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department of chemistry
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chemNEWS

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Prof. Arthur Mar Looking Shark

...in his fish hat photo entered in the CBC Royal Wedding Fabulous Hat Contest in April (for more entries see

http://www.cbc.ca/edmontonam/contest/-iglmgid_4933)

BUILDING UPDATES

Jill Bagwe

Building Envelope & Chemistry West Renewal Project Update

We are on the home stretch now with both of these two projects! The window replacements are now completed and the construction management team, Delnor, have yet to re-point and re-seal the brick, as well as repair the crumbling concrete ledges, where applicable, along the base of the windows. Expected completion date is 30 June 2011.

In order to meet the KIP funding terms and conditions in which a majority of the work is complete by 31 July 2011, you will have likely noticed an influx of trades coming into Chemistry West. Delnor has essentially tripled the number of trades in the building during these past few months and the activity on both the 4th and 5th floors is full speed ahead.

Much of the framing and walls are up on the 5th floor and the 4th is following close behind. While there is still a lot to do to meet the funding deadline, the tentative occupancy dates for these two floors are August 2nd for the 5th and August 22nd for the 4th.

The Department will host a Grand Opening, likely in November, to showcase our beautiful new labs and office spaces.

CCIS Update

CCIS building updates are provided to the (future) occupants of CCIS on a regular basis via email, but an overall summation of the building is as follows: Five of our Chemistry faculty opted not to move when it was announced that the laboratories would not be fully functional until early June. That target date has been pushed back to June 15th, but from all indicators arising from the challenge testing, that date looks firm.

The move dates for those five faculty were also pushed back with these moves occurring over a period from June 22nd to July 5th.

For those individuals who have assigned space in CCIS, I would ask that you replace your ONE card at the ONE Card Office located in the basement of Cameron and state that you are with Chemistry when you do so.

Once you're in possession of your new card, please go to the enrolment kiosk located in the CCIS 1-033 conference room (just at the end of the pedway link between Chem East and CCIS). The office is open between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. each day.

Please know that **Jayme**, who mans the desk, will require one piece of government issued ID, preferably your driver's license. The need for secondary ID is tied in with the ability to "activate" the system sooner and give specific people access to specific areas so we can disable the pinpad reader and construction cards.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Laura Pham

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Chris Sadek (Dr. Cairo) passed his MSc defense on April 5, 2011

Ping Cheng (Dr. Clive) passed her PhD candidacy exam on April 7, 2011

Shaohui Yu (Dr. Stryker) passed his PhD candidacy exam on April 18, 2011

Yidan Ding (Dr. Campbell) passed her PhD candidacy exam on April 26, 2011

Melissa Gajewski (Dr. Klobukowski) passed her PhD defense April 28, 2011

Peter Blanchard (Dr. Mar) passed his PhD defense on April 29, 2011

Farooq Wahab (Dr. Lucy) passed his PhD candidacy exam on May 10, 2011

Amira Khalil (Dr. Lowary) passed her PhD candidacy exam May 19, 2011

Greg Kaufman (Dr. McDermott) passed his PhD candidacy exam on May 27, 2011

Congratulations to **Catherine Fan** and **Jessica Li**, both are students from Old Strathcona High School, who won first place in the regional Sanofi Aventis BioTalent Challenge Competition and the "elevator pitch" presentation prize (see this issue's article). **Ms. Avena Ross** (Chemistry grad student) and **Dr. John Vederas** were the mentors of these students for this project in the period October 2010 to April 2011.

Congratulations to **Jack Lee** (Hall Group) and **Myles Poulin** (Lowary Group) who have been selected as co-recipients of the 2011 *Boehringer Ingelheim Award of Excellence in Organic or Bio-Organic Chemistry*. This award is attributed based on both academic and research excellence to 3rd or 4th -year graduate students in our Department.

Dr. Roderick Wasylishen has been awarded the 2011 *Eastern Analytical Symposium (EAS) Award for Outstanding Achievements in Magnetic Resonance*. The EAS awards honour analytical chemists who have distinguished career achievements and advanced their fields by superior work in developing theory, techniques or instrumentation. The 2011 EAS award will be presented at the 50th Eastern Analytical Symposium and Exposition on November 14-17, 2011 in Somerset, New Jersey, U.S.A.

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Celebration of Excellence in Teaching and Research

On Monday, May 9th, the Faculty of Science hosted its annual Celebration of Excellence in Teaching and Research. At this event, the Faculty recognizes the contributions of all faculty and staff whose efforts contribute to the Faculty's outstanding reputation. In 2011, the Department of Chemistry won an award in each and every award category!

