



The KalChemist News

January 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

Vol. 15, Issue 1

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2025 ACS Executive Officers

Chair

Dr. Nicole Burke

nburke@kalsec.com

Past-Chair

Dr. Dibyendu Mondal

dibyendu2mondal@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

Dr. Joe Chemler

chair.elect@kalamazooacs.org

Secretary

Mr. Jacob Kirkendall

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Treasurer

Mr. Sean Lapekas

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Councilor

Dr. Lydia E. M. Hines

lemhwgh@gmail.com

Alternate Councilor

Dr. Brian Eklov

alternatecouncilor@kalamazooacs.org

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National Chemistry Olympiad Offered

The KACS is now offering the National Chemistry Olympiad to those in the Section who qualify and are interested in applying.

Do you know a high school student with a passion for chemistry? Encourage them to challenge themselves by registering for the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) competition.

This prestigious competition provides students with an opportunity to showcase their chemistry knowledge and compete for a spot on the U.S. Chemistry Olympiad team.

The competition consists of two rounds: the Local Section Exam, which is administered at participating schools, and the National Exam, where top scorers advance to the final selection process.

The registration deadline is January 17, 2025. Students attending high schools in Kalamazoo, Allegan, and Van Buren Counties must register with the Kalamazoo Local Section.

For more details and to register, students can visit <https://www.acs.org/education/olympiad.html>. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the KACS USNCO co-coordinators, Dr. Carol Guerrero [cguerrero@kvcc.edu] or Dr. Doug Williams [williamskd@charter.net]. Don't miss this opportunity to inspire the next generation of chemistry leaders!



Books Found a Home!



All the Reference Books offered in the December issue of The KalChemist News have found a "Happy Home." Thank you!



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WMU ChemClub Presents at Compass High School

The WMU ChemClub was involved in outreach to Compass High School in Comstock. During the Fall semester they paid four visits to the school and provided several hands-on activities for the students there; their teacher and the students expressed **great enthusiasm** for the opportunity they were given to learn a subject to which they are not routinely exposed. Thanks are due to presenters Andrew Kaczmar and John McClelland.



Yet Another Invitation to the Great Lakes Regional Meeting

The following is another reminder for you to check out the information about the **Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Appleton, WI, June 4-6, 2025**, <https://greatlakesregion-accs.org/event-welcome/glr-2025>

Information is also available for **universities/colleges/businesses** in our KACS area (Allegan - Kalamazoo - Van Buren counties) to **advertise** their offerings by becoming **sponsors** for the Regional meeting **or** by signing up for a table as an **academic or industrial exhibitor** and sending one or more representatives to communicate your activities and possibly to recruit for employment <https://greatlakesregion-accs.org/event-welcome/Expo>

Finally, please consider nominating an outstanding HS teacher for the **Great Lakes Regional Award for Excellence in High School Teaching**.

- This award is offered by the Chemical Education (CHED) division to recognize a High School teacher within the region who excels in the classroom and beyond
- More information and a nomination form can be found at <https://greatlakesregion-accs.org/Event-Awards> (*note – the nomination form for this award is extensive and we encourage you to begin completing it well in advance of the deadline*)

Deadline: March 1, 2025

If you have any questions regarding this award, please contact Graeme Wyllie [wyllie@cord.edu], Great Lakes Region Awards Chair.



A Message from the 2025 Chair, Dr. Nicole Burke

I am excited and honored to serve as the 2025 Chair of the Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society (KACS). In 2024, the Executive Committee of KACS focused on re-engagement with the community, particularly with regards to STEM teachers and students. These efforts culminated in many successful initiatives, including the reinstatement of the annual chemistry competitive exam for high school students as well as the continuation of long-standing activities like Project SEED, the annual awards ceremony, and the Fall poster session at Bell's Brewery.



These efforts will continue into 2025 with plans to take part in the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad. Additionally, in 2025 we aim to boost engagement with the broader Kalamazoo community through the integration of KACS events with long-standing community events. This will enable us to communicate the positive impact of chemistry on society and the local community in direct support of both national and local ACS goals. We also fully intend to continue hosting our annual awards ceremony which recognizes long-term ACS members and exemplary students and teachers, support Project SEED engagement, participate in outreach activities during National Chemistry Week and Chemists Celebrate Earth Week, host engaging and relevant speakers, and offer networking opportunities.

In 2025 we aim to boost engagement with the broader Kalamazoo community through the integration of KACS events with long-standing community events.

Our Local Section Was Busy in 2024!

For our members' general awareness, events offered by KACS in 2024 are listed below:

Throughout the Year

- Monthly newsletter, The KalChemist News (Jan-June, Aug-Dec)
- Executive Committee meetings monthly, except July
- MiSTEM for teachers: 4 ZOOM meetings

February

- Approved grants to 4 K-College students to attend ACS NOLA 3/17-21

March

- 11—In-person lecture by Ms. Martha Gammill, "Patents 101"
- 11-15—1st part of Competitive (HS) Exam

April

- 9—In-person lecture by Dr. Inna Popova, "Chemicals of Emerging Concerns Found in Soils"
- 20—2nd level of Competitive Exam
- 20-28—Chemists Celebrate Earth Week: distribution of Celebrating Chemistry "Getting a Charge Out of Chemistry"—Batteries

May

- 13—Awards Gathering at WMed Innovation Center

June

- Project SEED

July

- Project SEED

August

- Project SEED
- 23—Project SEED Poster Session

September

- 17—In-person lecture by Dr. Mary Virginia Orna, "The Chemistry of Color"

October

- 7—Speed-Networking Event on ZOOM
- 19—National Chemistry Week: Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum—hands-on activities and distribution of Celebrating Chemistry "Picture-Perfect Chemistry"

November

- 6—Bell's In-Person Event ("Recycle-A-Poster") with Lecture by Dr. Carrie Graveel "Identifying causes and novel therapeutic strategies for treatment-resistant cancers"

KACS Calendar

January

- **January 13, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar with Michael Van Stipdonk (Duquesne University), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- January Executive Committee meeting: contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

February

- **February 3, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar with Nicolai Lehnert (University of Michigan), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- February Executive Committee meeting: contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

March

- **March 17, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar with Jovica Badjic (The Ohio State University), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- March Executive Committee meeting: contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **March 23-27**: ACS National Meeting in San Diego; more information [here](#)

We Want to Hear from You!

We would love to hear from you and share your news with fellow scientists in Allegan, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren counties! Send your news and events to newsletter editor Dr. Lydia E. M. Hines at lemhwgh@gmail.com by the end of the month in order to get them in the next month's newsletter!





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2025 ACS Executive Officers

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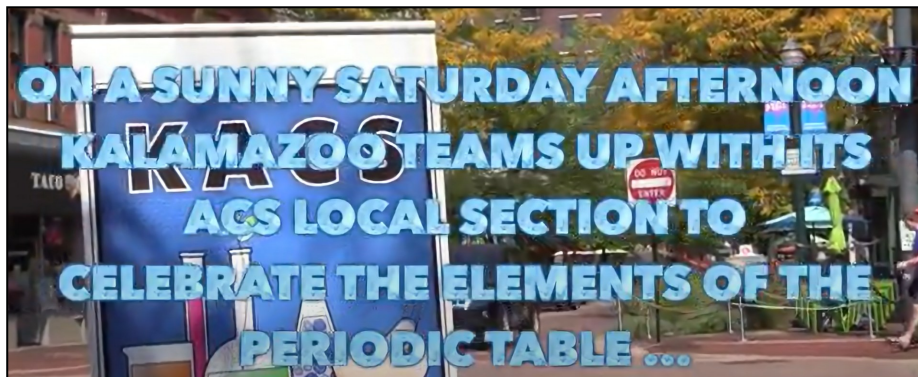
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A KACS Retrospective

Enjoy a KACS retrospective which should give you/your students/friends/family a smile—Thanks to Steve Secreast, KACS chair 2017!

In **2017**, and in anticipation of the International Year of the Periodic Table (IYPT) our **then-KACS Chair, Steve Secreast**, spent time on a beautiful spring afternoon at the Kalamazoo Mall talking to passers-by, offering each of them an opportunity to wear a KACS lab coat (purchased with a grant from ACS) and be videotaped holding up a card showing the symbol of each element in the Periodic Table (all 118 named as of November 28, 2016) while announcing its name. All the folks given this opportunity accepted his offer, and the result is shown in the following link: <https://youtu.be/zaZmjnkYEk8>



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Meet Your Newly-Elected KACS Officers

Nicole Burke, Chair 2025

Nicole Burke's educational background includes a Bachelors in Chemistry from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry from Purdue University. She started her career at Kellogg's where she directed analytical chemistry testing to guide product development. Since 2019 she has worked at Kalsec where she leverages her strong technical background to accelerate the pace of innovation commercialization via technology scouting, open innovation, and project management. After serving as the KACS Chair Elect for 2022, she relocated to the Netherlands in 2023 for a one-year temporary assignment to lead the design and build-out of Kalsec's newest R&D location in Wageningen. After returning to the U.S. in 2024, she resumed KACS responsibilities as Chair Elect. Nicole resides in Kalamazoo with her husband, 5-year-old daughter, infant son, and two bulldogs. In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, baking, and attempting to complete the seemingly never-ending updates to their 100-year-old historic home.



Joe Chemler, Chair-Elect 2025

Joseph Chemler is the biotransformation platform leader at Kalsec, a food ingredient company in Kalamazoo. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in chemical engineering from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, his Ph.D. in chemical and biological engineering from the University at Buffalo and performed postdoctoral research at the University of Michigan. Joseph started his industry career at Pfizer working in the Natural Products group within Medicinal Chemistry as a Senior Scientist followed by working as a group manager at the synthetic biology startup Zymergen. Joseph has been an ACS member since 2007.



Sean Lapekas, Treasurer 2025-26

Sean's passion for chemistry began in elementary school when he received a chemistry set for Christmas. In college, Sean participated in a 3-2 program, receiving a B.A. in Chemistry from Kalamazoo College in 1995 and a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Michigan State University in 1996. He has nearly three decades of experience in the pharmaceutical and fine chemicals industries. Sean is a respected expert in the fields of process safety and process R&D, resulting in invitations for distinguished international speaking engagements. In 2016 he was appointed to serve as the inaugural chair of the Pharmaceutical, Food, and Fine Chemical Subgroup that he helped establish within AIChE's Center for Chemical Process Safety (CCPS), a role he held for 2 years. In 2018, Sean and his wife Shannon relocated back to the Kalamazoo area to accept a position with Pfizer. Sean currently serves as a Technical Services Manager with Pfizer CentreOne, Pfizer's embedded CMO business unit. His hobbies include playing the violin with the Kalamazoo Philharmonia, running, and playing tennis.



Brian Eklov, Alternate Councilor 2025-27

A long-term ACS and KACS member, Brian has served as Chair of the KACS (2015-16), as program co-chair for the 2015 Joint Great Lakes / Central Regional Meeting, as a member of ACS' Committee on Chemical Abstract Services, and currently serves as a member of its Committee on Membership Affairs. He received his undergraduate degree in chemistry from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, did his graduate work at the University of Minnesota and worked with Dr. Scott Denmark as a post-doc at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. He joined Kaleksyn (NOW Dipharma Inc.) in 2005 and continues his employ at Dipharma Inc. as its President and CEO. Under his leadership, Dipharma Inc. implemented a GMP-compliant Kilolab which underwent a successful FDA pre-approval inspection in January of 2024.



A 'Trip Report' from Joseph Chemler, Chair-Elect

At the end of January I attended a three-day training seminar, called the ACS Leadership Institute, which was held in Houston, TX.

The Leadership Institute is a packed weekend of education in volunteer management and leadership. The material presented is geared toward enabling volunteers to be more successful as leaders within the ACS and other professional endeavors. The Institute provides the opportunity to learn, hear innovative ideas and approaches, network, and collaborate, all while having fun!

Groups participating at the Institute include the ACS Board of Directors, Divisions' Leaders, Future of Spring and Fall Meeting Workshop, Graduate School Readiness and Professional Development Boot Camp, Local Section Leaders, Membership Activities Committee, New Committee Chairs, Student Leaders, Younger Chemists Leaders, and ACS staff.

