From the Chair…

This semester brought many new faces to McKinley Hall and elsewhere on the Wichita State campus. As you will read inside this issue, we welcomed two new faculty members and a new staff member to the WSU Department of Chemistry. Administratively, there are also new faces in important positions. Bill Bischoff has stepped down after 13 years as Dean of the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, David McDonald has stepped down as Associate Provost for Research, Gary Miller has left the position of University Provost to become Chancellor of the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, and Don Beggs has retired after 15 years as President of WSU. Clearly all of these positions are vitally important to our department, both on a day-to-day basis and, especially, from the standpoint of our long-term mission. Three of these positions are currently filled on an interim basis, with Ron Matson (former chair of Sociology) as Dean, John Tomblin (director of NIAR) as Associate Provost for Research, and Keith Pickus (former Associate Provost) as Provost. At the top, however, we recently welcomed John Bardo as the new President of Wichita State University. Dr. Bardo, who began his career as a professor in the Sociology Department at WSU and most recently served as Chancellor of Western Carolina University, is projecting a sense of renewed energy as he begins his tenure at Wichita State. He has already begun to make some changes on campus, but it remains to be seen exactly where he will lead the university from an academic standpoint. He met with our department in November and confirmed that he is committed to continuing to establish and improve WSU as an institution which will emphasize both first-class educational opportunities and outstanding research efforts. We are excited to work with Dr. Bardo as he forges a new path for Wichita State. Among the first items on his agenda will be to fill the above-mentioned administrative positions on a permanent basis, a process which will undoubtedly involve a number of national searches and which will probably take a couple of years to complete. At this point, we continue to enjoy strong support from the current administration and we look forward to new challenges and new opportunities as we welcome new administrative partners to WSU.

David M. Eichhorn
Help the WSU Chemistry Department with your generous gift

In order to continue our mission of excellence in research and education, we need your help. Please indicate below the level of support you wish to pledge, or contact Mike Rishell (michael.rishell@wichita.edu). You may also make your gift online at foundation.wichita.edu/give (be sure to select “Other” and specify “Chemistry Department”).

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Please send this form to: WSU Foundation, 1845 N. Fairmount, Box 2, Wichita, KS  67260-0002 – Attn. Mike Rishell

New Chemistry Scholarship Established

Chemistry department alumnus Dr. Richard Dodge has made two generous donations to Wichita State University which will benefit students and faculty of the Chemistry department. The first gift is the establishment of the Richard P. Dodge Physical Sciences Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded annually to a student enrolled full time as a chemistry, mathematics, or physics major at Wichita State University. The second gift is a future bequest which will establish a fund for the purchase of equipment for the Chemistry department.

Dr. Dodge is a native of Wichita who received his bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from the University of Wichita in 1954. He went on to earn his Ph.D. in physical chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley. After working in industry for six years, Dr. Dodge accepted an appointment in the Chemistry Department at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, CA, where he taught for thirty years.

We are grateful to Dr. Dodge for this generous support of our department. As resources become more scarce and supplies become more expensive, gifts like this are extremely important in enabling us to continue to give our students the best possible educational opportunities and ensuring that the research efforts of our faculty can continue unencumbered.

If you have the inclination to remember your time at Wichita State with a donation to the Department of Chemistry, consider filling out the form at the top of this page, or contact Mike Rishell (michael.rishell@wichita.edu).

Mel Zandler named to Academy for Effective Teaching

The Academy for Effective Teaching at WSU recognizes the importance of effective teaching to the successful education of the students and, thus, to the mission of the university. To this end they are devoted to fostering effective teaching by assisting in the development of good teachers and the rewarding of accomplished teachers. The members of the Academy for Effective Teaching are honored retired emeritus faculty from all colleges on campus who are nominated for membership by current WSU faculty members. Mel Zandler, who retired from WSU in May, 2012, after 46 years of teaching, is one of the eight individuals selected to the Academy in 2012. He and the rest of the inductees were honored at a reception on November 15, 2012. We congratulate Mel on a well-deserved honor. Mel joins Phil Wahlbeck and the late Anneke Allen as members of the Academy for Effective Teaching from the Department of Chemistry.

Rong Li presents Watkins lectures

The Chemistry Department was pleased to welcome Dr. Rong Li as the 2012-2013 Watkins Visiting Professor in Chemistry. Dr. Li is an investigator at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research in Kansas City, MO, and a professor in the Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. Dr. Li gave a public lecture entitled “A numbers game: How cells find creative solutions quickly to adapt to big stress” and a scientific lecture entitled “New insights into the role of actin dynamics during cell migration and cell division.” Both lectures were informative and well-received, as Dr. Li talked about the molecular basis of cell motion and its relationship to diseases such as metastatic cancer. Dr. Li was honored at the Watkins banquet on November 7.
Two new faculty members

We welcome two new faculty members to the WSU Chemistry Department, both of whom started their appointments in the Fall 2012 semester.

