

## **Tenth Castle Conference**

“The Raymond N. Castle Student Research Conference was initiated as a means to encourage undergraduate and graduate students to present their scientific data in a friendly atmosphere. The Castle Conference is organized by the students and provides the opportunity for young scientists to develop the necessary communication skills to excel in the future.”

Graduate and undergraduate students from the University of South Florida and surrounding universities and colleges participated in the 2012 Castle Conference. Some 23 graduate students contributed research talks, and there were 23 posters by graduate students, and 63 posters were from undergraduates.

The conference was named after Dr. Raymond N. Castle (1916-1999). He was a Distinguished Research Professor of Chemistry (1981-99). A distinguished heterocyclic chemist, he was the founder of the *Journal of Heterocyclic Chemistry*. He and his wife, Ada, provided the funds that supported the Castle lectures (*see* Department History).

This year’s plenary speaker was **Dr. Kim Janda** (B.S., 1980), Professor of Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry at the Kellogg School of Science and Technology at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla,

CA. Dr. Janda also holds a joint appointment as Director of the Worm



Dr. Kim Janda

Institute for Research and Medicine also at Scripps and is also a Skaggs Scholar at the Skaggs Institute for Chemical Biology at Scripps. His research is broad and multifaceted, spanning the disciplines of chemistry and biology with practical application to medicine and therapeutics. A detailed summary of his research interests, as well as a publication list, can be found at [www.scripps.edu/janda/](http://www.scripps.edu/janda/).

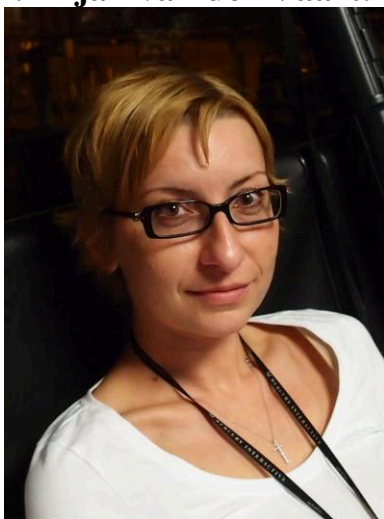
Dr. Janda’s lecture was titled “Immunopharmacotherapy for the treatment of Drug Abuse.”



## *Special Invitation*

**Ms. Aleksandra Karolak**, a doctoral candidate in the field of Computational Chemistry was selected as a participant for the 2012 Workshop on Multiscale Theory and Simulation at the University of Chicago (June 10-13). Housing and travel expenses were covered.

She was nominated by her advisor, **Dr. Arjan van der Vaart**.



Ms. Karolak

Ms. Karolak joined the doctoral program in Chemistry in the Spring 2010 semester.

## *Special thanks to:*

The Castle Student Research Conference Committee: **Christi Whittington** (Chair), **William Mazda** (Co-Chair), **Rachael Alessio**, **Christian Cioce**, **Kristin Costelow**, **Jason Cuce**, **Danielle Demers**, **Joseph Gill**, **Alaa Hashim**, **Seongmin Hong**, **Mu Kim**, **Yaqiong (Rosemary) Li**, **Silke Lopez de Mesa**, **Hasnaa Mouttaki**, **Ranjani Muralidharan**, **Dr. Rebecca**

**O'Malley (Honorary member)**, **Justin White**.

Faculty advisors were **Dr. Patricia Muisener** and **Dr. Arjan van der Vaart**.

**Further details may be found in a summary on the Department of Chemistry Web page.**



From bottom left: Yaqiong (Rosemary) Li, Christi Whittington (Chair), William Maza (Co-Chair), Rachael Alessio; 2nd row from left: Danielle Demers, Joseph Gill, Christian Cioce, Alaa Hashim; 3rd row from left: Arjan van der Vaart, Hasnaa Mouttaki, Rebecca O'Malley, Patricia Muisener; top row from left: Mu Kim, Justin White, Seongmin Hong, Ranjani Muralidharan, Jason Cuce.  
Photo credit: B&O Photography Studio

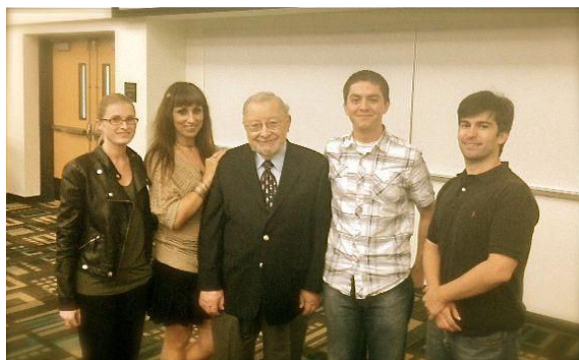
## *Out and about campus...*

### *Gale Lecturer*

**Dr. Gerry G. Meisels** presented the Meg Gale Plenary address at the 76<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Florida Academy of Sciences held at USF, March 16-17. His topic was "Science Education for Florida's Future."

