

American Chemical Society – Kalamazoo Local Section Newsletter

August 20, 2015

Vol. 5 - Issue 3



Chair's Comments

Brian Eklov

The spring was very busy for our section. Our annual awards gathering was held May 11 at Western (full report next month). The third climate change workshop was held on May 16 at KRESA, completing the grant we received from National ACS. As our grand finale, we co-hosted the Joint Great Lakes / Central Regional Meeting in Grand Rapids at the end of May, where over 700 attendees were able to choose from 398 papers across 23 symposia and two large poster sessions. It was rewarding to see the meeting take off with a life of its own after so much planning! A special thank you to those of you who attended the Industrial Member Focus Session with the national leadership. It was great to see so many members of the local section participating in what turned out to be a fruitful discussion.



Brian Eklov, Ph.D. (KACS Chair)

We are already looking forward to the fall. Planning is already underway for what I expect to be a very enjoyable Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum in October. We are working on planning a fall Science Cafe, and let's not forget our annual November gathering. As always, don't hesitate to let us know if you have anything else you'd like to see us do.

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Do you have questions, comments, or would like to contribute to this newsletter?
Send an email to: ACSkzoo@gmail.com

Chemistry Day at the Museum

John Miller

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and fellow-Members of ACS:

National Chemistry Week (NCW) is coming up soon! Please join the FUN!

NCW will be celebrated this year during the week of October 18-24, and its theme this year is "Chemistry Colors Our World!" exploring the chemistry of dyes, pigments, and light. The Kalamazoo Section's largest and most extensive annual outreach to the community is our **Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum (KVM)** on **October 17, from 12 noon to 4 p.m.** During the Chemistry Day event, our members and friends spend 4 hours on a Saturday afternoon presenting chemistry-related hands-on activities to many young people and their families who come to visit the museum and to learn about the joys and impacts of chemistry and its usefulness. Many visitors will receive materials to take home and read, do and share with their parents, teachers and friends. Annette Hoppenworth and her staff at the KVM work hard to assure the success of this outreach event, and their commitment is critical to the event's success.

Dr. Lydia M. Hines has stepped down, after 27 (!) years of tireless service, as our local coordinator for NCW. **Dr. John B. Miller** will be taking over the reins. Please contact him to let him know what activity you would like to present at **269-387-2871** or john.b.miller@wmich.edu. There is a modest budget for the event, so if you will need assistance with purchase of materials inform John of the need and the approximate expense when you contact him.

Thank you for helping youth get excited about Chemistry!



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The Joint Great Lakes/Central Regional Meeting 2015

Lydia Hines, General Co-Chair

Wednesday – Saturday, May 27-30, were days filled with exercise as 700+ registrants traveled between and within the Amway Grand Hotel and DeVos Halls in downtown Grand Rapids to take in all that was offered at this Regional Meeting.



Thanks are due to many of our local section members – seasoned chemists and students - who contributed to the success of this meeting through sponsorship of technical/social/networking events, exhibiting in our extensive exposition, organizing symposia (there were 24 unique symposia), giving technical presentations either orally or in our 2 large and highly popular poster sessions, all organized to accommodate the 397 abstracts submitted from the US and abroad. In addition to the symposia there were a plenary speaker and two keynote speakers.

Six ACS Governance representatives were in attendance the whole time, interacting with attendees, participating in technical sessions and social events (one took in the Fun Run as well); present and busily contributing to the smooth execution of the event were staff from the Washington office (often unsung heroes at ACS meetings of any size). AND, the newly-appointed ACS Executive Director, for whom this was the FIRST Regional Meeting of his tenure, was enthused by what he saw and heard at the JGLCRM2015.

A KACS area teacher received special recognition at the Awards Banquet: Mr. Brad Portis, chemistry teacher at Gull Lake High School, received the ACS's Division of Chemical Education Great Lakes Region Award for Excellence in High School Chemistry Teaching and as such is eligible to be considered for the national James Bryant Conant Award!

Informal conversations with samples of individuals in attendance – from students to experienced professional chemists – netted comments that the meeting was a **very profitable experience professionally and interpersonally.**

Special thanks are due to those of our Section who worked tirelessly on the planning and execution of this professionally-enriching meeting: **James J. Kiddle (WMU)** and **Brian M. Eklov (Kalexsyn)**, **Program co-chairs**; **Elke Schoffers (WMU)**, **Publicity chair** and **Exposition chair**; **Sherine Obare (WMU)**, **Awards co-chair**; and **Mark Wolf (Kalsec and now U of I – Chicago)**, the webmaster.

The 2015 JGLCRM in Pictures

Photos by Elke Schoffers



Outreach Events

Chemists Celebrate Earth Day

Lydia Hines

Maren Zanotti again spearheaded the Section's participation at the Kalamazoo Nature Center, which coincided with the Center's Earth Day celebration on Saturday, **April 18**. From 8:30 a.m. to 4 pm Students from WMU and Kalamazoo College chemistry clubs worked in tandem to distribute copies of an activity-packed theme-related publication, Celebrating Chemistry, titled "Climate Science: More than just a Weather Report" and developed by the American Chemical Society, and to help youngsters make chromatography butterflies. As always, families were most appreciative of the science-related information and hands-on project.