The first day was kicked off by the CEO of ACS, Albert G. Horvath, who welcomed attendees and announced the upcoming 150th anniversary of ACS in 2026! To further the mission of ACS, a rebranding is underway centered around "Chemistry is Everything."

As the chair-elect, I primarily attended Local Section Leadership Track sessions. The goal of the sessions was to provide local section chair-elects and leaders with tools and resources to be successful. The training included examples of successful activities, an opportunity to generate ideas about an activity and develop it, guidance to obtain help, what grants are available, a forum to connect with other local section leaders, a venue to discuss common concerns, evaluate best practices, and how to measure success. What was most impactful for me was learning about available grants and recommendations on planning and executing successful events. I walked away with many great ideas for next year, which will require advanced planning and collaboration with our local section members. I look forward to continuing to learn this year and use the knowledge I gained from the leadership training.



Needed: CCEW Coordinator!

This is an **invitation to our members for someone to offer to be coordinator for the annual CCEW (Chemists Celebrate Earth Week) event hosted by our KACS.**

This spring CCEW 2025 will be celebrated from April 20-26; the theme is "Glaciers: Hot Topic, Cool Chemistry!" We value your participation and look forward to **your offer to lead the outreach effort of our KACS as our CCEW coordinator!** Your offer to be a coordinator is essential to the success of our program (visit www.acs.org/ccew for program details). Resources from the Outreach Office at ACS will be made available to coordinators starting in April. In the interim, Lydia E.M. Hines will continue as coordinator.

Great Lakes Regional Meeting Abstract Submission Portal Now Open

The following invitation was sent to our Section from the meeting's leadership team:

Abstracts are now being accepted for the 2025 Great Lakes Regional Meeting (GLRM). GLRM 2025 will be held from **Wednesday to Friday, June 4-6, 2025** in Appleton, Wisconsin, and is being co-hosted by the Central Wisconsin and Northeast Wisconsin Local Sections.

This year's theme is **Chemistry for a Better Planet**. Chemistry has led to hundreds of innovative solutions over the last several centuries and it will continue to do so. Chemistry helps us gain a better understanding of the world around us, in all facets of life: health care, environmental science, and more. Chemistry and the planet are closely intertwined with one another and there are connections at all different levels and scales. With this theme, we hope to encourage curiosity and ingenuity to explore and discover all the possibilities that exist between the two.

[Visit the website](#) to find a list of the programming divisions and planned symposia open for submissions.

'Molecular Baskets as Abiotic Sequesters of Toxic Drugs' Topic of Next Seminar



Dr. Jovica D. Badjić, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at The Ohio State University, will present a seminar on the topic of "Molecular Baskets as Abiotic Sequesters of Toxic Drugs" on Monday, March 17 at 3 p.m. in the WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260.

Molecular baskets with amino acids at their rim are cup-shaped molecules capable of forming inclusion complexes with a variety of complementary guests in water. Our most recent computational and experimental efforts center on developing baskets capable of including toxic anticancer methotrexate and synthetic opioid fentanyl in their binding pockets. This lecture will describe discoveries related to the preparation of such hosts and the role of noncovalent interactions and hydrophobic effect for their assembly/recognition characteristics in abiotic and biotic environments.

KACS Calendar

February

- **February 19, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** February Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

March

- **March 17, Monday, 3 p.m.:** Seminar with Dr. Jovica Badjić (The Ohio State University), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- **March 19, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** March Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **March 23-27:** ACS National Meeting in San Diego; more information [here](#)

April

- **April 7, Monday, 3 p.m.:** Seminar with Dr. Michal Marszewski (University of Toledo), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- **April 16, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** April Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **April 20-26:** CCEW "Glaciers: Hot Topic, Cool Chemistry!" **We highly value your involvement;** it is essential to the success of the program.



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Sharing Chemistry with Middle Schoolers

By Andrew Kaczmar

In February, the WMU Chemistry Club visited 6th and 7th graders at The Gagie School twice to engage them in exciting chemistry activities and to learn more about chemistry and the broader implications of science.

On the first day, the students participated in a goldenrod paper experiment. Each student made Valentine's Day cards for friends and family using a baking soda solution and color-changing goldenrod paper. Next, the students made their own slime! All

of the students were thrilled with this activity, and they all learned basic chemistry concepts like chemical reactions and polymers.

Two weeks later, the WMU Chemistry Club returned to The Gagie School to have a presentation about science and ethics. Through videos and interactive discussions, students explored the pros and cons of scientific discovery and learned about the ethical considerations of scientific research and technological advancements. The students had many thoughtful questions, but they had even more insights that demonstrated exceptional critical thinking and awareness at such a young age.

Overall, the students had a fantastic time. In a thank you letter, one student wrote, "I greatly enjoyed your visit to the Gagie School! Watching you explain the chemical reaction and the reason behind it sparked interest in me. My mom and dad were both ecstatic that I made them a science Valentine's card. Thank you for visiting us here at The Gagie School. I greatly enjoyed it." The visits had a fantastic impact on the students, and we were honored to visit The Gagie School. Opportunities like these reinforce the importance of engaging young students in science, especially chemistry.



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ACS Guidelines Regarding Political Activities

The following important reminder of our guidelines regarding political activities was sent to ACS Local Section Officers with the request that we distribute it to our membership [Kim Knight and Tokë Vandervoort are, respectively, the ACS Secretary and the ACS General Counsel].

With any change in administration, political discussions often take center stage across the U.S. and beyond. Like anyone else, ACS volunteers are likely to have personal interests and opinions in this regard.



ACS respects each individual's right to hold and express political views and to engage in politics that affect them. However, as a congressionally chartered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, ACS must navigate these interests carefully to ensure compliance with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax code and, in many cases, local laws governing our operations.

While you are free to express your political views as a private citizen, it is important that your statements or actions do not suggest ACS endorsement, involvement or complicity in any political matter.

To ensure compliance with IRS regulation, please be sure to follow these guidelines:

1. Use your personal email address (non-employer) when expressing your personal positions or views. Use your ACS email account, if applicable, only to conduct ACS business.
2. Do not use your ACS affiliation when engaging in political activities or commentary. Avoid wearing or displaying ACS-branded items in such context.
3. Refrain from using ACS resources for political purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, ACS email addresses, office addresses, the ACS name, any ACS online and social media platforms, and any member, donor or other ACS-related lists.
4. Use your personal email and social media accounts for political discussions. If your account discloses your ACS affiliation (e.g., LinkedIn), a disclaimer should be added (e.g., in the "About/Bio" section) and where possible, at the end of such communications. A suggested disclaimer is: *"All views and opinions expressed are my own."*

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out to the Secretary's Office at secretary@acs.org.

Thank you for your attention to these important guidelines.

Regards,

Kim and Tokë

(Note from LaTrease Garrison, Chief Operating Officer of the ACS: The "Stand Up for Science" events occurring across the country are examples of activities that we cannot participate in as an organization. Doing so could compromise ACS's nonprofit status. Therefore, individuals who wish to participate should do so in their personal capacity and not under the umbrella of ACS or the local section. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.)

Planetary Science Prof to Present Lectureship

The ACS Western Michigan Section invites us to the Arnold C. Ott Lectureship in Chemistry, April 10 and 11, 2025 at Grand Valley State University.

Lectures will be presented by Dante Lauretta, Regents Professor of Planetary Science and Cosmochemistry at the University of Arizona.

Public Lecture

Thursday, April 10, 2025

Life in the Cosmos—

The Search for Consciousness and Biology in the Universe

Reception—5 p.m., Lecture—6 p.m.

Grand River Room, Russel H. Kirkhof Center, GVSU Allendale Campus

Chemistry Seminar

Friday, April 11, 2025

Journeys on the Asteroid Frontier—

The Engineering Behind NASA's OSIRIS—REx Asteroid Sample Return Mission

1 p.m.

Pere Marquette Room, Russel H. Kirkhof Center, GVSU Allendale Campus



GLRM Registration Reminder

Remember to register for the Great Lakes Regional Meeting June 4-6 in Appleton, Wisconsin!

<https://greatlakesregion-acs.org/event-welcome/glrm-2025>

KACS Calendar

March

- **March 17, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar with Dr. Jovica Badjić (The Ohio State University), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260
- **March 19, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: March Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **March 23-27**: ACS National Meeting in San Diego: Theme is “Pushing Boundaries. Solving Global Challenges.” More information [here](#)

April

- **April 7, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar presentation with Dr. Michal Marszewski (University of Toledo), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260. [Dr. Marszewski has been engaged in cutting-edge research of nano-porous materials for energy and environmental applications since he was a master's student.]
- **April 10, Thursday**, 6 p.m.: “Life in the Cosmos” lecture, Russel H. Kirkhof Center, GVSU Allendale Campus
- **April 11, Friday**, 1 p.m.: “Journeys on the Asteroid Frontier” seminar, Russel H. Kirkhof Center, GVSU Allendale Campus
- **April 16, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: April Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **April 20-26**: CCEW “Glaciers: Hot Topic, Cool Chemistry!” Many thanks to Carol Guerrero who volunteered to coordinate our Section's CCEW. I am sure she would value your offer to help; it is essential to the success of the program (visit www.acs.org/ccew for program details). Carol's contact information is cguerrero@kvcc.edu

May

- **May 21, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: March Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)



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Congratulations, Dr. Blakely Tresca!

Maxwell Rhames, Kalamazoo College senior Chemistry major and active student chapter leader, saw me, Lydia Hines, at the Spring ACS meeting in San Diego and came over for a pleasant chat; part of the conversation included letting me know that **Dr. Blakely Tresca**, KACS member and K College faculty member who has been actively involved with a variety of our KACS student- and teacher-related outreach activities had been **awarded tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Chemistry**. This milestone also signifies the College's confidence in the contributions he will make throughout his career; I am happy to share the public tribute below, and to extend our Kalamazoo section's CONGRATULATIONS to Blakely!



Dr. Blakely Tresca, Chemistry

Tresca teaches organic chemistry at K while striving to bring research into the classroom. He has mentored more than 30 research students and supervised 14 SIPs with more than 50% of his research mentees attending graduate programs at institutions such as the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin and Washington University in St. Louis.

Tresca has had five published articles and recently received a [\\$250,000 grant](#) from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The NSF funds will help his students develop a lab partnership with some of their counterparts at the University of Toronto while performing research with peptoid nanomaterials.

At K, Tresca has served on the Educational Policies Committee (EPC), where he participated in revising SIP guidelines and last year's teacher's assistant policy. Beyond EPC, he has been an advisor to K's student chapter of the American Chemical Society (ACS) while working with the local ACS professional chapter. He's also been the Michigan representative to the Midwest Association of Chemistry Teachers at Liberal Arts Colleges (MACTLAC) Board.

Tresca holds a bachelor's degree from Trinity University, along with a master's degree and a doctorate from the University of Oregon.



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Act4Chemistry Reminder

By Doug Williams

In our March newsletter, we reminded you of [important guidelines](#) to separate our personal political activities and viewpoints from our affiliation with ACS. We are not authorized to voice our own political opinions as those of ACS. However, it is also relevant to remind you that your society is NOT silent on government issues. ACS advocates vigorously for the importance of chemistry and science in developing sound policies for the welfare of all.

If you are motivated to engage in advocacy work with the support of ACS, please check the ACS' [Act4Chemistry Legislative Action Network](#). As explained on the ACS website, Act4Chemistry *allows members to become involved in advocacy at the federal level. It provides support to individual members, local sections, state committees, and other groups. Individual members can become involved at different levels of commitment and increase their strengths as advocates by joining advocacy groups. Currently, Act4Chemistry gives over 10,000 ACS members an easy, effective way to voice opinions to legislators. It is one of the most effective groups in the ACS. Act4Chemistry focuses primarily on federal science education and R&D policy, but also addresses environment, workplace, and technological competitiveness.*

Editor's Note: In addition to the *Act4 Chemistry Legislative Action Network* described above, as editor I would like to **encourage readers to go to the "Explore ACS" line at [acs.org](https://www.acs.org) and consider the multitude of opportunities and resources available at ACS for its members' growth in their professional lives.**



Registration Now Open for GLRM!

