

CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

From the editor:

In this issue of the newsletter I have included a couple of stories on new campus buildings and efforts to make them more energy efficient. If you make a campus visit anytime soon, it will be worth seeing these new facilities. As usual, we have information about the activities of our alumni, faculty, and current students. Most notable is the announcement that Dr. Lynch has received the Dean's Outstanding Teaching Award for 2009.

Your editor,
D. L. Batema

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NEW RIDGWAY CENTER OPENS

For alumni who were accustomed to grabbing their meals at the dining hall on Walnut across from the Carson Center, you will now find that a new facility has been erected in its place. On Friday, November 14, 2008, the University of Evansville opened the doors to its new Ridgway University Center.

The Ridgway University Center is a 92,000 square-foot facility built at a cost of \$23.6 million with funds raised entirely from private donations. The building is named in honor of Dr. William Ridgway, a long-time friend of the university who contributed monies for the construction of the center. Many of our alumni will also remember Dr. Ridgway's donation of UE's

British campus, Harlaxton College in Grantham, England in the late 1980s.

The centerpiece of the building is the 500 seat capacity Eykamp Hall which is available for both university and community events. Along with the Eykamp Hall, the Ridgway University Center is also home to the Class of 1957 atrium and grand lobby, Rademacher Café lounge and coffee shop, WVUEV radio station, the University Bookstore, Aces Place convenience store, and several casual and study lounges. The center also has offices for Student Engagement, Residence Life, Career Services, Cooperative Education, Publications, and the Dean of Students.



Left: Ridgway University Center.



Right: Schroeder Family School of Business Administration

CAMPUS GOING GREEN

The University of Evansville announced in February 2009 that the new Schroeder Family School of Business Administration building was officially certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) building. The building, located on the west side of the oval, opened in August 2007.

During the construction of the building, the certification process was started. In order to achieve LEED® certification, a building must earn points in six categories set forth by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Those categories are: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials

and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design. Points were earned for elements such as having toilets using different amounts of water for solid or liquid waste, use of natural light in much of the building, and using the existing exterior wall of the McCurdy Alumni Memorial Union as part of the new structure.

Making buildings more energy efficient, while at the same time providing a pleasant, healthy workplace, is now part of the campus master plan. Up next in the certification process is the new Ridgway University Center.

DR. LYNCH RECEIVES DEAN'S TEACHING AWARD

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Bryan Lynch has received the Dean's Outstanding Teaching Award for 2009. This award was established in 1996 to recognize teaching excellence by full-time faculty within the College of Arts and Sciences. Every spring, the Dean honors two exceptional faculty members for their record of teaching excellence as well as their commitment to student mentoring, advising, and related achievements. The honorees receive a certificate and a cash award, and their names are engraved on a permanent plaque that is displayed in the College offices.

Dean Susan Calovini received evaluations from faculty and students and it is easy to see from these comments that Dr. Lynch was a wonderful choice to receive this award. A colleague has said that Dr. Lynch "maintains a very high level of academic excellence in his courses and does an outstanding job of providing demanding and meaningful laboratory experiences for his students."

His students frequently comment on the passion, excitement, and enthusiasm he brings to his teaching. A student writes, "his positive attitude kept class interesting because it is apparent that he loves teaching his subject."

Another common theme expressed often by his students is his helpfulness both in and out of the classroom. Another student writes, "He was very helpful to me just by his thorough teaching style in class. His practice problems, practice exams, and answers for both took a lot of work on his part and were greatly appreciated." He also regularly encourages students to come and get help outside of class, and for at least one student this worked well because, "it is easier for me to learn one on one."

One student summed up Dr. Lynch's impact on student learning by saying, "PChem is difficult, don't get me wrong, but the professor has a knack for explaining complex derivations and concepts that makes them understandable. If you are looking for an easy class, don't take it; but if you want to expand the use of your brain and really be challenged, this is an amazing class."