Maojun Gong is a new Assistant Professor in Analytical Chemistry. Dr. Gong received his BS degree in chemical physics from the University of Science and Technology of China and his PhD in chemistry from the University of Cincinnati. He completed two postdoctoral appointments at the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan. Dr. Gong’s research interests are in the areas of separations, microfluidics, and microfabrication and he has begun to establish a research effort at WSU in applying these technologies to neuroscience and neurotransmitter monitoring. Dr. Gong and his wife, Hui Yang, have two children, aged 9 and 7.

Katie Mitchell-Koch is a new Assistant Professor in Physical Chemistry. Dr. Mitchell-Koch is a native of Wichita and received her BS in chemistry from the University of Kansas, followed by an MS in chemistry from the University of Michigan and a PhD in chemistry from the University of Kansas. She pursued postdoctoral studies at the University of Kansas, while also holding a lecturer position at Emporia State University. Dr. Mitchell Koch is a computational chemist and is establishing a research effort at WSU in characterizing the role that protein structure has on solvent structure, solvent and substrate dynamics, and hydrogen bonding in the active site. Dr. Mitchell-Koch’s husband, Jeremy, has begun a position teaching chemistry at Wichita Independent School. They have two children, aged 4 ½ and 2.

We welcome both Maojun and Katie to our faculty and wish them the best of luck as they begin their careers at WSU.

Chemistry Librarian retires

Elaine Harvey, who has been a fixture in the Chemistry Library for the past 19 years, retired from WSU at the end of October. Elaine began working in the Interlibrary Loan department of University Libraries in 1989 and moved to the Chemistry Library in 1993. Although officially employed by the University Libraries, Elaine was a vital member of the Chemistry department and attended all of our departmental functions and celebrations. In addition to supervising the library in McKinley Hall, she helped to keep track of all the changes in chemistry library services, references, and databases. The library hosted a retirement celebration in her honor on October 29th. Elaine’s husband, Dennis, was also well known in the chemistry department, as his position in Financial Operations brought him here often to keep track of instrumentation. Dennis retired earlier this year and we wish both of them a long and happy retirement. We all thank Elaine for her many years of service and friendship.

New Administrative Assistant

We are happy to welcome a new member of our Chemistry office staff. Marcia Norton joined the staff in July. She most recently worked in the Student Housing Office. Marcia will be splitting her time between the Departments of Biological Sciences and Chemistry, where she will take responsibility for the undergraduate majors. Welcome Marcia.

RECENT DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS

Rajapaksha, M; Lovell, S; Janowiak, BE.; Andra, KK.; Battaille, KP; Bann, JG; “pH effects on binding between the anthrax protective antigen and the host cellular receptor CMG2”; Protein Science 2012, 21, 1467-1480. 


Mandadapu, SR; Weerawarma, PM; Gunnam, MR; Alliston, KR; Lushington, GH; Kim, Y; Chang, K; Groutas, WC; “Potent inhibition of norovirus 3CL protease by peptidyl α-ketoamides and α-ketoheterocycles”; Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry Letters 2012, 2214, 4820-4825.

Aravapalli, S; Lai, H; Teramoto, T; Alliston, KR; Lushington, GH.; Ferguson, EL; Padmanabhan, R.; Groutas, WC; “Inhibitors of Dengue virus and West Nile virus proteases based on the aminobenzamide scaffold”; Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry 2012, 20, 4140-4148.

Johnson, DM; Eichhorn, DM; Moore, CE; Mwania, TM; Zhao, N; “Cyano-substituted bispyrazolylborate thallium(I) complexes”; Journal of Chemical Crystallography 2012, 42, 746-751.

Kullman MJ; Molesworth, S; Berden, G; Oomens, J; Van Stipdonk, M; “IRMPD spectroscopy b2 ions from protonated tripeptides with 4-aminomethyl benzoic acid residues”; International Journal of Mass Spectrometry 2012, 316-318, 174-181.

Carper, WR; Wahlbeck, PG; Griffiths, TR; “DFT Models of Molecular Species in Carbonate Molten Salts” Journal of Physical Chemistry B 2012, 116, 5559-5567.

Jacobs, R; Stranius, K; Maligaspe, E; Lemmytinen, H; Tkachenko, NV; Zandler, ME; D’Souza, F; “Syntheses and Excitation Transfer Studies of Near-Orthogonal Free-Base Porphyrin-Ruthenium Phthalocyanine Dyads and Pentads” Inorganic Chemistry 2012, 51, 3656-3665.

