



# USF Chemistry NEWS

News of Interest to  
Friends of the Department of Chemistry    Volume 17, No 3  
University of South Florida                    Spring  
A Florida Preeminent Research                2019  
University

## Annual Banquet

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Scholarship & Alumni Banquet was held in the Gibbons Alumni Center Traditions Hall on March 28 .



Faculty, students, and staff enjoyed themselves

2019 Outstanding Chemistry Award Recipient was Dr. **Richard William Hoerbelt '66**

The Outstanding Faculty member, nominated by students, was Dr. **Jim Leahy** (Professor of Chemistry)



Dr. Leahy

## Graduate Award Winners

*Theodore and Venette Askounes Ashford Doctoral Fellowship in Chemistry -* **Yassin Elbatrawi and Bo Song**

*Barbara B. Martin Fellowship:* **Lei Wang**  
*Alexiou Award in Environmental Chemistry:*  
**Gaurav Verma**

*George Bursa Award:* **Nicole Avalon and Guy Dayhoff**

*Martin Travel Awardees:* **Elena Bray, Amber Prins Dood, Brenjamin Rathman, Guizella Rocabado, Matthew Sarnowski, and Khalilia Tillett**

## Undergraduate Council Awardees

*American Institute of Chemists Award:*  
**Sandra Khalife**

*Calvin Maybury Department Scholarship:*  
**Eaindra Yee**

*Dean Martin Outstanding Chemistry Major, B.A* **Sahrain Zahoor**

*Dean Martin Outstanding Chemistry Major, B.S.* **Elisabeth Ruscitti**  
*Phi Lambda Research Award*

**Joanne Donovan**

*Richard Bowman Scholarship*

**Thrisna Singh**

*Graham Solomons Department Scholarship*

**Thrisna Singh**

**Undergraduate Research Awardees**

*T. C. Owen Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award:* **Joanne Donovan**

*Clear Springs Land Undergraduate Research Award:* **Amanda Rosa Perdomo**

**Division Award Winners**

***Analytical Division***

*ACS Analytical Chemistry Award:*

**Kory Love**

*Hypocube Scholar:* **Colette Taylor**

*Robert S. Braman Analytical Chem. Award:*

**Brianna Leone**

***Biochemistry Division***

*T.C. Owen Biochemistry Award*

**Grace Lloyd**

***General Chemistry Division***

*Jesse S. Binford General Chemistry Award*

**Ahan Kayasthe**

***Inorganic Chemistry Division***

*Joseph Stanko Inorganic Chem. Award*

**Tess Kaiser**

*Jay Worrell Memorial Scholarship*

**Colette Taylor**

***Organic Chemistry Division***

*George Wenzinger Memorial Scholarship*

**Emma Doukmak**

*Jack E. Fernandez Organic Chem. Award*

**Ignacio Quintana Goicochea**

***Physical Chemistry Division***

*Jeff C. Davis Physical Chem. Award*

**Harper Cassaday**

**Sally Everett Memorial Scholarship**

**Mary Pfaefflin**

**Phung Phong**

**McKayla Shahan**

**Oanh Tran**

**Outstanding Peer Leading Award**

**Julia Troncoso**

**Lauren Baak**

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**Organization:** Ms. **Kaitlyn Kroner**, lead organizer, was assisted by other members of the Chemistry office staff.

**Castle Conference**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Raymond N. Castle Student research Conference was held Saturday March 30<sup>th</sup>. The facilities of the ISA building was used for lecture presentations. Poster sessions were held on the second, third, and fourth floors of the Natural and Environmental Sciences building (NES) along windowed walkways.

Student involvement was impressive as indicated by

- 18 graduate talks in three sessions.
- 49 undergraduate posters
- 22 graduate posters.

Food and drink, provided by the Tampa Bay Section, ACS, were served in NES.

Dr. **Lisa McElwee-White** University of Florida served as plenary speaker.



Dr. McElwee-White

She is the Crow professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry. She is also the 2019 recipient of the Francis P. Garvin--John M. Olin Medal of ACS.

Her seminar was held 4:00-5:00 pm in ISA 1051. Background on Dr. Raymond Castle was provided by Professor **James Leahy**, who kindly presented both the professional and the personal side of this remarkable colleague.