As many of us know, Dr. Lynch has worked hard to maintain a state-of-the-art PChem teaching lab. There are very few small colleges in the U.S. that have PChem labs as well equipped as ours, especially with the laser and the experiments performed in this lab. **Congratulations Dr. Lynch!!**

A student wrote this concerning Dr. Lynch's PChem class, "If you are looking for an easy class, don't take it; but if you want to use your brain and really be challenged, this is an amazing class."



**Chemistry Department
Graduating Seniors
Class of 2009**

SENIOR GIFT/GRADUATING CLASS OF 2009

This year's spring banquet was full of surprises. In addition to the announcement during the dinner by Dr. Ray Lutgring of the Dean's Outstanding Teaching Award, the faculty received a very nice gift from the graduating seniors. Joann, chemistry department administrative assistant, was successful in rounding up all the seniors (well, almost all the seniors) and taking a picture. The picture was framed and all seniors signed the mat around the picture and presented it to the faculty at the dinner.

The UE chemistry department had 14 students graduate on Saturday, May 9, 2009 at ceremonies at Robert's Stadium. Our professional chemistry majors included: Zach Harms, Roshan Lamichhane, Amanda Johnson, Donna Ramsey, Amanda Senechal, and Sarina Winterrowd. Biochemistry graduates were: Ashley Austin, Angela Linney, Joel Melby, Kyoko Na-

kamura, Tonya Shepherd, Skylar Smith, Lynsey Thrasher. Keegan McHose graduated with a Chemistry Business degree. (Kyle Knust is scheduled to graduate in December with a Basic Chemistry degree.)

Some of our graduates have secured a job or will continue their education in graduate school; others are in the application stage. Tonya is off to Texas A&M Health Science Center in biomedical science; Zach will be working in analytical chemistry at IU; Lynsey will be in the Transition-to-Teaching program at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College; Joel will be working in chemical biology at the University of Illinois; Amanda Senechal is off to the University of Wisconsin in organic chemistry; Angela will be going to the University of Colorado Pharmacy School; and Amanda Johnson will be an analytical chemist at Schwarz Pharmaceuticals in Seymour, IN.

Amanda Senechal expressed her thanks to faculty: "You are always available for help in regards to chemistry, or just life in general. I would not have gotten to form these kinds of relationships at a larger school, and I really feel like it has influenced me in a positive way."

ALUMNI NEWS

We are always grateful to receive news of our alumni and are happy to pass along their news to others. The following alumni made visits to the department, sent e-mails or made calls to let us know what they have been up to since graduating from UE:

Jordan Bruce '08. Jordan is working as a lab technician in the Nutritional In-Process (NIP) lab at Mead Johnson Nutrition in Evansville, IN. He began working at Meads in Raw Materials part-time before his current position with the company.

Bryan Drury '08. Bryan is working as the microbiology technician for Kutol Products Co. in Cincinnati OH. He is currently busy with testing for contaminants for their OTC drug products and some cosmetic products. He also does environmental testing on site, including both air and water quality.

Brittany Sato '08. Brittany is completing her first year at the University of Hawaii and after her rotations has decided to work in the labs of Dr. Abby Collier. Dr. Collier's research emphasizes reproductive pharmacology and Phase II metabolizing enzymes. Brittany is currently working on the effects of non-pharmaceutical drugs present in drinking water on placental cells.

Jeff Yoder '08. Jeff is working in St. Louis, Missouri for GlaxoSmithKline. He is a QC assistant on an 18 month contract and he hopes it will turn into a full-time position.

Kim Fessel '07. Kim has started life as a graduate student after having been accepted to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Albany, NY. She will work toward a Master's degree in applied mathematics and a Ph.D. in mathematics. Kim will have a teaching assistantship while at

Rensselaer Polytechnic.

Jamie Smay '07. Jamie has just received a 2009 Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship and will begin graduate work for a masters degree at IUPUI.

Hsiang-Jui Yeh '06. Ray has sent us an e-mail to say that he is graduating from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in May '09. He will continue on as an employee at the health center working as a lab technician.

Kim Brown '04. Kim continues to work as a forensic scientist in Fort Wayne. She also has some exciting news to pass along; in the fall of 2008 she was married to Chris Burrows. Congratulations to Kim!