[Registration](#) is now open for the Great Lakes Regional Meeting 2025, which will be held from June 4-6 in Appleton, Wisconsin! Early-bird rate runs until May 4.

Highlights from the Spring ACS Meeting

Councilor's report (Highlights) from the Spring ACS Meeting in San Diego, where the weather was a bit cool and not as consistently sunny as anticipated...

The full report may be found on our website at <https://kalamazooacs.org/archives/>.

Below are a few highlights:

- The two individuals selected by the Councilors to be the **candidates for President-elect** are **Dawn Mason and Christina Bodurow**; this was the year to select “non-academics” for the Fall election. Members are urged to read the candidates' platforms when they appear in C&EN and VOTE come October-November!
- The updating of our KACS Bylaws merited mention in the oral report from the Chair of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws (C&B); it was one of the 21 Local Section bylaws certified during 2025.
- The Committee on Committees (ConC) is making committee participation on all but the three council-elected committees available to all members, whether or not they are councilors; forms are available online at www.cmte.acs.org through July 3.
- Registration at the Spring 2025 meeting was 15,332 (14,251 in-person and 1,081 online).
- The ACS Fall 2025 meeting will be held in Washington, DC, from August 17-21, 2025.
- As of December 31, 2024, ACS membership stood at approximately 100,000.

KACS Calendar

April

- **April 7, Monday**, 3 p.m.: Seminar presentation with Dr. Michal Marszewski (University of Toledo), WMU Chemistry Building Rm. 1260. [Dr. Marszewski has been engaged in cutting-edge research of nano-porous materials for energy and environmental applications since he was a master's student.]
- **April 16, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: April Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **April 20-26**: CCEW “Glaciers: Hot Topic, Cool Chemistry!” Thanks to Carol Guerrero who offered to take on leadership of CCEW, as reported in the March issue of this newsletter). **YOUR involvement** is highly valued — it is **essential to the success of the program** (visit www.acs.org/ccew for program details). Resources are available by contacting Carol Guerrero (cguerrero@kvcc.edu), and I am sure offers to help in this outreach would be welcome.



May

- *Within first two weeks?* KACS Awards Gathering; date, location, and start time TBD
- **May 21, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: May Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

June

- **June 4-6**: GLRM, Appleton, WI ([Registration](#) now open)
- **June 18, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: June Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

July

No activities scheduled for this month



The KalChemist News

May 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

Vol. 15, Issue 5

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Page 4

2025 ACS Executive Officers

Chair

Dr. Nicole Burke

nburke@kalsec.com

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Dr. Dibyendu Mondal

dibyendu2mondal@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

Dr. Joe Chemler

chair.elect@kalamazooacs.org

Secretary

Mr. Jacob Kirkendall

secretary@kalamazooacs.org

Treasurer

Mr. Sean Lapekas

treasurer@kalamazooacs.org

Councilor

Dr. Lydia E. M. Hines

lemhwgh@gmail.com

Alternate Councilor

Dr. Brian Eklov

alternatecouncilor@kalamazooacs.org

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Kalamazoo,
and Van Buren counties

Our 2025 KACS Honorees

Each year, the Kalamazoo Section of the ACS recognizes several individuals at its Awards Gathering. The program consists of brief introductions of our 50- and 60-year ACS members, our KACS past-chair, students who have completed a summer research experience through our KACS/ACS SEED program, and our Section's Meritorious Service Award winner; others who are recognized and receive awards are an outstanding teacher, outstanding graduating chemistry majors from Kalamazoo College and WMU, HS students nominated as outstanding by their chemistry teachers and HS students who have performed well on a two-tiered examination.

We especially honor our 60-year ACS members: Dr. Malcolm Moon and Dr. Andrew Zeiler and our 50-year members: Dr. Ray Sweany, Dr. John Stodola and Dr. Rodney Walters.

This year's awards ceremony will be held Tuesday, May 20, starting at 6 p.m. via ZOOM. Contact Dr. Joe Chemler for a link to participate.

Congratulations, and our best wishes to all of this year's honorees!

* * *

Below is wise advice offered by one of this year's 50-year members, who served as our 1999 KACS chair—Dr. John D. Stodola

"Why join ACS as an undergraduate? It is a great investment! Go for it. Pass it on to the next generation."

For about the price of a tank of gas you get:

- a lifetime of contacts with other chemists, especially the ones that will hire you and be your co-workers
- a weekly look at [Chemical & Engineering News](#) (and surprises you won't see anywhere else)
- a path into the chemical literature and updates on what's happening outside your field
- a wide range of meetings (with some discounts) and programs to share your work

[Editor's note: Many thanks, John, for your comments and continuing enthusiasm; John joined the ACS at the encouragement of his undergraduate adviser and served our profession in Kalamazoo, starting at The Upjohn Company!]



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Spotlight on Excellence: Student Achievements in KACS Competitive Exam and U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad

By Dr. Carol Guerrero and Dr. Doug Williams
Competitive Exam Subcommittee, USNCO co-coordinators

The Kalamazoo American Chemical Society (KACS) successfully completed its newly structured Competitive Exam and participation in the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) competition. Both the KACS Competitive Exam and the USNCO competition are established academic competitions designed to identify and nurture outstanding achievement in chemistry among high school students. These competitions attract motivated students who demonstrate a passion for chemistry and seek to challenge themselves in a competitive setting. Participation in these competitions fosters a sense of camaraderie among like-minded peers and encourages continuous learning and growth.

Both programs aim to motivate high school students to pursue academic distinction through challenging assessments while recognizing outstanding achievement. In addition, the initiatives recognize the contributions of chemistry educators and foster collaboration between KACS and local high school chemistry teachers.

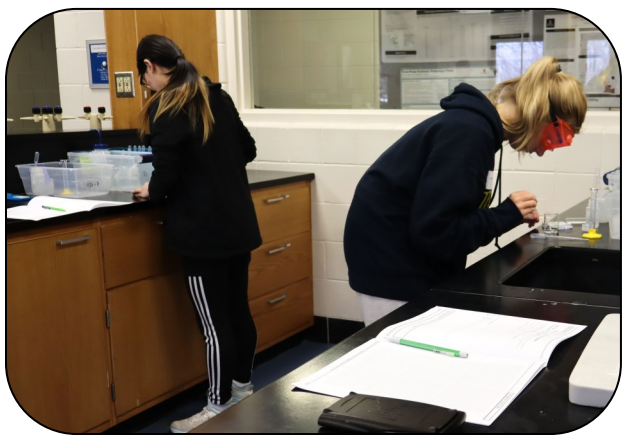


Between March 1 and March 23, 2025, a total of 134 students from 11 area high schools participated in the KACS Competitive Exam. High schools represented included Climax-Scotts High School, Galesburg-Augusta High School, Gull Lake High School, Hartford High School, Kalamazoo Central High School, Kalamazoo Christian High School, Loy Norrix High School, Parchment High School, Portage Central High School, Portage Northern High School, and Vicksburg High School. This assessment served a dual purpose: it determined the recipients of the KACS scholarships and acted as the qualifying exam for the USNCO competition. All registered students who took the exam received a certificate of participation.

The top three scorers in the KACS Competitive Exam were awarded KACS scholarships in recognition of their outstanding academic performance. The top scorer was Madeline Beck (Portage Central High School) followed by the second- and third-highest scorers David Shen (Portage Northern High School) and Janelle Yao (Portage Central High School), respectively. Scholarship recipients will receive a check and certificate of achievement.

The American Chemical Society (ACS) determines the number of USNCO qualifying students for each local section based on the number of ACS members in the local section, with a maximum of two students per home high school. The KACS was allotted 12 students for the competition. The 12 qualifying students, in alphabetical order, were Madison Alspach (Gull Lake High School), Sophia Barnard (Kalamazoo Central High School), Madeline Beck (Portage Central High School), Georgia Edmonds (Loy Norrix High School), Ethan Jastifer (Vicksburg High School), Lena Kuhn (Gull Lake High School), Isaac Patrick (Loy Norrix High School), Katherine Risley (Kalamazoo Central High School), David Shen (Portage Northern High School), Isabelle Tai (Portage Northern High School), and Janelle Yao (Portage Central High School). All 12 students attend the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center.

On Saturday, April 12, the qualifying students gathered on the beautiful campus of Kalamazoo College to take the rigorous, three-part USNCO national exam. The competition included two written exams and a laboratory



practical. During the event, students had the opportunity to connect with local chemists and engage with Kalamazoo College students over lunch. Qualifying USNCO students received a commemorative lapel pin provided by the ACS. Students who completed the USNCO competition received a certificate. Their teacher, Claudia Witt-Thomas, was recognized with a certificate for her role in supporting her students.

The KACS Competitive Exam Subcommittee extends its sincere thanks to Kalamazoo College for generously hosting the USNCO competition and supplying the necessary

materials for the lab practical. Special thanks go to the individuals who volunteered their time and talents to help make this event successful, including Dr. Blakely Tresca, Jarred Fitch, Maxwell Rhames, Will Tocco, and Caroline Johnson from Kalamazoo College, and Dr. Kristen Burns from Western Michigan University.

We also express our deep appreciation to the KACS Executive Committee for their continued leadership and support, as this year marked both the inaugural year of the new competitive exam structure and the return of the USNCO competition to the Kalamazoo region.

This year's efforts reflect KACS's continued commitment to advancing chemistry education. As the competitive exam program continues to evolve, it will no doubt continue to motivate students to further their interest and skills in the field of chemistry.

MORE GOOD NEWS!

Stevens-Truss Honored for 25 Years of Service

Last month we announced that we like to share good news about our members. I am happy to report that Regina Stevens-Truss took the message to heart and sent the following good news!

Regina Stevens-Truss, Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry at Kalamazoo College, was honored during the College's Founder's Day Celebration for 25 years of service. Regina started her career at K in January of 2000 and served on the KACS Women Chemists Committee for several years working with the group on the Glowing Embers Girl Scout Chemistry Badge. Most recently, Regina was elected to the Executive Committee of the newly-named ACS Division of Biochemistry and Chemical Biology. Of note, Regina was the driving force behind the new annual Undergraduate Award in Biochemistry and Chemical Biology.

Congratulations, Regina, and thanks for sharing this news with all of us!



Frantz Nominated for Teaching Award



KACS member Nathan Frantz, a first-year chemistry professor at Glen Oaks Community College in Centreville, MI, was recently nominated for the E.J. Shaheen Chair for Teaching Excellence Award. While he ultimately was not selected, he and other nominees were recognized at a recent ceremony held on the college campus.

Congratulations, Nathan, for making an impact on students' lives!

An Invitation to Attend a Meeting in the U.P. (on ZOOM)!

The Upper Peninsula Section of the ACS extended an invitation to our section members to attend a live online ZOOM presentation by **Michael O'Brian**, from the Brighton Area [Michigan] Fire Authority, on **Thursday, May 8, 2025, starting at 7 p.m. (ET)**. The title of the presentation is **Lithium-Ion Battery Safety: Risks, Challenges, and Public Awareness** and a short abstract was given as "Lithium-ion batteries are light weight, popular, and pervasive. The risks and challenges of using lithium-ion batteries will be presented, along with what can be done to enhance public awareness and safety."



Advance registration is requested by using the link <https://american-chemical-society.zoom.com/meeting/register/38udbw8DTzqrRJZUfwy8-w>.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. The ZOOM room will open at 6:45 p.m. EDT for social interactions, and will remain open for an additional 30 minutes after 8 p.m.

KACS Calendar

May

- **May 8, Thursday**, 6:45 p.m.: ZOOM presentation about Lithium Batteries—see invitation above from the Upper Peninsula Section
- **May 20, Tuesday**, 6-7:30 p.m.: Awards Gathering via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Joe Chemler](#) for the link
- **May 21, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: May Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Joe Chemler](#)

June

- **June 4-6**: Great Lakes Regional Meeting, Appleton, WI
- **June 18, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: June Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

July

No activities scheduled for this month

August

- **August 17-21**: Fall ACS Meeting—Washington, D.C., "Innovations in Chemistry"
- **August 20, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)



We would love to hear from you and share your news with fellow scientists in Allegan, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren counties! Send your news and events to newsletter editor Lydia E. M. Hines at lemhwgh@gmail.com by the end of the month in order to get them in next month's newsletter!