In his opening remarks, Dean of Science, Gregory Taylor, said the celebration was a real highlight in his calendar. He went on to say that the event provided him with a perfect opportunity to offer congratulations and thanks in front of family, faculty and staff. "Without brilliant teaching and research, our Science Faculty would not be what it is today," Taylor said.

The recipient of the Faculty of Science Research Award was **Jonathan Veinot**. The award recognizes outstanding research carried out by a scientist within 12 years of completing their PhD. Jonathan shared this award with **Duane Froese** of Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.

Jonathan's family was in attendance and his youngest daughter was especially enthused, crying out, "Aw, Daddy!" when he was presented with the award, much to the delight to those in attendance.

The winner of the Faculty of Science Award for Excellent Teaching was **Todd Lowary**. The award recognizes the commitment by its academic staff to high standards in teaching, and is given to recognize outstanding teaching and the key role it play in allowing the Faculty to attract and develop excellent students.

"The evidence that Lowary is among our very best teachers comes from the fact that he receives consistently high

ratings," said **Brenda Leskiw**, Senior Associate Dean (Student Services) when presenting the award. Leskiw went on to say that she was both impressed and in awe that Todd takes the time to memorize the names of all of the 100-200 students that he will teach in any given term.

The Faculty of Science Innovation in Teaching Award went to **Mariusz Klobukowski**. The award recognizes creative contributions to the development of tools for the innovative presentation of coursework, new curriculum design, and the creation of an improved teaching and learning environment.

The Faculty of Science Service Award was given to **Norman Gee**. The award is given to recognize outstanding contributions by an individual staff member for service to the department, faculty, university and/or community.

It is well known that the Teaching Assistants of Norman's Gen Chem laboratories feel a great source of pride when Norman bestows them with the "Norman Award", an award that he created in recognition of outstanding teaching. In turn, the department is very proud of Norman to have been bestowed with this service award.

Warmest congratulations to all of our recipients!

ANNOUNCEMENTS – cont'd

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Congratulations to **Dr. John Klassen** who was awarded the 2011 Canadian Society for Mass Spectrometry (CSMS) Fred P. Lossing Award for distinguished contributions to mass spectrometry in Canada.

WELCOME TO...

Welcome to our newest support staff member, **Miranda Skjel** (pronounced Shale), who has joined the Analytical & Instrumentation Lab. Miranda will be taking over the position of Instrument Technician vacated by David Zinz. Miranda has a B.Sc. (Honours) in Chemistry from the University of Victoria. She is also the author of an article titled "*Silane-Controlled Diastereoselectivity in the Tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane-Catalyzed Reduction of α -Diketones to Silyl-Protected 1,2-Diols*" published in the American Chemical Society. This bright, young woman also has plans to attend graduate school someday. Welcome to the Department Miranda!

Welcome to **Dr. Ronbing Du** who is the newest member of Dr. McDermott's research group. Dr. Du joins the group in the capacity of a post-doctoral fellow.

FAREWELL TO...

Karin Fodor will be leaving the AB Ingenuity Centre for Carbohydrate Science (AICCS) and the Department of Chemistry on June 20, 2011. Karin has accepted a challenging new position with the Li Ka Shing Institute in the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology (MMI). Karin started with the Department on November 5, 2002 as a Technical/Administrative Assistant. Her role has grown over the years and she has become an invaluable part of the AICCS and the Department. Although Karin will remain on campus, her presence will be missed in the Department. Congratulations to Karin on her new position!

Important Dates & Events

- **June 19th:** Father's Day
- **June 28th:** Support Staff Appreciation Picnic
- **July 1st:** Canada Day – University Closed

Did You Know?

For more than two decades the Fine Arts Building Galley has presented art and design exhibitions that benefit the University of Alberta, Edmonton, the province, and beyond. These exhibitions feature work by students at the undergraduate and graduate levels, faculty and staff, as well as by contemporary and historical artists with national and international reputations. FAB Gallery exhibitions—featuring both in-house curated exhibitions as well travelling exhibitions organized by other galleries and academic centres— attract approximately 13,000 guests a year to the Department of Art and Design.

Courtesy Faculty of Arts
Dept of Art and Design web site
10/06/2100

Contributions Welcome

This newsletter belongs to the department of Chemistry. So submissions of interest to our department are welcome.