Jesse Reiherzer '04. Last fall Jesse defended his thesis entitled "Synthesis and Photoluminescence in Rare Earth Activated Nitrides". Shortly after his graduation from Cornell, he headed off to Raleigh, North Carolina where he now works for Cree as a research scientist in the solid state lighting division.

Josh Fessel '99. Josh returned to the UE campus during Homecoming in October 2008 to take part in the Science Advisory Council Expert Panel, along with chemistry alum **Allen McCutchan '64** (see sidebar). They spoke to a group of students, faculty, and others about how their careers in medicine have developed since leaving UE.

Ryan Flamion '99. Ryan returned to his hometown of Holland, IN, to practice medicine at the Holland Family Practice Clinic in August, 2008 after completing his residency in family medicine in Glasgow, KY. Ryan received his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine in Dominica, West Indies.



Mr. and Mrs. Chris Burrows 2008

Allen McCutchan '64, Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases at UCSD School of Medicine, was an invited speaker at a couple of Homecoming Events this fall. He spoke at the Science Advisory Council Expert Panel, and the following day gave the inaugural talk as the Annual Homecoming Alumni Speaker. He discussed his career in medicine, especially his work over the last 20 years in AIDS research, and his involvement in assisting doctors in Ethiopia.

ROBERT PLANE RECEIVES 2009 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD

In February, Robert Plane returned to his alma mater to receive the 2009 Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dr. Plane graduated from Evansville College with a chemistry major in 1948 and went on to earn his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1951. After working one year at Oak Ridge National Labs, he moved to the Chemistry Department at Cornell University where he became full professor in 1961. He chaired the Department from

1967-69 and served as Provost of Cornell University from 1969-73. Dr. Plane left Cornell to serve as President of Clarkson College from 1974-85. He also served as President of Wells College from 1991-95. He co-authored the textbook *Chemistry*, the most widely used general chemistry textbook in the world. In 1985 he became a part-time winemaker and established Plane's Cayuga Winery on Cayuga Lake in Upstate New York.

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

The following notes from the faculty and staff will give our alumni some idea of what we have been up to during the last year.

Bill Morrison's Note:

Greetings to my friends from years past. I have now reached the end of my 34th year at the university. A year ago at this time I thought that this May would mark my retirement from teaching, but a number of factors have encouraged me to continue with the department for at least the near future. I still love inorganic chemistry and interacting with our students! My wife, Sue, continues with her stained glass business in Newburgh. The university recently dedicated a stained glass panel in our new Ridgway University Center which commemorates her experience as a member of the first group of University of Evansville students to study at Harlaxton. Our daughter, Mary, is finishing her third year as an acting major at Milliken University in Decatur, Illinois and is on track to graduate as early as next December. Life is good for our family.

Bryan Lynch's Note:

We had a busy year in the PChem lab. Since we are now using the NMR for a number of phase transition and kinetics experiments, and to help students develop a deeper understanding of the NMR technique, I added a separate lecture on NMR theory, focusing on pulsed-NMR and its use to probe the dynamics of molecular motions and reactions. This was the second year PChem students used the nitrogen-pumped dye laser and the double resonance technique to access highly excited electronic states of iodine. We've had so much success with this experiment, and it is such an important addition to the PChem lab, that I will be presenting it at the June meeting of the Ohio State University International Symposium on Molecular Spectroscopy. This summer I plan to continue working with the double resonance technique by extending it to the study of larger molecules.

Outside the lab I've taken up playing the piano. My teacher is a former UE graduate, Donna Davis, and I now have 5 months of piano lessons under my belt.

My first piano recital was at the annual "Spotlight on Faculty and Staff" event presented by the UE Music Therapy Association. This is a talent show where the audience votes for their favorite act with monetary donations and the act receiving the most "votes" wins. I played two beginning piano pieces, one of which was the campfire song, "On Top of Spaghetti". Although I didn't win with my piano playing, I was in the barber-shop quartet that did win! I really enjoy playing the piano and I plan to continue my lessons.