Alex, D; Gay-Andrieu, F; May, J; Thampi, L; Dou, D; Mooney, A; Groutas, W; Calderone, R; “Amino acid-derived 1,2-benzoisothiazolinone derivatives as novel small-molecule antifungal inhibitors: identification of potential genetic targets” Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy 2012 56, 4630-9.

Liu, J; Campos, LA; Cerminara, M; Wang, X; Ramanathan, R; English, DS; Munoz, V; “Exploring One-State Downhill Protein Folding”; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 2012, 109, 179-184.

Debbie Mitchum Earns MA Degree

We congratulate Debbie Mitchum, who has worked in the Chemistry Department office for 28 years, on earning a Masters degree in Criminal Justice from WSU. After completing her undergraduate degree in 2007, Debbie continued her studies while working full time as our Administrative Specialist. She participated in commencement ceremonies in December, 2012. Congratulations, Debbie!!
WSU Presentations at the Midwest Regional ACS Meeting

The Midwest Regional Meeting of the ACS was held October 24-27, 2012 in Omaha, NE. WSU had a very good showing at this meeting, with 19 presentations by students and faculty. We also debuted our new graduate student recruitment booth.

- Photocatalytic reduction of CO₂ to CO, and its study in the production of acrylic acid  Eric Oweggi, Venugopal Komreddy, D. Paul Rillema.
- Electronic properties of platinum(II) biphenyl complexes containing the ligands 2,2'-bipyridine and 1,10-phenanthroline  D. Paul Rillema, Arvin John Cruz, Curtis E. Moore, Khamis Siam, Ali Jehan, Wei Huang.
- Synthetic models for nickel superoxide dismutase  Nimini K Senaratne, David M Eichhorn.
- Get involved with the ACS Division of Chemical Education  D. Paul Rillema.

Control of actin polymerization and organization by palladin  Ritu Gurung, Moriah R. Beck.
Inhibition of Norovirus 3CL Protease by Bisulfite Adducts of Transition State Inhibitors  Mallikarjunareddy Gunnam, Sivakoteswara Rao Mandadapu, Kok-Chuan Tiew, Roxanne Adeline Uy, Allan M Prior, Kevin R Alliston, Duy H Hua, Yunjeong Kim, Kyeong-Ok Chang, William C Groutas.


19F-NMR studies on Anthrax Protective Antigen  Fatemeh Chadegani, James G Bann.

- Photo catalytic reduction of CO₂ to CO, and its study in the production of acrylic acid  Eric Oweggi, Venugopal Komreddy, D. Paul Rillema.
-Electronic properties of platinum(II) biphenyl complexes containing the ligands 2,2'-bipyridine and 1,10-phenanthroline  D. Paul Rillema, Arvin John Cruz, Curtis E. Moore, Khamis Siam, Ali Jehan, Wei Huang.
- Synthetic models for nickel superoxide dismutase  Nimini K Senaratne, David M Eichhorn.
- Get involved with the ACS Division of Chemical Education  D. Paul Rillema.

ACS Student Affiliates win award

The ACS Student Affiliates Chapter at Wichita State has received an Honorable Mention Award for its activities conducted during the 2011 – 2012 academic year. This award was based on a report submitted to the ACS Committee on Education. Of over 360 reports submitted to the committee, 46 outstanding, 81 commendable, and 114 honorable mention awards were presented. Among the activities of the Student Affiliates Chapter during the past year were touring local chemical-related industries and outreach programs, including a partnership with Exploration Place during National Chemistry Week. All the winning chapters will be honored at the 245th ACS National Meeting in New Orleans, LA in April, 2013. We applaud co-presidents Carmen Gott and Sarah Jack, faculty advisor Doug English, and all of the members of the ACS Student Affiliates Chapter for their hard work and dedication.

New Partnership with NIAR

The National Institute for Aviation Research, located at Wichita State University, provides research, design, testing and certification to the aviation manufacturing industry, government agencies, educational entities and other clients. Over the years, the Chemistry Department has had various interactions with NIAR. Our most recent partnership, begun this year, is to provide analytical chemistry services to NIAR’s clients. Spearheaded by Royal Lovingfoss, Associate Director of NIAR’s Composites Laboratory, and overseen by Kevin Langenwalter, Chemistry Department Instrumentation Manager, this partnership allows NIAR to offer analyses such as HPLC, GC/MS, and NMR for samples on which they are already performing other tests. The setup benefits both NIAR, which has an additional service to offer its clients, and the Chemistry Department, which gains a source of income and experience with aerospace materials. Most importantly, it establishes an ongoing relationship with a campus entity with which we have many common interests.