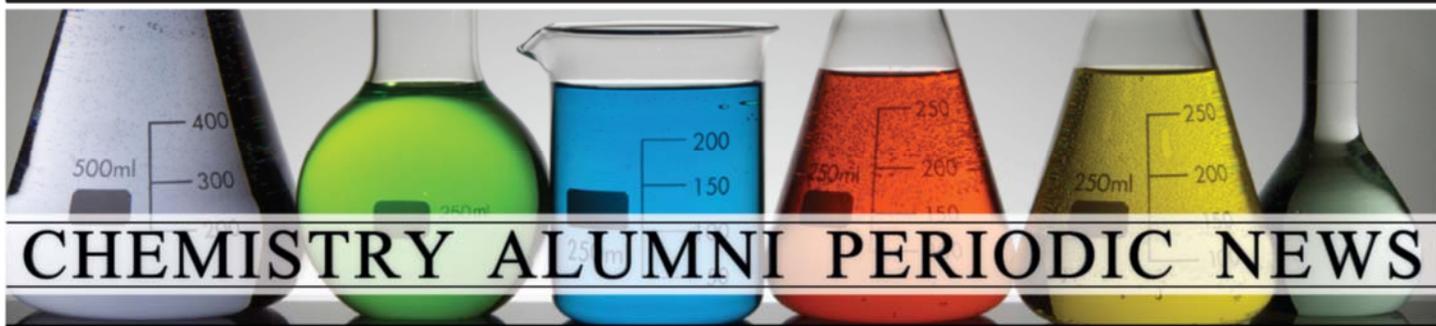


2016

12th edition

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY



From the Chair...

Dear Alumni and Friends,

2016 was a special year, as I did something I promised I would never do—I became department chair! The transition has been made a little easier because I have the help of my outstanding colleague, Dr. Bob Rittenhouse, who is serving as associate chair. The job of chair is like nothing I have done before, but I can say that in the first six months I have enjoyed tremendous support from both faculty and staff. If I've got to be a department chair, I would choose this group of professionals over any other. As I always say, we are the best department on campus!

Among the highlights this year was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of our department with several events (detailed within) that included a very successful evening of Chemistry Career Talks in which four of our alums returned to campus to share their experiences as chemists in the workforce. In April, we hosted the American Chemical Society Puget Sound Section Undergraduate Research Symposium, which was attended by nearly 100 students and faculty from around the region. The conference was a great success, and the department was praised by the Section Executive Committee for "doing an exceptional job in the organization and execution of the event."

In June, we added to the ranks of our alumni with the graduation of seventeen majors and three MS students. Our graduate program

continues to grow—we currently have seventeen students working on their MS degree! We have added a new project-based degree, and we are also developing relationships with local industry so that employees can pursue a project-based MS by doing research at work.

One of the most exciting developments of the year was the completion of Science Phase II, which houses the Geology and Physics departments. Faculty in Chemistry, Biology and Geology successfully obtained funding from the Murdock Foundation to assist with the purchase of a new scanning electron microscope, which is now operational in the new building. The SEM will have a major impact on research programs in a variety of disciplines.

There were also some difficult times this year, as we mourned the passing of two close friends—2014 graduate Eric Winterstein, and long-time custodial staffer Chris Hull. They will both be missed dearly. Eric's family funded the creation of a memorial outside the Science building, which includes a specially designed bench next to what will become a magnificent climbing tree.

Here is wishing all of you a happy and productive 2017. Feel free to stop by and visit us anytime!

Best,

Anthony Diaz

50th Anniversary Celebration...



Chemistry was officially recognized as a department in 1965 and the department held several events to commemorate this milestone 50th anniversary.

The events held in 2016 included our first annual Chemistry Career Talks, Concert for a Cure, SOURCE and the annual student/alumni appreciation picnic.

Chemistry Career Talks were presented on Friday, February 19 by several alumni: Brittany (Best) Holmes, BS 2008/MS 2010, Washington State Department of Agriculture; David Nguyen, BS 2007, Washington State Patrol– Toxicology Lab; Tom Wickerath, BS 1982, The Boeing Company; Eric Winterstein, BS 2014, DB3, Inc. The program can be found online at https://issuu.com/teriolin/docs/chemistry_career_paths

Students have requested such an event for some time and it was exciting to debut it as part of our 50th anniversary. The

festivities were enhanced in part by the presence of two of our retired faculty members, Clint Duncan and David Lygre! (pictured below)



The 9th annual Concert for a Cure was held the next night, Saturday, February 20, featuring two bands—Rusty Cage and RoadFever. There was a turnout of more than 300 people for this benefit for the American Cancer Society, which was originally started by Chemistry Club members in 2007 and has since become an unofficial homecoming event for the department. Many alumni from across the state showed up at the concert, and Brown, Diaz, Sorey, and their bandmates did not disappoint!