Don Batema's Note:

I have had a pretty full year with teaching, research and outside activities. I continue to teach labs for freshman chemistry, both general chemistry and organic chemistry. I have finished my 12th year teaching environmental science in the BLS program. And in the fall I taught a class on the Introduction of Soils for the third time. I am keeping busy with research as well. Jonas Schoenherr just finished a wetland research project. His research focused on the chemical and physical characteristics of soils in natural and created wetlands in southern Indiana. Jonas received funding from UE Explore and the Natural Resources and Conservation Service. In a couple of weeks Amanda Bellian will start a project on the Biodiversity of dragonflies and damselflies at the Patoka National Wildlife Refuge and Management Area. Amanda has received funding from UE Explore and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Anyone who has walked into my office knows that I like birds, and a lot of my outside activities are bird related. I was recently elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Evansville Audubon Society (EAS). I also gave a presentation to the EAS this past year on my birding experiences while I was at Harlaxton. I presented a slide show (set to classical guitar music) on the birds I saw in Britain and Ireland. I also worked on the steering committee that planned the 2nd Annual Ohio Valley Birding Festival that took place May 1-3, 2009. It included workshops, speakers, a family day, and several hikes to local birding hotspots. I lead a hike to the Bluegrass Fish and Wildlife Area where I have been doing bird surveys now for about six years. We saw 56 different species of birds!

Although Dr. Miller did not submit a note this year, as editor I thought some of our alumni would like to know that Dr. Miller is the proud mother of a new baby girl, Erica, pictured below.



5th ANNUAL UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE MESCON CONFERENCE

The 5th Annual University of Evansville MESCON (Math, Engineering, and Science CONFERENCE) was held Saturday, April 4, 2009. MESCON is an undergraduate research conference with a focus solely on math, engineering and science. Unlike other research conferences, MESCON is a competitive conference with judging based on the quality of presentation as well as the technical merits of the paper presented. Monetary awards, and other recognition are given for the best presentations.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. R. Graham Cooks, Henry B. Hass Distinguished Professor of Analytical Chemistry at Purdue University and Co-Director, Center for Analytical Instrumentation Development. This year, UE MESCON attracted over 40 abstract submissions from universities and colleges in the tri state that included: UE, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Bellarmine University, University

of Indianapolis, and University of Southern Indiana. In addition there was participation from faculty from area high schools and also the UE science advisory council.

UE chemistry major, Kyle Knust won 1st place in the chemistry division with his presentation entitled "Direct and Nickel(I)-Catalyzed Reduction of Triclosan in Dimethylformamide" and UE environmental science major, Jonas Schoenherr won 1st place in the biological science division with his presentation entitled "Nonpoint Sources of Pollution: Examining the Effect of Golf Courses on Water Quality in Southern Indiana Watersheds". Amanda Senechal, a senior chemistry major, took home 2nd place in the poster division for her work on "Assessment of Soil Mercury Concentrations in the Local Environment and its Relationship to the Proximity of a Coal Fired Power Plant."



The MESCON logo for 2009.

MESCON winners for 2009 include Kyle Knust, Jonas Schoenherr, and Amanda Senechal.

SUMMER RESEARCH

Several chemistry students from the department will be involved in research or internships during the summer of 2009.

Kevin Todd will be working on the UE campus with Dr. Miller as a Merck/AAAS Fellow and will be studying the phytase enzyme. Amir Yaghoubi, who received a UExplore grant, will work with Dr. Renkema on a "Search for a Catalyst for the Abstraction of Hydrogen from Substrates".

Those students working at other institutions for the summer 2009 include; Ashley Nelson, Aaron Wiles., Kyle Knust, and Chris Childers.

Ashley will travel to San Jose, CA to work at the IBM Almaden Research Center. Her financial support will come from the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) program. Aaron will do his research at the Summer Science Academy at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.

Both Kyle and Chris will be funded by the REU Summer Research Program. Kyle will travel to Indiana University in Bloomington and Chris will do his research at the University of Southern Mississippi School of Polymer Science and High Performance Materials in Hattiesburg, Miss.