The KalChemist News

June 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

Vol. 15, Issue 6

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2025 ACS Executive Officers

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A 'Call for Action' from the Chair of the ACS Committee on Committees (ConC)

Dear ACS Colleague:

if you are interested in serving on an ACS Committee, the [online committee preference form](#) for committee assignments is the key way to let us know your committee preferences, your background and your interests. **The online preference form will be open thru July 3, 2025, at <http://www.cmte.acs.org>.** As you indicate your preferences, please keep in mind the following:



- Most initial appointments to committees are for *non-voting associate positions*.
- Those who are finishing a term or have reached the statutory limit on a committee are especially urged to complete the online form to reaffirm their interest and commitment to service in the Society.

When assembling recommendations for appointments by the ACS President and/or Board Chair, the Committee on Committees (ConC) seeks to identify and involve individuals from across the Society.

As a reminder, your ACS membership must be in *good standing* to complete your committee preferences. Please indicate a committee preference only if you feel that you can attend and actively participate in a committee's meetings either virtually or in-person. ACS committees are working committees; attendance (virtually or in-person) and participation at committee and subcommittee meetings are important.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Brian Mathes



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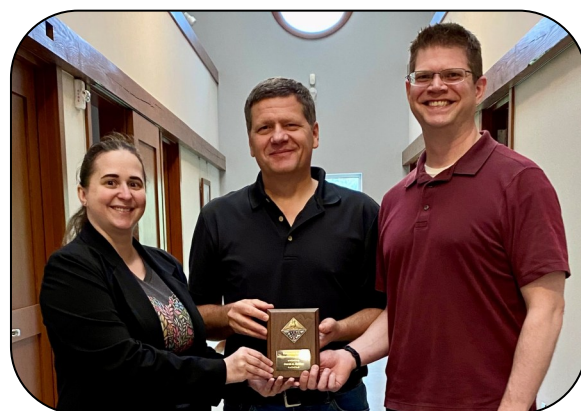
Success Celebrated at 2025 KACS Awards Gathering

The 2025 Awards Gathering convened shortly after 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, using the ZOOM platform rather than being in person; it was attended by approximately 25 individuals. The full program is shown on the trifold on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter. Each year the highlight of the event is hearing from our various awardees about their careers, what their next steps are in their educational pursuits, how their experiences in the classroom and workplaces were in concert with, or different from, what they expected, and how these experiences have shaped their lives and given them an impetus to continue in their desire to pursue their studies. This year was no exception, as we honored ...



Dibyendu Mondal receives past-chair pin from current chair Nicole Burke

- 50- and 60-year members of the American Chemical Society (3 and 2, respectively)
- a recent past-chair of Kalamazoo Section
- our section's Meritorious Service Award winner who has volunteered service over the long-term
- graduating College Seniors in chemistry from Kalamazoo College and Western Michigan University identified as outstanding by their college faculty
- students who have participated in a summer science research learning experience through our section's SEED (Science Experiences for the Economically Disadvantaged) program
- an outstanding High School Chemistry Teacher in our 3-county area
- outstanding students in our three-county area identified by their high school teachers for their demonstrated interest in the study of chemistry, and
- students who have excelled in a written examination as well as participated in a subsequent laboratory component



David Bolliet receives the KACS 2025 Meritorious Service Award Plaque from Nicole Burke and chair-elect Joe Chemler for his past service as newsletter editor, and for his participation as a promoter of the SEED program as well as mentor for SEED students

Private Brewery Tour with Western Michigan Section

Western Michigan ACS is announcing a **Private Brewery Tour on Friday, June 20, at 2 p.m. at Founders Brewery in Downtown Grand Rapids**. Learn about the chemistry of brewing and taste Local Michigan Beer while doing it. **See the flyer on page 6!**

There are a maximum of 20 spots for participants and as of 5/29, seven had been spoken for. More information will be sent when your reservation is confirmed. *Email the section Chair, Carter Tomko, at Ctomkotank85@gmail.com with your confirmation and any questions.* When confirmation is given and you plan on attending, please remember to bring your ID! When spots are filled an email will be sent out. Any cancellation that frees a spot will be advertised before the event. **There will be a \$5 cover fee for anyone who cancels less than 48 hours prior to the event.**

Founders Web Page with more information on the tour: <https://foundersbrewing.com/visit-connect/brewery-tours/#id=private-brewery-tour-grand-rapids>

Good News Once Again: Lydia Hines Receives Mentoring Award

On Thursday, June 5, our Newsletter editor was recognized at the 2025 Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Appleton, WI, as the recipient of the inaugural Great Lakes Regional Award for Excellence in Mentoring named in honor of Martin Rudd, a well-loved Local Section councilor and Region Board member from the Northeast Wisconsin Section, who was known by many as a man of integrity, a caring mentor and a friend.

Lydia E. M. Hines was nominated by Brad Portis, a now-retired Gull Lake High School chemistry teacher, with supporting letters from our alternate councilor Brian Eklov, and Paul Dobrowolski, a former KACS volunteer who now serves similarly in his Huron Valley Local Section.



GLRM Awards Chair Graeme Wyllie presents Lydia E. M. Hines with her Excellence in Mentoring award.



Lydia E. M. Hines promotes the KACS at the Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Appleton, Wisconsin.

She says the smaller size meetings are a great opportunity for students to connect with others in their field.

KACS Calendar

June

- **June 18, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** June Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **June 20, Friday, 2 p.m.:** Founders Brewery Tour in Grand Rapids (see article on page 2 or flyer on page 6)
- Act on ConC invitation (see article on page 1) **through July 3**

July

No activities scheduled for this month

August

- **August 17-21:** Fall ACS Meeting—Washington, D.C., “Innovations in Chemistry”
- **August 20, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

September

- **September 17, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

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SOCIETY

Kalamazoo Section
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2025 is the fifty-second year the Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society has recognized Outstanding Students in Chemistry. The purpose of this program is to acknowledge and encourage academic excellence. It is the fond expectation of the Kalamazoo Section that this recognition will stimulate a continuing interest in science, and by so doing provide to these students – regardless of their ultimate area of study – the knowledge necessary for the thoughtful evaluation of the many issues in science and technology now facing our society.



2025
High School, College and
Kalamazoo Section Awards
Program

Tuesday, May 20, 2025
6:00 p.m.
Via ZOOM

Awards Program

2025

Host

Dr. Nicole Burke

Sixty-Year Members

Dr. Malcolm Wilson Moon

Dr. Andrew George Zeiler

Fifty-Year Members

Dr. Ray Lewis Sweany

Dr. John Denis Stodola

Dr. Rodney Robert Walters

Kalamazoo Section

Meritorious Service Award

David A. Bolliet

Outstanding College Graduating Seniors

Kalamazoo College

Maxwell Rhames

Western Michigan University

Rosalie Mucciante

2024 Project SEED participants

Rowan Hagenbuch

Comstock & KAMSC

(mentor: Michael Horton, Kalsec)

Mahdi Hassnawi

Kalamazoo Central

(mentor: Daniela Arias-Rotondo,

Kalamazoo College)

Benjamin Knight
Portage Northern

(mentor: Drew Elder, Kalsec)

Reem Rasool

Kalamazoo Central

(mentor: Dwight Williams,

Kalamazoo College)

Dorian Roberts

Kalamazoo Central

(mentor: Dwight Williams,

Kalamazoo College)

Jocelyn Suranyi

Bloomingtondale

(mentor: Blakely Tresca,

Kalamazoo College)

Outstanding

High School Chemistry Teacher

Claudia Witt-Thomas

KAMSC

Outstanding

High School Chemistry Students

Comstock High School

Karma Sparks

Gull Lake High School

Michael McCarthy

Hartford High School

Isaiah Lewis Lovell

Kalamazoo Area Math & Science Center

Madeline Beck

Parchment High School
Lucas Platte

Paw Paw High School

Avery McCafferty

Plainwell High School

Ava Klann

Vicksburg High School

Grant VanWoert

Kalamazoo Section Scholarship Awardees (based on scores on USNCO written exam)

#1 Madeline Beck*, Portage Central/
KAMSC

#2 David Shen*, Portage Northern/*KAMSC*

#3 Janelle Yao, Portage Central/*KAMSC*

All Other USNCO Competitors (alphabetical)

Madison Alspach, * Gull Lake/*KAMSC*

Sophia Barnard, * Kalamazoo Central/
KAMSC

Georgia Edmonds, Loy Norrix/*KAMSC*

Ethan Jastifer, Vicksburg/*KAMSC*

Lena Kuhn, * Gull Lake/*KAMSC*

Isaac Patrick, * Loy Norrix/*KAMSC*

Katherine Risley, Kalamazoo Central/
KAMSC

Maryam Syeda, Parchment/*KAMSC*

Isabelle Tai, * Portage Northern/*KAMSC*

*designates individuals who completed both segments of the USNCO competition



WESTERN MICHIGAN ACS PRESENTS A

PRIVATE BREWERY TOUR

TAKE A COUPLE HOURS TO LEARN THE CHEMISTRY BEHIND
BREWING AND ENGAGE IN LOCAL BEER TASTINGS AT:

21+



FRIDAY JUNE 20TH 2025

2:00PM

235 CESAR E. CHAVEZ AVE SW
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

| CASH/CARD BAR AFTER THE TOUR | ACS TO BUY APPETIZERS |

RSVP, 20 SPOTS AVAILABLE

CONTACT CARTER TOMKO AT: CTOMKOTANK85@GMAIL.COM FOR DETAILS AND
BOOKING



The KalChemist News

August 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

Vol. 15, Issue 7

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2025 ACS Executive Officers

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Project SEED Update & Poster Session Invite

By Doug Williams

KACS Project SEED Coordinator

Our **Project SEED fellows** [biographies on page 2] are working away in preparation for the Kalamazoo College **Summer Research Symposium on Friday, August 22, from 9 a.m. — 1:15 p.m. in the Kalamazoo College Upjohn Library (150 Thompson St.)**. Please mark your calendar and join us for this important KACS event.

I am deeply grateful to our research mentors at Kalamazoo College and Kalsec for the time, supplies, expertise and inspiration provided to our fellows. This year we thank Dr. Priyanka Sharma and the WMU College of Engineering for agreeing to host a tour of their research facilities for our students and mentors on August 11.

Lastly, we appreciate you, our members, who generously support our program. 100% of all member donations are used directly for student stipends. Please see our [website](#) for more information about donating.

Chemistry Day Call for Volunteers

Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum will be held in person from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Get ready to educate, entertain, and entice the next generation to the wonders of chemistry and watch

the smiles on the faces of children and adults alike! The topic of National Chemistry Week (NCW) 2025 is Spices, and the **theme is *The Hidden Life of Spices***. Do you have a great experiment you can share with an audience of middle school students? Are you interested in demonstrating one of several experiments that are performed every year at this event? Do you have no idea what this event is about but are willing to contribute a few hours of your time on a Saturday in October to brighten the day of young scientists in our community? We need your help to make this event a success. If you are willing to participate, please email [Hershel Jude](#) or [Carol Guerrero](#).



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Meet Our 2025 Project SEED Fellows

Dorian Roberts

My name is Dorian Roberts, and I am a rising college freshman and set to graduate in April 2029. This is my second year in Project SEED. My chemistry teacher was Mr. Jovaughn Carver who taught at Kalamazoo Central High School. I plan to go to college at Eastern Michigan University and my special interests include research, the STEM field, and the healthcare field. I also really enjoy taking chemistry and advanced classes, because I love to learn all the intricate parts and gain new knowledge. I learned about Project SEED through a friend who did the program for two years. My mentor this summer is Dr. Dwight Williams (at Kalamazoo College) and the project that I'm working on is the design, synthesis and evaluation of maleimide-bromotryptamine hybrids as potential antibacterial agents, a continuation of my previous project which dealt with chlorotryptamine hybrids. Project SEED has been an amazing experience as it has helped me to gain hands-on experience in college-based labs and additional chemistry knowledge that will come in handy later, especially in organic chemistry. I'm forever thankful for the countless lessons and opportunities that this program offered me. This program will help my college life and my future career as an OB/GYN. While in college, I plan on pursuing a biochemistry and Medical Laboratory Science dual degree.