The following Saturday, **April 25**, was a cold, overcast day, so the "outdoor" program planned by the Oshtemo Branch of the Kalamazoo Public Library was moved indoors – The library staff arranged for us to have a table in the entrance hallway, and as in previous years it gave us a great opportunity to interact with the families that were there for the planned Music event. Brian Eklov and Lydia Hines were able to draw in about 50 children with demos of "Magic Sand", color-changing beads, and "indicator" demonstrations. Parents happily followed their children to our table and copies of Celebrating Chemistry were gratefully received; the first patron at our table was a 4th grade science teacher and she was so excited to hear about our KACS offerings through the year!

Report on the 3rd (and Last) Climate Science Toolkit Event

Steve Bertman

This last event, in the series of three we arranged to hold based on the Climate Science grant received from National ACS under Bassam Shakhashiri's leadership, went extremely well. We had our largest class and we were better at managing our time/technology so that there was less rushing and more time for questions. We had 14 participants. The workshop consisted of 4 sections - 1. the scientific basis of climate change, 2. the ecological consequences of climate change, 3. the economic consequences of climate change, 4. the potential technological, social, and personal actions. Each section had a content portion and a classroom-ready activity using online resources including the ACS Climate Toolkit. We distributed to each participant a flash drive with copies of resources and an editable version of the activities to make adoption of the activities in their own classrooms easier. Many of the participants also took copies of the ACS Earth Day activity booklets for their classrooms. The day appeared to be very well received. One veteran teacher said that it was the best Professional Development event she has been to!

Community Events

“Chemistry on Stamps”, a lecture by Dr. Daniel Rabinovich

Lydia Hines

Dr. Rabinovich was in Kalamazoo on April 17, 2015, to visit the WMU Chemistry Department as a repeat of a weather-aborted visit planned for 2011; that also happened to be the day that the Chemistry Department had a presentation of research posters showing work being accomplished by students in the department and also made its end-of-year awards to outstanding students. At the completion of the awards ceremony there was a very appreciative audience to hear Dr. Rabinovich's presentation on a portion of his extensive collection of stamps from around the world, stamps which commemorate a variety of events, elements, inventors, concepts, and some mis-concepts, connected with our profession. He described how he uses these stamps to engage his beginning chemistry students in the understanding the evolution of the practice of chemistry over the years - starting with alchemy, showing the importance of safety, and bringing to life the idea that chemistry is universal and is appreciated worldwide.

A “pat on our back” for our Competitive Exam Awards

Lydia Hines

Once in a while, several years after his/her child has received an award from the KACS, I hear from parents that they joyfully remember the ceremony at which we have awarded that child, and they go on to give me a story about the recipient's educational achievements since that time.

On May 21 of this year, 2015, I heard a great interview on WMUK, which again gives us reason to be pleased that as a Section we continue to make a small difference by rewarding our local High School students: the first-place winner of our 2012 Competitive Exam, Stephen John (Portage Central & KAMSC), matriculated at WMU in the Lee Honors College and this year is graduating with a Bachelors degree in Biomedical Sciences and Mechanical Engineering; he is on his way to the University of Michigan Medical School and recently was named a co-recipient (with fellow WMU student Joseph Barnett) of the MIT-Lemelson Collegiate Student Prize for the development of a respiratory device for use in premature infants in underdeveloped countries (read the article which describes these young men's story in the Spring 2015 issue of [The Western Michigan University Magazine](http://wmich.edu/magazine), pp12-13 and 29; wmich.edu/magazine) and/or listen to their interview aired on May 21 at the following link <http://wmuk.org/topic/westsouthwest>. Congratulations, Stephen and Joshua!

Community News

Kalamazoo College DowBQ

Mara Birndorff

In order to foster community and networking among and between the biology and chemistry students and faculty at Kalamazoo College, the ACS student chapter held the yearly DOWBQ (DOW barbecue) event on May 21, 2015. Members of the Kalamazoo College ACS student group, and other students and faculty in the Dow Science Center made the event possible. Professors and other staff brought chips and dessert, and students helped set up, grill and run the event. Throughout the event, the biology and chemistry students were able to talk about their Senior Individualized Projects (SIPS), classes, and other summer plans. This event fostered conversation between students of different years and majors, as well as with their professors, in a more casual, personal environment. This event, always a major highlight of the year, was made possible by the financial support from KACS. Attendance of 180 surpassed expectations by 80!



Our Councilor's (Lydia Hines') report from the Spring ACS Meeting in Denver can be found on the KACS website

See: <http://kalamazooacs.org/about/councilor-reports.html>