Her seminar was titled:

“A Physical Chemist’s Approach to Precursors for the Deposition of Inorganic Nanostructures”



Organizing Committee members from left to right: **Heng Liu; Zach Magnuson; Guy Dayhoff; Alexander Filosa; Benjamin Rathman; Steve Lan; Qingyu Xing; Mengjia Liu; Sami Abdulkadir; Douglas Franz.**

We are also grateful to the Panel of Judges, 28 members representing six institutions.

Dr. **Xiaodong (Mike) Shi** and Dr. **Kimberly Fields** served as Faculty Advisors.

## **Seminar Series**

**Barbara and Dean Martin Lecture**

Dr. **Leemar Joshua-Tor**, professor and HHMI investigator, Cold Spring Harbor served as lecturer on April 18.

The lectureship was introduced by Dean **Eric Eisenberg**. Dr. **Wayne Guida** provided an introduction of the lecturer, who he had known for a number of years.

Her lecture was titled “Mad about U: destroying the let7-premicro RNA.”



Dr. Joshua-Tor

Her lecture was titled “Mad about U: destroying the let7-premicro RNA.”

She had a full schedule of visiting with students and faculty.

## **Student Activities**

### **Council of Graduate Students**

The first *COGS Choice Speaker* was

Dr. **Seth Cohen**, professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, UC-San Diego (April 4<sup>th</sup>)



Dr. Cohen

His lecture was “Proving our ‘Mettle’ in drug discovery.”

An afternoon lecture was “ Career paths in Chemistry.” was a Q&A session “using his experiences in academia, industry, and government policy ... to talk about his journey through science aspirations, and offer advice for students who are unsure of where to take their careers after graduating?”

## ***Persons you may know***

**Neal Nabar** (BA, ca 2012) did undergraduate research on removal of a dye from soil with **D. F. Martin** (cf. J. E.S.H-A 2012) has been working on a doctorate at The Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm.

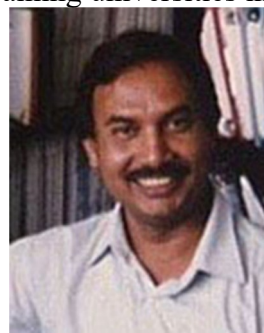


Neal Nabar

He is pictured following a traditional custom of nailing a copy of his dissertation to a board in the university commons following an old custom where it could be read by professors, who could evaluate it, and write an “antithesis”.

Next, the university invited an “opponent” to present an antithesis or professional review following a formal presentation and interview.

**Dr. Abdul Malik** and **Dr. David Merkler** have served the role of evaluator in the past. The Institutet is one of the world’s foremost medical training universities in the world.



Dr. Malik



Dr. Merkler

Dr. Malik added that he served as an official *opponent* at Upsalla University in the fall of 2006. He had received a page of detailed instructions. He wrote, “For me it was a unique experience to sit one-on-one with the defending student at the podium and a QA that lasted ~ two hours.” He added that the

auditorium was filled with the members of the public.

Dr. **David Rogers** (assistant professor) prepared a talk with slides, “Life After Graduation” that he has given to students in his classes. Copies are available on his web site.



Dr. Rogers

Dr. **Jhon Figueroa**, safety coordinator and officer and undergraduate laboratory manager has arranged for Chemistry students to tour nearby laboratories and pertinent facilities. One is the Bausch and Lomb facility, which may afford an opportunity for a summer experience for select graduate students.



Dr. Figueroa

In addition, they will have the opportunity to participate in an internship program that could be taken on a credit or no-credit basis, but appearing on their transcript. This is designed to assist their future employment opportunities.

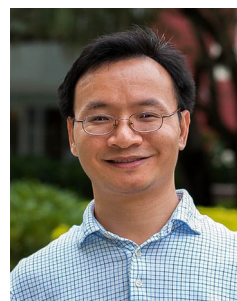
### ***Student recognition***

A graduate student working with Dr. **Shengqian Ma** (professor), Ms **Briana Aguila** received the Dissertation Completion Fellowship from USF Office of Graduate Studies.

She earned her B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Florida before joining USF.



Ms. Aguila



Dr. Ma

Her dissertation work focuses on the development of functional porous materials to target contaminants as well as for resource recovery from water.

### **Student research Awards Luncheon**

Graduate Student Research Symposium Awards were presented to were presented to Ms. **Fiona Kearns** ( Dr. **Lee Woodcock**, advisor) and Mr. **Brian O’Flynn** (Advisor: Dr. **David Merkler**).



