From the Chair...

Dear Alumni and Friends

The year has flown by, and it is my privilege to say hello again and share some of the exciting news coming out of our department.

In May of 2018, we will host the first ever meeting of the Chemistry Professional Advisory Council (featured inside). This amazing group of chemistry professionals (including several alumni) will take a fresh look at our programs, practices and challenges.

Finally, I’d like to say thank you to an excellent teacher and chemist, outstanding colleague, and generally all-time great person. Dr. Robert Rittenhouse, who has been in our department since 2007, will be retiring in June after an unbelievable career. Many of you remember him for his thoughtfulness, professionalism, and his genuine care for our students. I will also remember him for helping keep me sane as I tried to survive my first two years as department chair. His expertise, wisdom, and friendship will be truly missed. Good luck in your next adventures Bob!

Being department chair has presented some unique challenges, but I have the great fortune to work with an outstanding group of students, staff and faculty who have made the good days truly great. Here is wishing all of you a happy and productive 2018.

Best,

Anthony Diaz

Staffing changes...

Rebecca Coates was hired by the department in fall 2017 as a full-time lecturer. She earned her doctorate in physical chemistry in 2017 from the University of Utah, and was an adjunct chemistry faculty member at Westminster College. She is a bundle of energy and is already active working with the Chem Club.

Cindy White joined the team as instrument technician in July 2017, replacing Jeff Wilcox. Cindy graduated in May with her MS in chemistry from the University of Colorado Boulder. She came to us with experience as the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Facility Graduate Assistant where she managed eight spectrometers.
The Chemistry Department has been discussing for a couple of years the idea of forming a professional advisory council (PAC) with the primary purpose of advising the department and assisting with program promotion and evaluation, curriculum innovation and more. We are happy to introduce to you the first members! Most are chemistry alums except where otherwise noted. The inaugural meeting will be held on campus in 2018.

**Aurora Clark**
CWU BS class of 1999
Professor of Chemistry
Washington State University

**Melissa Mackey**
CWU BA class of 1994, MS 2003
Science Teacher
Kentwood High School

**Heather Durkee**
CWU BS class of 2009
Metrology Research Scientist
Moses Lake Industries

**David Nguyen**
CWU BS class of 2007
Forensic Scientist
Washington State Toxicology Lab

**Lindsay Groce**
CWU BS class of 2006, MS 2012
Chemistry Instructor
Big Bend Community College

**Jesse Nye**
CWU BS class of 2008, MS 2010
Family Medicine Physician
Family Medicine of Southwest Washington

**Victor Johnston**
CWU BS class of 1985
Global Catalysis Technology & Innovation Manager
Celanese Corporation

**James Rivard**
CWU BS class of 2005, MS 2007
Regional Manager, Solid Waste Division
Washington State Dept of Ecology

**Greg Heacock**
CWU BS in Manufacturing Engineering/Materials Science Class of 1982
Chief Executive Officer
Sensor Indicator Products

**Ryan Scheffelmaier**
CWU BS class of 2010
Pharmacist and Co-Owner
Downtown Pharmacy

**Joshua Kirk**
CWU BS class of 2008
Dentist and Owner
Mountain View Dental Center

**Erwin “Buzz” Vickery**
CWU BS class of 1998
Process Chemistry Scientist
Washington River Protection Solutions
ACS National Meeting...

Five CWU chemistry students (Hannah Braunstein, Jadesha Brooks, Katie Hovenkotter, Spencer Langevin, Brandon Mansker) were determined to attend the American Chemical Society (ACS) National Meeting in San Francisco April 2-6, and they succeeded in securing almost $4,500 in funding for that trip! They presented results in several poster sessions of research conducted with Timothy Beng. The students also coordinated a lunch with some of the CWU alumni in attendance at the meeting. Pictured here, left to right: Julia Jennings (PhD candidate at UC Davis, CWU BS class of 2013), Chris Malmberg (PhD candidate at Oregon State, CWU BS class of 2013, MS class of 2015), Spencer Langevin (CWU BS class of 2015, MS candidate), Hannah Braunstein (chemistry minor), Brandon Mansker (CWU BS class of 2015, MS candidate). All of the student participants said that being able to connect with former CWU students at the national meeting was extremely beneficial and they hoped this will become an annual tradition.

Research Highlight...

Nearly 150 million tons of ethylene are annually produced to make plastic, rubber and many other chemicals essential for industrial manufacturing. The massive production of ethylene consumes a tremendous amount of energy because ethylene is mainly made from ethane, and the ethane-to-ethylene conversion takes place at high temperatures even in the presence of traditional catalysts. To catalyze this conversion more effectively, Dr. Yingbin Ge has been studying novel transition metal catalysts. Part of the study was published in the Journal of Physical Chemistry with student coauthors Hao Jiang, Russell Kato, and Prasuna Gummagatta. This publication helped Ge obtain funding from the American Chemical Society for his research.

As a chemistry professor, Ge is interested in effective teaching and has been working on three chemical education projects: the first derives two-dimensional quantum chemistry, the second helps explain negative energy barriers and the third corrects improper counting of microstates. The first two were published in the Journal of Chemical Education; the last one is on its way.

Currently, Ge is working with chemistry undergraduates Morgan Schimelfenig, Anna Le and Gregory Marquino on the rhodium-catalyzed production of ethylene. Morgan will represent the Ge group and present three posters at the ACS national meeting in March 2018.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Career Paths: February 23
Concert for a Cure: March 3
SOURCE: May 16-17
Chemistry Student Appreciation Picnic: May 18

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