Rowan Hagenbuch

I am a rising senior at Comstock High School and the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center (KAMSC). I studied Chemistry at KAMSC with Mrs. Claudia Witt-Thomas and learned about Project SEED through KAMSC's Research Director, Ms. Rebecca Joyce. I am returning for a second Project SEED summer, this time with Dr. Blakely Tresca at Kalamazoo College, after working on HPLC methods at Kalsec last year. I am using computational modeling and solid-phase synthesis to design and prepare fluorinated peptoids to help with the removal of PFAS from water. Outside of academics and Project SEED, I enjoy staying active through various sports.

Lizbeth Mares-Castro



I am Lizbeth Mares-Castro and am about to enter my junior year at Loy Norrix High School. My chemistry teacher is Dr. Jamie Weaver, and my Project SEED mentor is Dr. Dwight Williams at Kalamazoo College. This is my first year as a Project SEED fellow. I learned about this program through my older sister who attended Kalamazoo College and recommended the program to me. This program has taught me how to problem solve and I also gained valuable hands-on lab experience that will help me in the future after high school. I would like to enter college as a biochem major working towards medical school.

Arib Haider

Hello, my name is Arib Haider, a rising senior attending Stuyvesant High School in Brooklyn, NY. This is my first year doing Project SEED. I found this program through my Organic Chemistry teacher, Dr. O'Malley, and applied to work at Kalsec Inc. on a virtual (remote) project to index common and IUPAC names and attributes of flavor compounds in a proprietary GC/MS database for complex natural flavor extracts and blends. This experience is my first real-world internship related to STEM, so I have been looking forward to this opportunity. As I've gone through the first month of this program, it has allowed me to see how theoretical knowledge that I have been learning in school can be applied outside to real examples. Overall, Project SEED has given me insights into the type of career path that I was considering when it came to research, and many connections that I hope to keep in the future.

August is National Make-a-Will Month

Each August, we are reminded to reflect on our loved ones and the causes important to us--and consider how to honor them in our wills. If you need to create or update your will, the ACS Office of Philanthropy offers these FREE resources:

- a personal estate planning kit
- a recording of the ACS Webinar: Simple Steps to Update Your Will and Leave Your Legacy

A number of ACS members like you are already contributing to the future of chemistry by including ACS in their will. For more information, contact Mary Bet Dobson or Lara Kadylak at 202-872-6210 or PlannedGifts@acs.org.



KACS Calendar

August

- **August 17-21:** Fall ACS Meeting—Washington, D.C., “Innovations in Chemistry”
- **August 20, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **August 22, Friday, 9 a.m.—1:15 p.m.:** Project SEED Participants’ Poster Presentations, Kalamazoo College Upjohn Library (150 Thompson St.)

September

- **September 17, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

October

- **October 15, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** August Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
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The KalChemist News

September 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

Vol. 15, Issue 8

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with Western Michigan Section**

Page 4

2025 ACS Executive Officers

Chair

Dr. Nicole Burke

nburke@kalsec.com

Past-Chair

Dr. Dibyendu Mondal

dibyendu2mondal@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

Dr. Joe Chemler

chair.elect@kalamazooacs.org

Secretary

Mr. Jacob Kirkendall

secretary@kalamazooacs.org

Treasurer

Mr. Sean Lapekas

treasurer@kalamazooacs.org

Councilor

Dr. Lydia E. M. Hines

lemhwgh@gmail.com

Alternate Councilor

Dr. Brian Eklov

alternatecouncilor@kalamazooacs.org

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Kalamazoo,
and Van Buren counties

ACS and KACS Election Time is Upon Us!

For our Kalamazoo Section

Election season is near for two KACS officers: **Secretary (2-year term 2026-7)** and **Chair-elect (1-year term 2026 in a 3-year succession (chair-elect > chair > past-chair))**.

Descriptions of responsibilities may be found on our website at <https://kalamazooacs.org/operations-manual/>. If you desire to be considered for any of the positions mentioned above, please let our secretary (Jacob Kirkendall) know of your interest by contacting secretary@kalamazooacs.org. To nominate someone for either position, please determine his/her willingness to accept the responsibility before submitting the person's name!

For President-elect of the National ACS

The two individuals who have been selected, and have agreed, to stand for election in 2025 for the term beginning in 2026 are **Christina Bodurow**, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer, AViDD, Stanford University, and **Dawn Mason**, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Partnerships, NC State University.

Read their biographies [here](#) (first two at the link).

The Younger Chemists Committee (YCC) in partnership with the Committee on Nominations and Elections has a [webinar](#) (Catalyze the Vote) scheduled on **September 11, 2025, from 2-3 p.m. ET** where you may hear from both candidates so that you may vote knowledgeably when your ballot arrives, starting in mid-September, either by e-mail or in paper form.

- Meet the ACS President-Elect Candidates
- Listen as the candidates share their vision for ACS
- Ask your questions to the candidates

Don't miss this opportunity to discover more about each candidate's values as they answer questions relevant to young chemists as well as the entire Society. Become more informed of their specific goals during this **free interactive broadcast** and get the information you need to cast your vote confidently.

Register for free [here](#).



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JOIN US ON LINKED IN!
[KACS LinkedIn Group](#)

Financial Assistance Programs Available from ACS

1) ACS Proactive Membership Assistance Program (PMAP) — by Brian Eklov

Life is not always predictable. Job loss, natural disasters, or even global conflicts can suddenly disrupt our professional and personal stability. To help in such times, ACS created the **Proactive Membership Assistance Program (PMAP)**. The purpose of this program is to ensure that members continue to have access to Society resources when we might need them most.

Keeping Membership Accessible

A central feature of PMAP is **flexibility with dues**. Members who find themselves unable to pay because of unforeseen challenges may request a reduction or waiver of their annual fees. This support allows them to maintain access to ACS publications, technical resources, and professional networks. PMAP is available to members worldwide, and serves members at all career stages—from students to senior scientists.

Career Resources and Guidance

Beyond financial relief, PMAP links members to a range of **career development tools**. These include confidential consultations with ACS career advisors, access to the ACS Career Navigator, professional development webinars, and job boards tailored to chemical professionals. For those navigating layoffs or transitions, these services provide immediate help and strategies for career recovery.



How to Apply

Members seeking assistance can apply confidentially through the ACS website. Details about eligibility and the application process are available at www.acs.org/PMAP, or contact Member Services at (202) 872-4600 or service@acs.org.

2) Grants available from ACS

(a) At ACS Fall 2025, Chair of the ACS Board of Directors, Wayne E. Jones, Jr., announced that **ACS will award \$2.5 million in the form of 100 \$25,000 grants**. This will support graduate students within one year of degree completion who have been impacted by the termination or cancellation of their advisor's research grants.

Starting Monday, Sept. 15, principal investigators can apply for the funds. The grant seeks to lower the risk of a declining number of U.S.-trained chemists with advanced degrees, thereby preserving the strength and continuity of the scientific community. For more information about the opportunity, visit www.acs.org/gradsuccessgrant.

(b) Apply Soon for an ACS PrepareCTP (Chemistry Technical Professional) Seed Grant

Community colleges and similar institutions can apply for up to \$20,000 in PrepareCTP Seed Grants to support student training, faculty release time, equipment, and employer partnerships in the chemical sciences. **Apply by Tuesday, Sept. 16.**

Chemistry Day: Save the Date and Call for Volunteers

Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum (KVM) will be held in person from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Get ready to educate, entertain, and entice the next generation to the wonders of chemistry and watch the smiles on the faces of children and adults alike! The topic of 2025 National Chemistry Week (NCW) is Spices, and the theme is *The Hidden Life of Spices*. Do you have a great experiment you can share with an audience of middle school students? Are you interested in demonstrating one of several experiments that are performed every year at this event? Do you have no idea what this event is about but are willing to contribute a few hours of your time on a Saturday in October to brighten the day of young scientists in our community? We need your help to make this event a success. If you are willing to participate, please email [Hershel Jude](mailto:Hershel.Jude@kvm.org) or [Carol Guerrero](mailto:Carol.Guerrero@kvm.org).



2025 Project SEED Summary and Poster Presentations

By Doug Williams

Three of our four 2025 Project SEED fellows presented posters of their summer research at Kalamazoo College on August 22. Thank you to those of you who were able to attend and support them. Thank you to Prof. Dwight Williams (Chemistry, Kalamazoo College) for organizing the event.

We are also grateful to Dr. Priyanka Sharma, her colleagues and her students for giving us a tour of the WMU Department of Chemical and Paper Engineering on August 11. We toured the labs of Dr. Sharma, Dr. Qingliu Wu, and Dr. Mert Atilhan to learn about their research and the opportunities that that WMU program provides. We also toured the WMU Paper Pilot Plant with Dr. Jason Wang.

Dorian Roberts studied under Prof. Dwight Williams at Kalamazoo College on the Synthesis and Biological Evaluation of a Maleimide-Indole Hybrids as Potential Antibacterial Agents. She graduated from Kalamazoo Central HS in June and has enrolled at Eastern Michigan University this fall to pursue a degree in biochemistry and medical science with a goal to become a physician. Dorian was unable to attend our poster session in person because of her move to EMU but presented her poster virtually on the electronic board at the session.

Lizbeth Mares Castro studied under Prof. Dwight Williams at Kalamazoo College on the Synthesis and Purification of a Maleimide-Tryptamine Hybrids as Potential Antibiotics. Lizbeth returns to her studies this fall at Loy Norrix, where she is a junior.

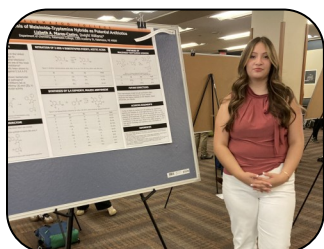
Rowan Hagenbuch studied under Prof. Blakely Tresca at Kalamazoo College on Molecular Models of Peptoid Aggregation in Virtual Reality. Lizbeth returns to her studies this fall at KAMSC and Comstock HS, where she is a senior.

Arib Haider worked under Dr. Tiffany Crawford and Dr. Carolyn Suh at Kalsec, Inc. to develop a database of over 300 flavor chemicals for automated interpretation of in-house GC/MS data from complex volatile mixtures such as essential oils and flavor blends. Arib worked remotely this summer from his home in Brooklyn, NY and returns to his studies this fall at Stuyvesant HS, where he is a senior.

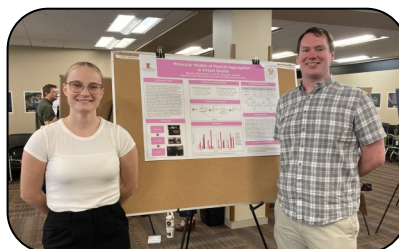
Our ability to offer this program has become increasingly dependent on local fund raising as we continue to spend down excess reserves. Thank you to our members who have donated to this effort. Please visit our [Project SEED webpage](#) or contact me directly at projectseed@kalamazooacs.org to learn more about how to help. We cannot do this without you.



Tour of WMU Paper Pilot Plant: Front left to right – Project SEED Fellows Lizbeth Mares Castro, Dorian Roberts, Rowan Hagenbuch. Back left to right – Dr. Jason Wang, Dr. Priyanka Sharma, Dr. Blakely Tresca, Dr. Doug Williams



Lizbeth Mares Castro at the Kalamazoo College Summer Research Poster Symposium



Rowan Hagenbuch with Prof. Blakely Tresca at the Kalamazoo College Summer Research Poster Symposium



A Visit to Founders Brewing Co. with the Western Michigan Section

The Western Michigan Section has sent us invitations to some recent programs, and one of our Local Section Affiliates, Michael Kiella, participated in two of them. In this newsletter you will read a summary of his experience at his June 20 visit to Founders Brewing Co. (Part 1) and in the October Newsletter you will read about his experience on the July 12 event – a visit on the GVSU Research Vessel D. J. Angus (Part 2).

Part 1: June 20 Visit to Founders Brewing Co.