Mr. O'Flynn



Ms. Kearns

## USF News

USF Week was a celebration the first week of April. Included on Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup> was a special birthday party.

**Rocky D. Bull**, USF mascot is 45, based on the fact that its image was trademarked in 1974.



The mascot was designed once in 1986 with the current version redesigned in 2003. (Picture courtesy USF Athletics.)

## Presidential Update

**Dr. Judy Genshaft**, sixth USF president, announced last fall that she would retire on July 1, 2019. This will be after 19 years of dedicated service and remarkable increases at the USF campuses.

A notable change in status occurred during her tenure, including creations of USF as an

Preeminent research University

One obvious physical/symbolic change was entire Tampa campus was enclosed in an attractive black fence that provided a degree of security previous lacking. Also the number of resident students was increased to a historical high of 6,000 as a consequence of new dormitories and supporting structures. .

A search for a new president was initiated early in March, 2019.

A 15-member search committee selected four finalists from a list of 33 applicants.

**Dr. Steven Currall** was selected to be USF's seventh president and he announced that USF would become be his "great life mission."



Dr. Currall

He will join USF in July, 2019

## Commencement: 117th

### Chemistry

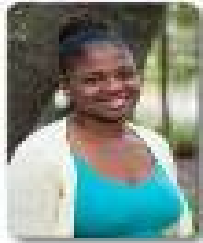
Three graduate students completed their requirements. **Amanda (AJ) Sona**, M.A. **Wishrawana Ratnayake**, Ph.D. (Advisor: **Dr. Mildred Acevedo-Duncan**) and **Santana Thomas**, Ph.D. (Advisor: **Dr. Bill Baker**).



Ms. Sona



Dr. Ratnayake



Dr. Thomas

### Additional information

Total number of degrees: 7,519 (largest to date) 6,686 (Tampa), 546 (USF –St Pete), 287 (Sarasota-Manatee)

In her time as president, Dr. Genshaft has graduated about 210,000 students and this doubled the size of the USF Alumni base.



President Genshaft

She was given (by the Board of Trustees) a personal presidential medallion with 210,000 inscribed on the back.

*A very special note:* President Genshaft’s elder son was scheduled to receive a

master’s degree, and those of us who were members of a platform party were shown a framed copy of his diploma. The signature above “President” read “Mom.” (A more formal version was also planned)

### USF System Consolidation

The USF Consolidation Planning, Study, and implement Task Force was established legislatively pursuant to 1004.335(1) Florida Statutes to develop recommendations to improve service to students by phasing out the separate accreditation of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and the University of South Florida Sarasota Manatee.

This means by July 1, 2020 USF must be operating under a single, unified accreditation. A series of key milestones is available.

### USF Innovation Enterprise

Paul Sanberg, M.D., Ph.D., (Senior VP for Research, Innovation, and Knowledge Enterprise), serves as Chair, Advisory



Dr. Sanberg

Board, Florida Inventors Hall of Fame,

Dr. Sanberg also resided at a highly successful eighth annual meeting of the National Academy of Inventors “Connecting

the Innovation Community” held in Houston, April 10-11.

## **Acknowledgments**

Information on the four presidential finalists from *Tampa Bay Times*, March 19, pp1A,8A

Information about the mascot was provided In a USF Week article by **Jesse Stokes** *Oracle* Editor in Chief.

The picture of the USF mascot was kindly provided by Ms. **Erin Beck**, thanks to Ms. **Abby Ritter**, both members of USF Athletics.

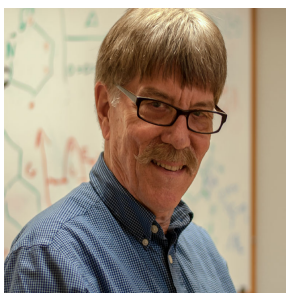
Banquet pictures were provided by Mr. **Brant Tudor**.

## **Abbreviations**

ACS : American Chemical Society

## **News and feedback**

### **Chair's Address:**



Dr. Wayne C. Guida  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Chemistry-CHE 205  
University of South Florida  
4202 East Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33620-5205

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### **Webmaster: Mr. Doug Franz**



Mr. Franz

Mr. Franz is a member of Dr. **Brian Space**'s research group working in the area of computational chemistry.

### **News:**

For past issues you may have missed, please see the departmental Web page.

### **News for us or comments?**

Please write to: [dfmartin@usf.edu](mailto:dfmartin@usf.edu)  
or share with the Webpage or with the Facebook.