Chemistry was well-represented at the annual SOURCE event (Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression) on May 18-19. Students presented seven talks and 12 posters, and were awarded four outstanding presentation awards: two talks and two posters. Special thanks

go to four chemistry alumni who returned to campus as judges for this important event: Heather Durkee (BS 2009), Brittany (Best) Holmes (BS 2008/MS 2010), Kellie Mullen (BS 2012), and Anthony (Tony) Smith (BS 2006).

The annual chemistry student/alumni appreciation picnic was held on Friday, May 20. There were two organized activities this year: a corn hole tournament with a special 50th anniversary set of boards for the winners as well as a kickball game of current students vs. alumni, faculty, and staff. It was exciting to have numerous alumni present at this end-of-the-year event and a great way to end our year of celebrating 50 years as an academic department on the CWU campus. Thanks to everyone who joined us at our celebratory events and to the planning committee for all of their effort!



50th anniversary planning committee (from lower left, clockwise): Whitney Swain, Levente Fabry, JoAnn Peters, Lisa Stowe. Not pictured, Jeff Wilcox.

ACS Regional...

The Puget Sound section of the American Chemical Society has an annual undergraduate research symposium hosted by one of the schools in the section. All of the colleges and universities in the region were invited to the CWU campus on April 23, 2016. Eleven students from CWU presented results of their research, and there were eight faculty and many undergraduate and graduate student volunteers who helped with the event. There were also students and faculty in attendance from Centralia College, Evergreen State College, Pacific Lutheran University, University of Puget Sound, University of Washington and Western Washington University. CWU hosts this event approximately every six years.



Research Highlight...

Typical Americans spend over \$4500 per year, out of pocket, for health care, 19 percent of which is for drugs. Assistant Professor **Timothy Beng** and coworkers strive to reduce these costs. They develop tools to synthesize drugs in fewer steps (less time, and less chemical input), and test drug intermediates for medical potency (same effect with a simpler drug).

Many drugs are complex molecules; synthetic errors can be toxic or lethal for the patient. Thalidomide is an excellent example. Originally commercialized in the late 1950s, impure forms cause severe birth defects.

Dr. Beng has many CWU students in his research group; in his first year at CWU, Dr. Beng's group has already published research manuscripts, and presented at scientific conferences. **Katie Hovenkotter** improves morpholine synthesis (e.g., in antidepressants). **Spencer Langevin** synthesizes complex molecular rings (e.g., for treating parasitic worm infections). **Hannah Braunstein** spearheads a collaboration with **Dr. Blaise Dondji** in the Biology Department to target Leishmania parasites. Dr. Beng's students are continuing these efforts to reduce drug costs and improve lives.

In memory...



The department was sad to learn of the passing of **Eric Winterstein**, a Wildcat Chemist who earned a BS in Biochemistry and a BS in Biology in 2014. Eric was a member of the American Chemical Society and was working for Db3 in Seattle as the company chemist at the time of his death on June 4 at the age of 26. He was a passionate chemist and had been talking about returning to CWU to pursue a graduate degree. Eric's connection to CWU was a strong one—he had presented at the first annual Chemistry Career Talks event in February and was at the annual chemistry department student/alumni appreciation picnic just two weeks prior to his accident.

Anyone that knew Eric remembers his infectious and boundless energy...and the above image has become synonymous with his memory. So much so that his family had a bench designed that included it, as well as other meaningful symbols of Eric's life, and placed on the CWU campus, just to the northeast of the Science Building (pictured on the right). When you come to campus you might even see faculty, staff and alumni sporting a bright blue shirt with this image on it. The family suggests remembrances to the Central Washington University Foundation by going online to www.mycentral.cwu.edu/give and entering the donation amount in the "gift amount" area and then, using the drop down menu, choose "other" and type in "Eric R Winterstein Memorial." Checks can also be made payable to the CWU Foundation with that intention designated and mailed to 400 E University Way, Ellensburg WA 98926-7507



All contributions to the CWU Foundation are tax deductible to the extent provided by IRS regulations.

Thank you for supporting the CWU Foundation. As required by law, the CWU Foundation is registered with the Washington State Charities Program and financial information may be obtained by calling 800-332-4483 or 360-725-0378.

RECONNECT TODAY!



Privacy laws prevent us from disclosing contact information for current and former students, but this social networking site has enabled us to create a page to give you a way to find old friends and stay current with the department...Go online to <https://www.facebook.com/CWUChemistryAlumni>

The department will use this, in tandem with the website, to post interesting news and upcoming events.

Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat. Thanks for your support!