By Michael Kiella, PhD

Local Section Affiliate and Past Chair of the KACS

The Western Michigan Section of the American Chemical Society invited members of the Kalamazoo Section to participate in two joint summer activities. Section Chair, Carter Tomko, served as host and organizer for both events.

On June 20, Hospitality Leader Kyle presented an overview to an audience of 18 members in the hospitality tap room at Founders Brewing Co., which included the history of then Hope College student “Garage Brewers,” Mike Stevens and Dave Engbers and the early days preceding their commercial adventure. Canal Brewing was the predecessor to the Founders Brewing label. Kyle walked the participants through the difficult financial origins of the company and humorous anecdotes about the selection and branding names of several of the different beers that are now well known selections—favorites for beer drinkers across the nation. Kyle also shared that in the early days of the company, wages, design creations, and brand artwork was often paid-for in beers. The tap room presentation was completed with “refills” around the room and word that 5 years ago, Dave and Mike wanting to retire from the day-to-day involvement in running the company, sold Founders to MAHOU USA, a Spanish company. MAHOU successfully recapitalized the operation and added a more expansive restaurant experience. As a measure of that success, last year the restructured restaurant revenues exceeded revenues from beer production and sales. To help participants obtain a feel for the size of the production operation, a geometric visual is painted on to the floor of the second story viewing area which demonstrates in scaled concentric circles, the number of barrels of beer, and what each increment translates to in 12oz. bottles.

The presentation concluded with a tour of the production facility, where participants were able to see first-hand the brewing vats and systems where raw materials are added to the brewing process, all the way through the final staging, filling, and canning operation in a magnificently clean and modern facility. Kyle responded to questions from the tour group and invited participants to sign the “visitor’s canvas” in the main packaging area.

A BIG thank you goes out to Carter Tomko for his efforts in organizing and hosting this event. This reporter recommends we keep our eyes peeled for other activities with the Western Michigan Section....from my place in the scheme of things, it was time well spent!

Brief Councilor Report from Fall ACS Meeting August 17-21, 2025

By Lydia E. M. Hines

(A more extensive report will be posted on our website)

The Council meeting on Wednesday, 8/20, was very low key. The formation of one new Committee was approved by a vote of 86%:14% (CALC, Committee for the Advancement of LGBTQ+ Chemists) and several other committees had their duties updated or their names adjusted to reflect current activities. An updated version of the Professional Employment Guidelines was adopted. Attendance at the meeting was **11,640 (10,602 in-person and 1,038 online)**. The **ACS Spring 2026** meeting will be held in **Atlanta, GA from March 22-26, 2026**. The Board voted to approve that the **advance member registration fee for 2026 ACS Spring and Fall meetings remain at \$549 for in-person and \$149 for virtual**, and approved associated pricing for all other registration fees.

The Local Section Activities Committee (LSAC) was pleased to have the council accept the new LS assignments of the ~1000 previously-unassigned US ACS members.

Turning to CCEW and NCW, the **2026 CCEW** topic will be “Trees and Forests” with the theme “Into the Woods with Chemistry” and for **2027 CCEW** it will be “Harvest Chemistry,” with the theme “Crop to Cart: The Chemistry of Food.” The **2026 NCW** topic will be “Construction” with the theme “Chemistry under Construction.”

Help was requested for topics for NCW 2027 and CCEW 2028 and beyond. To make suggestions and offer help contact outreach@acs.org. Topics and themes for past events may be found at acs.org/ccew and acs.org/ncw

KACS Calendar

September

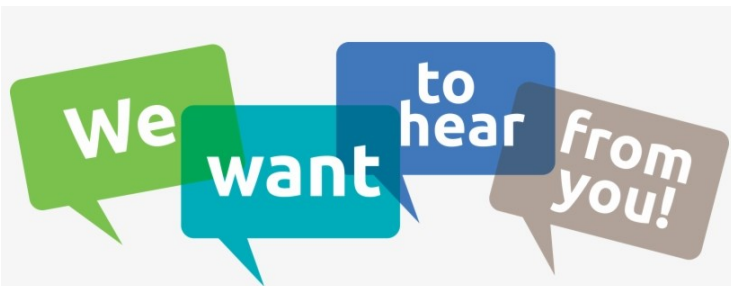
- **September 17, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** September Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

October

- **October 15, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** October Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **October 18, Saturday, noon—4 p.m.:** Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum; contact [Carol Guerrero](#) or [Hershel Jude](#) to volunteer [NCW is October 20-26, 2025 and its theme is “The Hidden Life of Spices”]
- **October 20-26:** [National Chemistry Week](#)

November

- **November 6, Thursday, 5 p.m.:** Bell’s Event
- **November 19, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** November Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)



We would love to hear from you and share your news with fellow scientists in Allegan, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren counties! Send your news and events to newsletter editor Lydia E. M. Hines at lemhwgh@gmail.com by the end of the month in order to get them in next month’s newsletter!



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- Visiting a Research Vessel**
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Chair

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dibyendu2mondal@gmail.com

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KACS and ACS Election Season is Now!

*Please remember to submit your name or the name of another member (who agrees to do so) for the position of chair-elect for our KACS for 2026 (see description of duties at <https://kalamazooacs.org/operations-manual/>). The election will be happening in mid-October and we still do not have any candidates. Anyone on the executive committee (see masthead) would be happy to hear a recommendation from you!



*Each ACS Member eligible to vote should have received a ballot, either by e-mail or on paper, for election of the 2026 President-Elect of the Society. The candidates are **Christina Bodurow** and **Dawn Mason**. If you have not yet voted, biographical information and election platforms may be found in *C&EN* (cen.acs.org September 2025 pp. 94-97) or online at www.acs.org/elections.

Exciting Experiments, Captivating Demonstrations Coming at Chemistry Day

Chemistry Day is back at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum! The Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society present "The Hidden Life of Spices" on **Saturday, October 18, from noon to 4 p.m.** Exciting hands-on experiments and captivating demonstrations will educate and entertain learners of all ages and abilities. **The program is free.**

Join chemistry enthusiasts from the area, including those from the Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, Kalsec, Pfizer and Perrigo to explore the role of chemistry in our everyday lives. This year's program will also feature the Kalamazoo Seed Collaborative, which will be distributing free seeds to grow your own plants, and continue exploring the science of spices in your own garden.



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[KACS LinkedIn Group](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/KACS-LinkedIn-Group)

Sustainable Science—Recycle-a-Poster Event at Bell’s

The Kalamazoo Section of the American Chemical Society presents the popular “Sustainable Science – Recycle a Poster” event on Thursday, November 6, from 5-9 p.m. at Bell’s Eccentric Café, 355 E. Kalamazoo Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007. The event is free and open to the public, with complimentary hors d’oeuvres provided.



The keynote presentation will be “Advancing Solutions for Reliable Access to Cyanotoxins and Cyanopeptides in Environmental and Biomedical Research” by Professor Jeremy J. Kodanko from Wayne State University. Dr. Kodanko is Professor of Chemistry and Associate Chair at Wayne State University in Detroit, where he also serves as Director of Graduate Studies.

He has authored numerous papers spanning inorganic, organic, and medicinal chemistry, including pioneering studies on photocaging strategies, and cyanobacterial peptide natural products. He is also founder of AnchorChem LLC, a company focused on environmental health and monitoring.

Funding for this event has been provided through a generous grant from Zoetis. Current ACS members, poster presenters, and Zoetis employees are eligible for two complimentary drink tickets (alcoholic beverages for 21 years and older)

For questions please email symposium@kalamazooacs.org.

(Part 2) July 12 Visit to the GVSU Research Vessel D.J. Angus

By Michael Kiella, PhD

Local Section Affiliate and Past Chair of the KACS

On July 12th participants visited Grand Haven for a trip aboard the Grand Valley State University, Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute’s 45 foot diesel powered Research Ship, the Donald J. Angus. The research vessel serves as both a floating research laboratory conducting bona-fide research into water quality in both Lake Michigan and Spring Lake, and an educational outreach programs for students and adult learners, alike. Twenty-two participants gathered shore-side of the docks on Harbor Island and were given sailing instructions and requirements for the trip out onto the water. The ship was captained by a Great Lakes Master, while two educational resource instructors led the participants in safety, history, and objectives of the day’s trip. Emphasis was given to past industrial uses of the waterway, and the deleterious effect of those uses on water quality which are now being remediated and monitored.

On deck, participants volunteered to conduct subjective multi-observer corroborating assessment of water and “bottoms” samples. Samples were obtained out in Lake Michigan and in Spring Lake. Questions were encouraged, and many science conversations arose from the answers to those questions. Visual



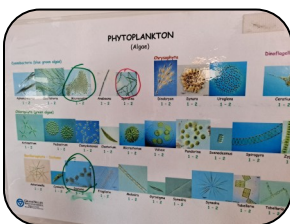


tests such as the Secchi Disc depth, Column Turbidity, and Clarity test were completed and logged. Emphasis was placed on the food-chain, oxygen content, and trophic status of the water as a conclusion drawn from the data collected.

The inside of the ship contained a laboratory, where volunteers conducted objective instrumental analysis of the water sample taken that day. Tests such as pH, Conductivity, Dissolved Oxygen, were assessed by multiple participants and logged for the day's data. In addition to instrumental chemical analysis, samples were examined for living organisms in the sample water. There was a protocol where the organisms were isolated and magnified. The magnified images were able to be compared to a visual species-specific reference library. One member's daughter was not only *excited* to isolate these organisms, but was also *very good* at correctly identifying the species. It was joyous to watch her excitement as she isolated each organism: Stentor, Bloodworms, and others; and then search the reference images for a match!

Returning to the dock, the instructors provided an overview of the day's activities, the conclusions, and the trajectory of the Great Lakes. The conclusion: water quality is demonstrably improving over time! Participants gathered for a group photo before being dismissed to return shore-side.

A BIG thank you goes out to Carter Tomko for his efforts in organizing and hosting this event (as well as the one on June 20, to Founders Brewery, described in the article on page 4 in the September issue of The KalChemist News). Again, this reporter recommends we keep our eyes peeled for other activities with the Western Michigan Section....as already mentioned in my report in September, from my place in the scheme of things, it was time well spent!



TROPIC STATUS CLAIMS	
STATION #1	STATION #2
Lake Michigan	Lake St. Clair
OME	OME
5.1	11.6
5	18
76	175
9	16
82.1	72
5A3	49
M2	6.6
102	0
0	9
5A4	1.4
8	6
2	19
OME	OME
OME	OME



KACS Calendar

October

- **October 15, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** October Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)
- **October 18, Saturday, noon—4 p.m.:** Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum
- **October 20-26:** [National Chemistry Week](#), “The Hidden Life of Spices”

November

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- **November 17, Monday, 3-4 p.m.:** Seminar by Dr. Ming-Yu Ngai of Purdue University, WMU Chemistry Building Room 1260
- **November 19, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** November Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

December

- **December 1, Monday, 3-4 p.m.:** Seminar by Dr. Jayaraman Sivaguru of Bowling Green State University, WMU Chemistry Building Room 1260
- **December 16, Wednesday, 7 p.m.:** December Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)



Share Your News!

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Bell's Event This Thursday

REMEMBER that the KACS Bell's Event is on THIS THURSDAY (November 6) in the "back room" at Bell's Eccentric Café in Kalamazoo. Come to make new acquaintances, enjoy opportunities to network with other chemists and appreciate research being done by chemists at the various stages in their careers. Doors will open soon after 5 p.m. We will also be treated to a lecture titled "Advancing Solutions for Reliable Access to Cyanotoxins and Cyanopeptides in Environmental and Biomedical Research" by Dr. Jeremy Kodanko of Wayne State University.



Inspired Brewing®



Jeremy J. Kodanko is Professor of Chemistry and Associate Chair at Wayne State University in Detroit, where he also serves as Director of Graduate Studies for the largest Ph.D. program on campus. His research shows how transition-metal complexes, photochemistry, and peptide natural products can be leveraged to address challenges in medicine, environmental monitoring, and sustainable materials recovery. Jeremy is a recipient of Wayne State's Career

Development Chair and Outstanding Graduate Director Awards and has been recognized for his leadership in graduate education reform. He has authored numerous papers spanning inorganic, organic, and medicinal chemistry, including pioneering studies on photocaging strategies, and cyanobacterial peptide natural products. He is also founder of AnchorChem LLC, a company focused on environmental health and monitoring. His translational research has led to multiple patents and federally funded projects from NIH, NSF, and NASA aimed at advancing both fundamental science and real-world applications.