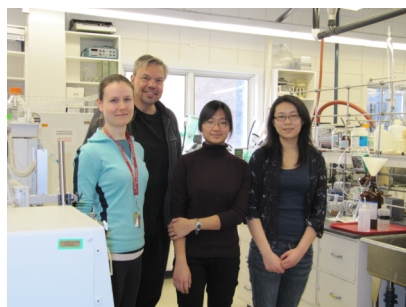
Submissions can be up to 1000 words and are subject to editing. Send your submissions to: newsletter@chem.ualberta.ca

Please send submissions by the 20th of the month to ensure they can be featured in the next month's newsletter.

Biotalented Teamwork at the UofA

Bonnie Gover

For a few hours a day of their final year, room W2-57 at the UofA was home to high-school students Catherine Fan and Jessica Li. That's because it was there where they came up with the project that won them first place in the regional Sanofi-Aventis BioTalent Challenge Competition. The Challenge gives high school students from across Canada the opportunity to get hands-on experience in the field of biotechnology. Mentored by John Vederas and Avena Ross, the pair came up with their winning entry: "Identification of the Antibacterial Activity of *Saccharomyces boulardii* Against *Clostridium difficile*." They also won the "elevator pitch" prize. In between their high school courses and graduation ceremony, Catherine and Jessica took time out to answer a few questions about their success.



From L to R: Project Supervisor and Mentor: Avena Ross and John Vederas; High school students Jessica Li and Catherine Fan

Q: What was it like in the Vederas lab and how did Dr. Vederas become your mentor?

Jessica: Graduate student Avena Ross was our direct supervisor and generously donated her time to guiding and supervising us during our research. It was an excellent experience being able to work in such a top-notch lab as the Vederas lab. Getting this glimpse of what a career in research would be like while I was still in high school was definitely exhilarating.

I had participated in the WISEST (Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology) Summer Research Program last summer, and was placed in Dr. Vederas' lab. When I heard about the SABC

"The elevator pitch was almost like a movie trailer in that it shrunk down the research process and its applications into a 60-second speech. For instance, we talked about the research process and how it could offer alternative treatments for antibiotic-resistant pathogens. It offers a glimpse into the big picture, if you will. The elevator pitch was actually its own prize, so we received an additional \$250 for that."

-Catherine

"We're very grateful to Dr. Vederas and Avena Ross, our supervisor, who both showed an incredible amount of patience in teaching us lab techniques and helping us through the research process."

-Catherine

"I'd really like the chance to thank Dr. Vederas, Avena, and the rest of the Vederas group once again for their tremendous generosity, patience, and support as they helped us through this project. We really couldn't have done it without them."

-Jessica

competition, I went back to Dr. Vederas asking if he would be able to mentor us for the competition, and happily he agreed.

Q: What was the most fun part of the research?

Jessica: The most fun I had during research was probably just learning new procedures and working with the more advanced equipment. Even something as simple as learning how to pour agar plates for the first time was loads of fun. The best feeling though was probably when we saw the first traces of activity during our activity testing.

Q: What was frustrating for you and how did you fix it?

Jessica: I suppose research by nature can be very stressful, if not frustrating, if you're working on a timeline and desperately hoping for results. For example, when we were first testing the supernatant of our yeast culture for traces of an active, extracellular compound, we saw no activity because the supernatant was too dilute. However, we continued purifying and trying to isolate the active compound, since we assumed that once we had fractionated the supernatant and concentrated the fractions, we'd see activity. Thankfully, we did.

Q: What do you think helped you win over the other contestants?

Catherine: Our project focused on a very exciting field – probiotics. When we think of pharmaceutical research, one of the first things people think of is finding a cure for cancer. Some of the most insidious and frustrating diseases, however, are caused by pathogenic organisms resistant to antibiotics. I think the novelty of our project made us a bit different from our other competitors.

Q: What will you be doing with the \$2000?

Catherine: Jessica and I had split the money, and I imagine it's going to be paying for university tuition fees.

Q: Will you be coming to the UofA for further studies?

Jessica: Working in the lab has inspired me to study Chemistry at the U of A next year. **Catherine:** Yes, I will be.

We look forward to welcoming you both this year, Catherine and Jessica!



Health Promotion and Work/Life Services (HPaWS)

LUNCH & LEARN

June 2011

12:05 – 12:55 p.m.



