on campus will appear regularly. Using Facebook is part of a new strategy by the departments in mathematics and natural sciences to develop social media to reach out to alumni and students. To visit the Department of Chemistry Facebook page, go to [www.facebook.com/uechemistry](http://www.facebook.com/uechemistry).

## Chemistry Club Officers

Left to right: Dalton Snyder (Academics), Paige Shevlin (Vice President), Ben Fritsch (Secretary), Michael Grassmyer (Activities), Carder Labrake (President)





Jessica Frisz '06



Skyler Smith '09



Chris Childers '10

## Alumni News

Keep up to date with the latest from other UE Chemistry Alumni

### Brian Alberding '05

Brian received his PhD in chemistry from OSU on August 28, 2011. Brian was a student of Dr. Malcolm Chisholm while completing his Ph.D. at The Ohio State University and the title of Brian's dissertation was, "Photophysics and Excited State Electronic Communication in Quadruply Bonded Paddlewheel Complexes of Molybdenum and Tungsten."

### Jessica Frisz '06

Jessica graduated from UE in 2006 with a BS in Professional Chemistry and went on to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for graduate school. In February of this year, she finished her PhD in Chemistry under Professor Mary L. Kraft studying the distribution of lipids in mammalian cell membranes using high resolution imaging mass spectrometry. In March, she started working as a Scientist in Research and Development in the Clinical

Diagnostics Division within Thermo Fisher Scientific, working to improve the way hospitals run routine blood tests for their patients.

### Samantha (Kirsch) Bouchie '06



Samantha was voted chief resident for next year by her faculty and peers. Now she is leaning towards a fellowship in infectious disease after working a few years as a hospitalist. Dr. Bouchie is currently doing a study in doripenem monohydrate daily dosing in pseudomonas infections, and working on a quality improvement project to form a best practice module for treating hypertension in strokes. She also recently placed second

in the American College of Physician's case report competition. If she isn't already busy enough, she and her husband had a daughter, Cora Grace Bouchie, born on July 2, 2011. Dr. Bouchie indicates that Cora must have known that her mom was a busy doctor because she has literally slept 7 hours straight since her first night at home.

### Skyler Smith '09

Skyler is now in his third year of teaching chemistry at Evansville North High School. This spring he also became an adjunct faculty member in the UE Department of Chemistry teaching four sections of CHEM 108 lab.

### Chris Childers '10

Chris is now a graduate student studying at the University of Southern Mississippi. He came to UE to speak on graduate school in polymer science on January 27, 2012.

# Faculty Notes

Keep up with the latest from UE Chemistry Faculty and their research! All faculty can be reached via their email addresses as listed on the Chemistry Department Webpage: [chemistry.evansville.edu](http://chemistry.evansville.edu)

## Note from the Chair



My first year of being Chair of the Department of Chemistry has been quite busy but equally rewarding. Some of the various items include:

When fellow colleague, Dr. Jean Beckman, agreed to being appointed Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Science, she had to take a reduction in her normal teaching load. As a result, the Department was faced with hiring adjuncts. Fortunately, the three adjuncts hired for the 2011-2012 academic year were very capable which ultimately made it easier for the Department.

The annual Davidson Scholarship Day was held in January and we had 17 students attend.

The Department had long, in-depth discussions concerning student outcomes and goals in preparation for the Departmental Assessment Plan. Also, in light of the recent revision of general education, the Department

has been working on the general education outcomes in CHEM 100, 108 and 118 for those courses to be approved.

In addition to “chair duties,” I taught biochemistry lecture and lab in the fall and two sections of CHEM 108 in the spring. I also advised four research students who examined the kinetic parameters of phytase, an enzyme that is an additive in animal feed used to degrade phosphate in plant feed ingredients. Moreover, I plan to advise two research students in the summer.

## Dr. Tod's Note



I have really enjoyed my first year at the University of Evansville. The school size is the perfect size and I get to teach a variety of the student body. Overall, I have formed a good impression of the students here—they get really excited about going to class. Everyone has been very supportive of me at UE.

As for research, I have been supervising students working on a project creating a new catalyst that can transform renewable materials into something useful such as biofuels. The project has received funding from UExplore and involves three undergrad students.

I have also been involved with the Chemistry Club and am excited at the possibility of hosting a Chemistry Camp for local middle and high school students on campus next fall.