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A Retrospective on Chemistry Day at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum

By Carol Guerrero

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Kalamazoo Local Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) presented "The Hidden Life of Spices" on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from noon to 4 p.m. at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. This 39th annual celebration of chemistry brought together chemistry enthusiasts to explore the wonders of chemistry and offer patrons an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation for the science that shapes our world.

Volunteers from Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo Local Section of the ACS, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Kalsec, Perrigo, Pfizer and Western Michigan University made it possible for visitors to engage in exciting experiments, witness captivating demonstrations and learn about chemistry in other meaningful ways.

Many activities aligned with this year's theme and were designed to explore both the scientific and sensory qualities of spices. Visitors guessed and matched spices by scent and appearance, observed spice color changes with pH and used chromatography to separate pigments. They also ground spices and learned about the Mohs hardness scale, examined the chemical structures of spices and compared flavor profiles to understand what makes each spice and flavor unique. In addition, visitors were treated to a station to create their own taco seasoning blend, watched live demonstrations on the science of light, painted with turmeric, and enjoyed other popular activities like dancing milk and making and testing tablets.

The Kalamazoo Seed Collaborative was on site to distribute herb and spice seeds for visitors to continue learning about spices in their own gardens.

A poster presentation on the history of Kalsec, a Kalamazoo spice extraction company, recognized the contributions of Paul H. Todd, Jr. and his company to the field, acknowledging and preserving the rich history of local scientific innovation.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the volunteers who dedicated their time, knowledge and enthusiasm to make Chemistry Day possible. Their hard work and passion for science are truly appreciated. Without their dedication and participation, this event would not have been possible. Relive some of Chemistry Day's exciting moments through photos on the museum's [Flickr page](#).... and **save the date of October 17, 2026, for next year's celebration of chemistry, with the theme "Chemistry Under Construction."** Together, we will continue to ignite the spark of scientific curiosity and exploration in our community!



End-of-Year Appeal for Project SEED

By Doug Williams

Project SEED coordinator

As we approach the end of the year, I ask you to consider our local section Project SEED program in your charitable giving plans. This year we celebrated the achievements of [four Project SEED fellows](#). Since in-person research resumed in 2022 after a pandemic pause, we have sponsored 19 projects at a cost to our section of \$1,600-\$2,000 per project. We currently have no reserves specified for Project SEED in 2026 and have drawn increasingly from our general reserve fund in recent years to supplement program funding. Donations to the KACS Project SEED program are used only for student fellowship payments. Mentors are not compensated. Supplies and research tools are provided by the host facility. To make a donation, please see instructions on our [Project SEED webpage](#) and let us know if your employer will match your donation. Kalamazoo ACS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and listed as a [Silver level charity with GuideStar](#). A gift receipt will be sent to you after your donation is received. Thank you!

Read All About Us!

Our KACS 2024 Annual Governance and Financial Reports submitted to the National ACS Office, along with the Local Section Activities Committee's encouraging evaluation, are now on our KACS website, at <https://kalamazooacs.org/archives/>.

KACS Election Results

We appreciate the ~12% of the membership that voted in our recent Local Section Election.

Tiffany Crawford (Kalsec) was elected as our new secretary, for a two-year term (we thank her for her willingness to serve our KACS)

The position of **chair-elect for 2025 is still vacant**, so there is still opportunity for a member to step up and help our section continue its outreach efforts.

KACS Calendar

November

- **November 6, Thursday**, 5-9 p.m.: Bell's "Recycle-a-Poster" and networking event featuring speaker Professor Jeremy J. Kodanko, Wayne State University
- **November 17, Monday**, 3-4 p.m.: Seminar by Dr. Ming-Yu Ngai of Purdue University, WMU Chemistry Building Room 1260 (see <https://wmich.edu/chemistry/events> for additional information)
- **November 19, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: Executive Committee meeting via ZOOM; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

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- **December 16, Wednesday**, 7 p.m.: Executive Committee meeting; contact [Dr. Nicole Burke](#)

January 2026

Happy New Year!

- **January 28, Monday**, 3-4 p.m.: Seminar by Dr. Nicole Becker of Michigan State University, WMU Chemistry Building Room 1260 (see <https://wmich.edu/chemistry/events> for additional information)



The KalChemist News

December 2025

www.kalamazooacs.org

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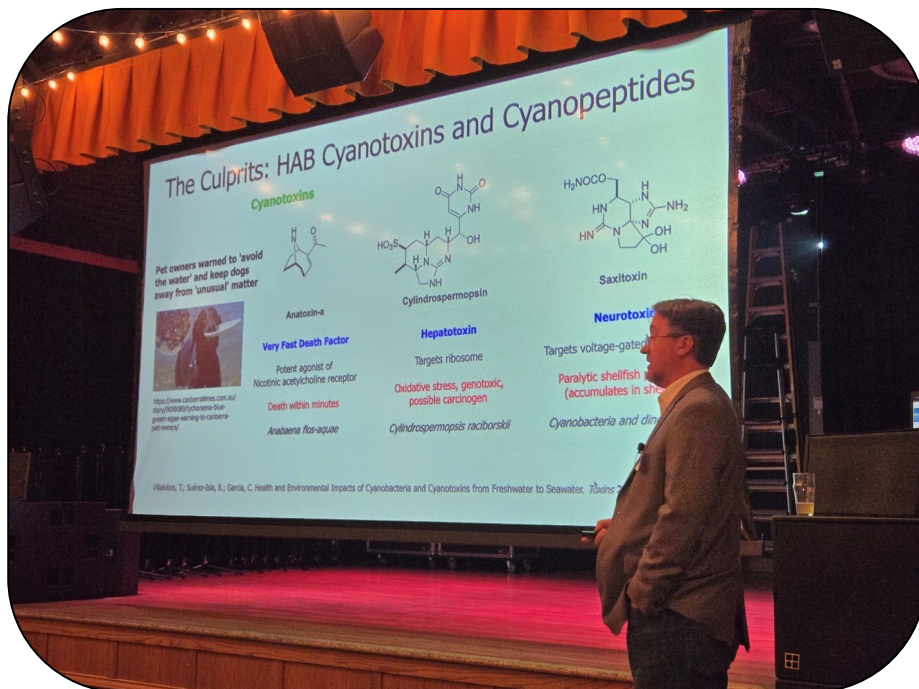
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Professor Kodanko presenting the keynote talk titled “Advancing Solutions for Reliable Access to Cyanotoxins and Cyanopeptides in Environmental and Biomedical Research”

Retrospective from the 2025 Bell’s Event

By Tomasz Respondek

The 13th Recycle-a-Poster annual KACS event took place on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at Bell’s Eccentric Café. The event drew close to 100 attendees and 15 poster presenters. The iconic Kalamazoo venue was once again filled with a broad spectrum of scientists from the Kalamazoo area representing both academia and industry.

This year’s event featured a keynote presentation from Professor Jeremy J. Kodanko, Professor of Chemistry and Associate Chair at Wayne State University, where he also serves as Director of Graduate Studies for the largest Ph.D. program on campus.

He is also the founder of AnchorChem LLC, a company focused on environmental health and monitoring. His translational research has



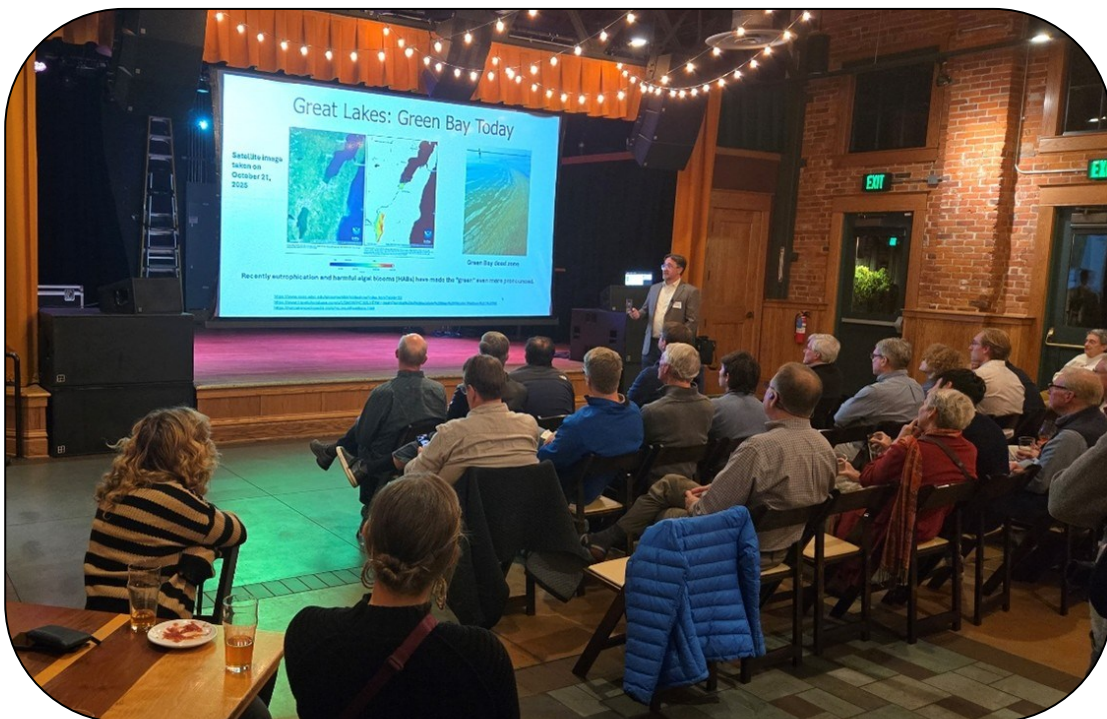
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led to multiple patents and federally-funded projects from NIH, NSF, and NASA aimed at advancing both fundamental science and real-world applications.

Professor Kodanko shared his newest research in the area of the chemistry of algae blooms titled “Advancing Solutions for Reliable Access to Cyanotoxins and Cyanopeptides in Environmental and Biomedical Research.” This extremely informative talk resonated with the attendees, as algae blooms have become synonymous with hot summers around the Great Lakes.



Professor Kodanko discussing algae bloom chemistry in the Great Lakes

This year was the first time that the KACS extended an invitation to the Western Michigan section to participate in the event, and a number of them did join us. All present enjoyed hors d’oeuvres and craft beers and other beverages from Bell’s Brewery, made possible by a generous grant from our longstanding partner, Zoetis.

The Eccentric Café was buzzing during the poster session that followed Professor Kodanko’s lecture. The posters sparked lively questions and debates, and gave presenters the chance to broaden their professional networks. Fifteen presenters showcased research done privately, or at WMU, Kalamazoo College, Grand Rapids Community College, Aquinas College and Zoetis. The following three students were awarded \$50 prizes:

- Ella Satterthwaite, Aquinas College, “The River Narrative: Development of low-cost, aquatic, electrochemical sensors for environmental monitoring.”
- William Aiden Martel, Kalamazoo College and the Center for Molecular Medicine, Maine Health Institute for Research, “Propranolol treatment does not rescue social isolation-induced bone loss in C57BL/6J mice.”
- Landon Palmer, Western Michigan University, “Dietary Probiotic Supplement Effects on Methamphetamine-Induced Conditioned Place Preference in Sprague-Dawley Rats.”

The KACS Executive Committee extends its **sincere thanks** to **all the volunteers and sponsors** who helped organize and finance the event, and to **the participants** who made it memorable. We look forward to the 14th edition in fall 2026.

Tomasz Respondek, former KACS alternate councilor and lead organizer of the event since 2019, will be passing the baton for the 2026 event to Jacob Hood.

Aldrich Focus on Science Scholarship Now Available

A \$3,000 one-time scholarship, the Aldrich Focus on Science Scholarship, is now available to students from Kalamazoo County pursuing studies in science.