****Please note that staff and faculty will receive priority Lunch and Learn registration, with others being accommodated if space permits. To ensure a quality learning environment for all participants, registrants are asked to please endeavour to arrive at Lunch and Learns on time to minimize class disruption.****

Be Green and Clean—The simplicity of green cleaning solutions

Cheryl Williams, Office of Sustainability

Wednesday, June 1, 2011—CAB 269

Open your cupboard or peer under your sink...everyday household items can be used as effective and eco-friendly cleaning supplies! Learn more about the draw backs to chemical-laden cleaners, the benefits of green cleaning solutions and how simple it can be to start *cleaning green*. During this workshop we will look at some standard cleaning ingredients and consider some of the alternatives available.

Make your own green cleaner!

Simple Suppers for People on the Go

WholeSUM Nutrition Consulting

Wednesday, June 8, 2011—Agriculture/Forestry 2-36

Is your life fast and furious? Looking for some quick dinner solutions for you and your family? Come and learn how to prepare fast meals that are still healthy and taste a variety of foods from salad, soup and entrees cooked in different ways. Learn the tricks of the trade to cook quick, delicious meals.

Cooking demo in the teaching kitchen!

Negotiating Respectful Inter-Personal Boundaries

Irene Spelliscy, Homewood Human Solutions

Wednesday, June 15, 2011—Education South 158

At work and at home, we need to negotiate our own needs with those of others. We have to select between competing priorities and manage overlapping roles. When we set boundaries assertively, while consulting with key stakeholders before making decisions, we create cooperative relationships. This session outlines how to consciously set time, task and role boundaries in order to create successful relationships with ourselves and others.

All-Weather Warriors

Keri Bonk, Campus Recreation

Wednesday, June 22, 2011—Main Quad

Have you always wondered what a boot camp entails? This event will give you an opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy a fitness class that integrates running, jumping and intervals with core conditioning and body weight exercises. While boot camp style training is designed to build physical and mental toughness, participants are nonetheless encouraged to work within their own limits and at their own pace. All fitness levels are welcome!

This session will take place rain or shine

Making Room for Everybody: Creating a Culture of Inclusion

Irene Spelliscy, Homewood Human Solutions

Tuesday, June 28, 2011—Education South 158

Globalization, the new workplace reality, requires us to develop new skills. Appreciating differences—whether they stem from ethnicity, generational status, sexual preference, or a myriad of other variables—requires us to move beyond our fears and prejudices in order to create a shared culture of respect.

Bring your lunch and join us for these informative sessions. Seating is limited—please register at www.learningshop.ualberta.ca. For information about the Lunch & Learn program, contact the Health Promotion and Work/Life Services office: hpaws@hrs.ualberta.ca.

Armour part of UN delegation on status of women

Taken from Folio, March 25, 2011, Volume 48 Issue 14

Written by Michael Brown

Margaret-Ann Armour, University of Alberta associate dean of science (diversity) and champion of women in science, engineering and technology, was the only academic named to the Canadian delegation that attended the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations headquarters in New York earlier this year. The commission brings together representatives of member states to evaluate progress on gender equality while identifying challenges, setting global standards and formulating concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.


The meeting of the commission, held over 10 days starting Feb. 22, discussed such themes as access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including promoting of women's equal access to full employment and decent work, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against the girl child.

"Our government is very keen in having more initiatives in encouraging women and girls in science and technology, and then into leadership positions," said Armour, president of the Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology, or WinSETT Centre. "Canada is past the stage where we have to worry about education of women and girls; for me, what was an amazing experience was listening to a number of developing countries talking about what they were going to do in a public forum."

Rona Ambrose, federal minister of state for [the] status of women, headed the delegation made up of federal and provincial government representatives as well as leaders of non-governmental organizations.

Canada has participated in the UNCSW since its creation in 1947, and is a key leader in the work of advancing gender equality. Along with the priority themes, Armour, who says her highlight of the week came when she was asked to address the member states on behalf of Canada, said the Canadian delegation took the opportunity to highlight the need to end all forms of violence against women and girls, including honour-motivated violence.

"The fact that [countries with gender inequality] were talking about equality in a public forum with all the other countries listening, I thought was very encouraging," said Armour, adding she knows implementation is easier said than done. "Many countries are still trying to provide even elementary education for girls in rural areas where there are no schools, so it was a good start."



Healthy Workplace Tip

Find some time in your work day to take an outside break. Natural light has been shown to improve mood and health as well as increase productivity.

Do You Have an Idea...

...for a cost-saving measure or revenue-generating plan? We now have a new e-suggestion box.
Email: suggestions@chem.ualberta.ca