CHEM 490 SEMINAR: GREEN CHEMISTRY

Our recent alumni are familiar with the Chem 490 seminar class which usually meets on a Friday afternoon. In a recent change in format, the seminar has been structured to emphasize a common theme in chemistry. Each student presents a paper centered around the chemical expertise of the faculty member. In this way the common theme is thoroughly covered and represented by the various disciplines in the

department. This year the Chem 490 seminar class gave presentations on 'green chemistry' as the common theme. Topics included the use of supercritical carbon dioxide as a solvent for chemical synthesis; recyclable reagents; and the synthesis of green nanoparticles. Next year's class will present talks centered about the theme "Chemistry in the Service of Medicine".

*This year's Chem 490 Seminar theme was **Green Chemistry** and next year's theme will be **Chemistry in the Service of Medicine**.*

CHEMISTRY CLUB ACTIVITIES

Dr. Kenton Renkema took over the mentoring of the chemistry club for the 2008-2009 school year while Dr. Miller was on maternity leave.

The chemistry club began the year with a picnic at Wesselman Woods on September 14th. The weather was not at all cooperative, so only a few hardy souls attended.

In October, the Chem Club joined with members of the BiSci Club and the Eco Club to participate in the National Make a Difference Day. All members volunteered to help with cleaning, landscaping and even playing with the puppies at the Warrick County Humane Society.

A new event this year was the Murder Mystery Game. Numerous clues were spread out in the various labs of the chemistry department, and using basic chemistry knowledge, students attempted to solve a murder mystery. Honors for the first to solve the crime went to Joel Melby.



Left: Chem Club Picnic at Wesselman Woods



Right: Chem Club Booth at the Sunset Concert

At the annual Christmas party on Reading and Study Day, Chem club members brought in pizza and enjoyed a game of BAIPO (Biochemistry, Analytical, Inorganic, PChem, and Organic) Bingo along with the faculty. A white elephant gift exchange also occurred.

The spring semester began with a liquid nitrogen ice cream social on February 2nd. The final event for the year occurred at the Sunset concert. The Chem club had a booth where participants threw darts at balloons on a board that had the periodic table on it. Winners received a Chem club T-Shirt. The booth was a major success, and I expect it will return at next years Sunset Concert.

Chem club officers next year will be: Kate Upton, President; Brad Gibson, Vice-President; Lindsay Cornett, Secretary; Chris Childers, Treasurer; and Tom Hardin, Activities. With the election of new officers, the club has also set some new goals, including becoming more involved in campus activities, and getting more underclassmen to participate.

*The Chemistry Club has been very active this year and they are looking into applying for and becoming a **Green Chemistry ACS affiliated** chapter (they need to fulfill just one more requirement).*

STUDENT AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Student awards in the UE Chemistry Department were presented at the Senior Recognition Dinner on April 29th at the Acropolis restaurant and at the local ACS section annual Awards Dinner April 30th in Owensboro, Kentucky.

As many of you know the ACS sponsors an award for both a sophomore and a senior. At the ACS dinner Amanda Senechal, a professional chemistry major, received the Outstanding Senior Award. Kate Upton, also a professional chemistry major, received the Outstanding Sophomore Award. Both Amanda and Kate received a cash award.

The CRC Freshman Award, presented at the Senior

Recognition Dinner at the Acropolis, was awarded to Kerry Lasswell. She received the CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics.

Last year was the first year we presented an award to an outstanding laboratory assistant. This years Pitt Outstanding Lab Assistant Award was presented to Jonas Schoenherr, a senior environmental science major. Jonas received a plaque and a small gift.

This year's scholarship recipients are: Karen Schenk, Brad Gibson, and Aaron Wiles. Karen received the Brenntag Mid-South Scholarship; Brad received the Donald R. Maulding Scholarship; and Aaron Wiles received the Lowell and Eloise Weller Scholarship.



Jonas Schoenherr: 2009 Pitt Outstanding Lab Assistant Award



DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY ALUMNI INFORMATION FORM

**SPRING
2009**

Name _____ Year Graduated _____

E-mail Address _____

Current Position _____

Address _____

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