Applicants must be current graduate or undergraduate students who are pursuing associates degrees, bachelor's degrees, graduate degrees, or vocational/trade certification. They must also be residents of Kalamazoo County (or graduates of Kalamazoo County high schools), demonstrate financial need, and be majoring in science (preference for chemistry, biochemistry, or pharmaceutical science).

To apply, visit <https://kzcf.org/scholarship-search/aldrich-focus-on-science-scholarship/>.

The Aldrich Focus on Science Scholarship was established in honor and memory of D. Scott Aldrich, who started his career after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University. Although he was focused on biology and chemistry, the opportunity to take a class at McCrone Associates opened a lifetime passion in microscopy. He pursued a career with Upjohn, Pharmacia, Pfizer, and his own company, Ultramikro LLC. Scott transformed his passion for microscopy and trace analysis techniques into a career of solving scientific problems, a relentless pursuit of excellence, and a passion for advancing pharmaceutical quality standards, specifically as it relates to particulates in pharmaceutical dosage forms.



Calling for a Volunteer to Chair and Revitalize a KACS Women Chemists' Committee (WCC)

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary, in 2027, of the National ACS WCC, they are seeking input from ACS Local Section WCC chairs about their activities which relate to its objectives. They are encouraging Local section engagement, and would like to make sure the appropriate contacts are listed for any WCC programming being done by the local sections so that correct information is included on the WCC Local Sections webpage at <https://acswcc.org/local-regional/local-section-contacts/>. Unlike in years past, **our KACS does not currently have a functioning WCC** and consequently has no chair of the same, nor does it plan any relevant activities. The function of the KACS WCC parallels that of the national committee and may be found in our Section's Operations Manual on our website (<https://kalamazooacs.org/operations-manual/>):



"The Women Chemists Committee (WCC) serves the membership of the American Chemical Society. Its mission is to be leaders in attracting, developing and promoting women in the chemical sciences. The committee shall:

- Serve as a forum for women in chemistry and related professions.
- Develop recommendations regarding issues of interest to women chemists.
- Provide a means of increasing and improving participation of women in the chemical sciences and the SOCIETY.
- Promote the recognition of women chemists.

Seeking Volunteers for 150th ACS Anniversary Events at KVM

To celebrate the **150th anniversary of the American Chemical Society**, the KACS will partner with the Kalamazoo Valley Museum to educate the public about how “Chemistry is Everywhere.” Through immersive planetarium experiences and interactive exhibit-based engagement, visitors will explore local contributions to chemistry while connecting with KACS members who will be on-site to share insights and information about the organization. These activities are designed to strengthen community ties, promote chemistry literacy and invite deeper

involvement in the mission of the ACS.

Volunteers are needed to help at the information table from 1 to 3 p.m. on the following dates:

- Saturday, February 14, 2026
- Saturday, May 9, 2026
- Saturday, August 8, 2026
- Saturday, November 7, 2026

If you are interested in volunteering your time at one or more of these events, please contact Carol Guerrero (cguerrero@kvcc.edu).

Help Requested by the Science Olympiad Director at WMU

Hello Chemistry community!

I am looking for supervisors to run **chemistry related science olympiad events on March 21, 2026, at WMU**. In the last few years Kristen Burns and Linda Hanson from the WMU Chemistry department have worked with some of you to do a great high school level “Chem Lab,” and the WMU Chem club also ran a fine “Potions and Poisons” and other events. Ramikrishna Guda, also from the WMU Chemistry Department, has been running a fantastic “Crime Busters.” We are looking for commitments from undergrads, grad students, faculty and community chemistry professionals to come together and collaborate on this year’s events! Many hands make light work! **A couple of rule sets are on the next two pages as examples. Let me know if you want to see any others.** Please consider volunteering with us this year! It means so much to the kids and helps us bring in future students in Chemistry! I want to thank you

in advance, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

The **Chemistry events** for March 21, 2026 are:

High School

Chem Lab with emphasis on chemical rxns/
stoichiometry and kinetics
Materials Science (nanomaterials)

Middle School

Crime Busters
Potions and Poisons

Marty Buehler, martin.r.buehler@wmich.edu or mbuehler17@gmail.com

K-12 Schools Liaison College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS)

WMU STEM-Workforce Collaborative Innovation Expo

Cell Phone: (269) 903-9044

KACS Calendar

December

- December 16, Wednesday, 7 p.m.: KACS Executive Committee (EC) Meeting will be in **hybrid format**, with the **in-person component** being hosted by Brian Eklov **at Dipharma**, 4502 Campus Drive (in the WMU Business and Technology Research Park south of Parkview Avenue)! Please contact [Nicole Burke](#) for further details.

January 2026

- January 21, Wednesday, 7 p.m.: EC Meeting;

contact [Joe Chemler](#)

- January 26, Monday, 3-4 p.m.: Dr. Nicole Becker, Michigan State University, WMU Chemistry Bldg Rm 1260

February 2026

- February 18, Wednesday, 7 p.m.: EC Meeting; contact [Joe Chemler](#)
- February 23, Monday, 3-4 p.m.: Dr. Jovica Badjic, Ohio State University, “Molecular Baskets as Abiotic Sequesters of Toxic Drugs,” WMU Chemistry Bldg Rm 1260



POTIONS & POISONS B

See General Rules, Eye Protection & other Policies on www.soinc.org as they apply to every event.



1. **DESCRIPTION:** This event is about chemical properties and effects of specified toxic and therapeutic chemical substances, with a focus on household and environmental toxins or poisons.

A TEAM OF UP TO: 2

APPROXIMATE TIME: 50 minutes

EYE PROTECTION: C

CALCULATOR: Class II

2. **EVENT PARAMETERS:**

- Each participant may bring one 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper, which may be in a sheet protector sealed by tape or laminated, that may contain information on both sides in any form and from any source without any affixed labels.
- Each participant must bring a writing implement and may bring a Class II calculator.
- Teams should bring any or all of the items listed on the Division B Chemistry Events Lab Equipment List, posted on soinc.org. Teams not bringing these items will be at a disadvantage, as they are not provided.
- Participants must wear goggles, an apron or a lab coat and have skin covered from the neck down to the wrist and toes. Gloves are optional, but if the host requires a specific type they will notify teams. Pants should be loose fitting; if the host has more specific guidelines, they will notify teams in advance of the tournament. Shoulder length or longer hair must be tied back. Participants removing safety clothing/goggles or unsafely handling materials, or equipment will be penalized or disqualified.
- Supervisors will provide any required reagents, additional glassware, and/or references that are needed for the tasks (e.g., Periodic Table, etc.)

3. **THE COMPETITION:** The competition will be conducted in two parts.

- Part 1--Exam: This part will be a multiple-choice and short answer test covering the following subject areas: Students should understand ionic and covalent bonds, and the difference between mixtures, solutions and compounds. Students may be asked to separate components of a mixture. Students will distinguish between physical and chemical changes. Students may be asked to balance a simple chemical equation. Students may be asked to identify various poisonous plants and animals, and their toxic effects. Students may be given a map and be asked to analyze the potential patterns of spread of toxic spills in the environment via water, wind or gravity. Students will understand the effects and chemistry of common household toxins. Students should understand the effect of dilution on toxicity.

The test may include information on the following specific toxins:

- Household chemicals: ammonia, hydrogen peroxide, rubbing alcohol, bleach, Epsom salts, vinegar, nutritional supplements containing calcium and iron.
 - Toxic living organisms: poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), **giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)**, **Calabar bean (*Physostigma venenosum*)**, **rhubarb (*Rheum raphaniticum*)**, **American false hellebore (*Veratrum viride*)**, **cane toad (*Rhinella marina*)**, **poison dart frog (*Dendrobatidae*)**, **Portuguese man o' war (*Physalia physalis*)**, **lionfish (*Pterois* sp)**, **fat tail scorpion (*Androctonus australis*)**
 - Environmental toxins: **copper**, lead, and mercury.
- Part 2--Lab: Students will be asked to perform at least one lab task themselves. Other lab exercises may be performed as a demonstration, at the discretion of the event supervisor. Lab activities will be drawn from: chromatography, mixtures of reagents, separation of a mixture, serial dilutions, determination of pH, and conductivity testing. Reagents may be mixed by students or the event supervisor with subsequent observation of changes in temperature or color, production of a gas or a precipitate, the relative rate of a chemical reaction or other parameters. Students may be asked if a particular change is a physical or chemical change.

4. **SCORING:** High Score wins. Part 1: Test questions are worth 60% of the competition. Part 2: Lab questions are worth 40% of the score. Selected questions or quality of free response answers will be used to break ties.

Recommended Resources: The Science Olympiad Store (store.soinc.org) carries a variety of resources to purchase; other resources are available on the Event Pages at soinc.org.



CHEMISTRY LAB C

See General Rules, Eye Protection & other Policies on www.soinc.org as they apply to every event.



1. **DESCRIPTION:** Teams will complete one or more tasks and answer a series of questions involving the science processes of chemistry focused in the areas of chemical reactions/stoichiometry and **kinetics**.

A TEAM OF UP TO: 2

APPROXIMATE TIME: 50 minutes

EYE PROTECTION: C

CALCULATOR: Class III

2. **EVENT PARAMETERS:**

- a. Each participant must bring safety equipment (e.g., goggles, lab coat, apron), a writing implement, and may bring a Class III calculator.
- b. Each participant may bring one 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper, which may be in a sheet protector sealed by tape or laminated, with information on both sides in any form and from any source.
- c. Teams should bring any or all of the items listed on the Division C Chemistry Events Lab Equipment List, posted on soinc.org. Teams not bringing these items will be at a disadvantage, as they are not provided.
- d. Participants must wear goggles, an apron or a lab coat and have skin covered from the neck down to the wrist and toes. Gloves are optional, but if the host requires a specific type they will notify teams. Pants should be loose fitting; if the host has more specific guidelines, they will notify teams in advance of the tournament. Shoulder length or longer hair must be tied back. Participants removing safety clothing/goggles or unsafely handling materials, or equipment will be penalized or disqualified.
- e. Supervisors will provide any required reagents, additional glassware, and/or references that are needed for the tasks (e.g., Periodic Table, table of standard reduction potentials, any constants needed).

3. **THE COMPETITION:**

- a. The competition will consist of a series of tasks focused on the areas of chemical reactions/stoichiometry and kinetics. These tasks could include hands-on activities, questions on listed topics, interpretation of data (e.g., graphs, diagrams, tables), or observation of an established and running experiment. **At least 2 activities, one on each topic, are required.**
- b. Teams may be asked to collect data using a probe ware set-up demonstrated by the Supervisor(s). Following a demonstration of the sensors/probes, participants may be given data sets to interpret.
- c. Nomenclature, formula writing, & stoichiometry (mole conversions & percentage yield) are essential tools of chemistry & may be included in the event. Participants are expected to know the symbols & charges for: nitrate, carbonate, phosphate, acetate, sulfate, ammonium, bicarbonate, & hydroxide. Participants should know how to use the "ite" form of anion (one less oxygen than the "ate" form). With a periodic table, participants should be able to obtain charges for monatomic ions (e.g., Na^+ , S^{2-}).
- d. Participants should understand the following about Chemical Reactions/Stoichiometry:
 - i. classification of reaction type.
 - ii. balancing reactions.
 - iii. reaction prediction (including predicting products of metathesis reactions, solubility, oxidation-reduction, total ionic and net ionic equations).
- e. **Students will demonstrate an understanding of the principles of kinetics by:**
 - i. **Measuring reaction rates and identify how and why reaction conditions (temperature, concentration, particle size, and catalysts) affect reaction rates.**
 - ii. **At the state and national levels, teams will be asked to determine rate laws from actual experimentation or data provided, and teams should also be able to determine rate constants with correct units.**

4. **SCORING:**

- a. High score wins. Points will be divided evenly between kinetics and chemical reactions/stoichiometry.
- b. Time may be limited at each task but will not be used as a tiebreaker or for scoring.
- c. Ties will be broken by pre-selected questions.
- d. A penalty of up to 10% may be given if the area is not cleaned up as instructed.
- e. A penalty of up to 10% may be given if a team brings prohibited lab equipment to the event.

Recommended Resources: The Science Olympiad Store (store.soinc.org) carries a variety of resources to purchase; other resources are available on the Event Pages at soinc.org.