## Dr. Lynch's Note



This summer I had the pleasure of traveling to Kenya, Africa as part of a medical mission team sponsored by my church. After flying into Nairobi, we traveled to the village of Ekerenyo, where we set up our medical camp. Team members diagnosed illnesses, pulled teeth, passed out medications, and gave out both reading and

## Faculty Notes Continued

prescription eye glasses (prescriptions were read with a portable autorefractor). We saw about 1200 people and could have seen more, the need was so great. After the mission, we went on a two-day safari in the Masai Mara, where the wildebeest migrate across the Mara River. We saw lions, cheetahs, leopards, hyenas, giraffes, elephants and more, as well as birds. All in all, it was the trip of a lifetime.

### Dr. Batema's Note



I have been keeping busy

with my normal duties teaching in the freshman chemistry labs, and it has been a bit of a challenge keeping up without a stockroom clerk this year. All of us have been doing a bit extra by pitching in and we hope to have a new stockroom clerk in place by this fall.

Research has been going strong this year as well. This past summer, Zuzana Kocsisova continued the bird diversity and density project begun by Kyle Zoll at Vectren Conservation Park. She also initiated a study on repertoire size and variation in the song of the Bell's Vireo and spent countless hours recording and analyzing its song. She gave a poster at MESCON in

March and then went to the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Animal Behavior Conference at Indiana University in April. I will be continuing this project, along with the bird density study, this summer.

But, before all that research begins, I will have an opportunity to join Dr. Hochwender and Dr. Gordon and the Tropical Ecology class for a trip to Costa Rica in May. I have been attending the class, with some rather eager students, in an attempt to learn some things about the flora and fauna of Costa Rica in preparation for the trip. My focus will be on the birds, and I will attempt to see as many of the 882 species of birds that occur in Costa Rica as I can.

## Student Research

We are excited at the number of students conducting research this summer! Much of this has been made possible through UExplore grants.

Deanna Miller will be attending the Iowa Summer Institute in Biostatistics at the University of Iowa In Iowa City, Iowa.

The program is sponsored by the National Heart & Blood Institute (NHLBI) and National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Zuzana Kocsisova will be conducting research at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. She will be part of the Fungal Genomics & Computational Biology REU Program, sponsored by the NSF-REU.

Cyril Patra will be a student researcher in Molecular Biology Techniques (ELISA) at the Texas A & M Health & Science Center, Texas A & M University, Kingsville, Texas.

Emily Wood and Michael Grassmyer will be conducting research on phytase, an

enzymatic animal feed additive, at the University of Evansville, under the direction of Dr. Kristy Miller. Both Emily and Michael are being supported this summer by funding from UExplore.

Also receiving financial support for research from UExplore this summer are Nickolas Takebayashi and Paige Shevlin. Nick and Paige are working in the Lynch research group and will continue analysis of the excited states of elements using the laser.

# Awards and Banquets



Outstanding Senior: Kerry Lasswell

The Indiana-Kentucky border section of the American Chemical Society gives cash awards and a certificate to the Outstanding Sophomore and Senior students. Senior Kerry Lasswell and sophomore Dalton Snyder students were honored at the annual ACS awards banquet which was held at the Acropolis Restaurant on April 17.



Outstanding Freshman: Katie Prosser

Additionally, a *CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics* is presented to the Outstanding Freshman student. This year, two outstanding freshmen, Katie Prosser and Paige Shevlin were recognized at the annual Chemistry Awards banquet also held at the Acropolis on April 25.



Outstanding Freshman: Paige Shevlin

Zuzana Kocsisova, a biology major, was awarded the Pitt Outstanding Lab Assistant Award at the Senior Recognition Banquet at the Acropolis on April 25<sup>th</sup>. She received a plaque and small monetary award for her dedicated work as a lab assistant in our department.

## Where are our seniors going?



### Kerry Lasswell

Kerry will graduate with a professional chemistry major and has applied for a job at Sabic Innovative Plastics in Mount Vernon, Indiana.

### Cody Rausch

Cody will graduate with a basic chemistry major and he has accepted a Lab Technician position with Absorption Research, Inc. in Dublin, Ohio.

### Sean Sullivan

Sean will graduate with a basic chemistry major.

### Kirby Williams

Kirby will graduate with a basic chemistry major and has applied to Good Samaritan Hospital School of Medical Technology.