Among those attending were students from a graduate-level course, Methods of Instruction in Higher Ed Chemistry, taught by **Dr.**

**Santiago Sandi Urena**, Assistant Professor of Chemistry.



Among those gathered afterward (from left) Ms. Rachael Alessio, Dr. Vicky Lykourinou, Dr. Meisels, Mr. Adrian Villalta –Cerdas, and Mr. Todd Gatlin.

**Dr. Meisels**, a former USF Provost, is Professor of Chemistry and Director, Coalition for Scientific Literacy at USF.

### *Apocalypse Program*

The Humanities Institute co-sponsored a three-day program, called “Visions of the Apocalypse.” This follows an annual tradition of a program involving *Science Fiction*, and the third part was a panel discussion “Apocalypse Fact or Fiction” .

Professor of Chemistry **Dr. David Merkler** was one of two faculty members on the Panel, along with two leading apocalyptic science fiction authors (**Joe Haldeman** and **Nancy Kress**).

**Dr. Merkler** is a nephew of **Mr. Harry Harrison**, noted Sci-Fi author, who wrote “Make Room! Make Room!” that inspired the movie “Soylent Green.”

### *Out and around*

Among those we’ve seen lately:

**Brian Moulton** (Ph.D. ’03) now with ab initio (<http://www.abinitio.com/>), was on campus April, 6<sup>th</sup> to serve as Chair of a dissertation defense examination.

**Dr. Jack Fernandez** (Professor emeritus, Charter Faculty member, 1960-1995) and his wife, **Mrs. Sylvia Fernandez** attended the College of Arts and Sciences Trail Blazers luncheon April 19<sup>th</sup> at the University Club.

**Dr. T. W. Graham Solomons** (Professor Emeritus and Charter Faculty member 1960-1990) and **Mrs. Judy Solomons** attended the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Scholarship and Alumni Celebration (February 21<sup>st</sup>) . And Dr. Solomons was also a guest lecturer in Organic Chemistry lecture sessions.

### *Graduate Student Awards*

Following a custom of long standing, the Departmental awards were made to certain graduate students at the year’s last seminar. (April 26). **Barbara and Dean Martin** were recognized for donations made to the awards program.

The background, full names of the awards, and names of past recipients may be found on our Web page.



Mr. Wu, Mr. Monastyrskyi, Mr. Maza, the Martins, Mr. Gatlin, Ms. Alessio (missing: Ms. Chen)

Names of awardee advisors are given parenthetically

*Theodore and Venette Askounas Ashford Fellowship*

**Mr. Todd Gatlin** (Dr. Sandi-Urena)  
**Mr. Andrii Monastyrskyi** (Dr. Manetsch)  
**Mr. William Maza** (Dr. Larsen)

*George Bursa Award*

**Mr. Haifan Wu** (Dr. Cai)

*Alexiou Award*

**Ms. Rachael Alessio** (Dr. Sheryl Li and Dr. Martin)

*Barbara Bursa Martin Fellowship*

**Ms. Yao Chen** (Dr. Ma)



Ms. Chen

## **Recent Graduate Alumni**

*Masters*

**Rachael Alessio** (Dr. Li, Dr. Martin),  
**Le Meng** (Dr. Ma, Dr. Malik)

*Ph.D.*

**Ramakanth Ananthoji** (Dr. Harmon)  
**Heather Clarke** (Dr. Mike Zaworotko)  
**Sumit Handa** (Dr. David Merkle)  
**Shikha Mahajan** (Dr. Merkle, Dr. Roman Manetsch),  
**Philip Murray** (Dr. Mark McLaughlin)

The list of our graduates with the full titles of their theses and dissertations is available: <http://chemistry.usf.edu/graduate/recentgrads/>

## **Department Cookout and Picnic**

was held at Phillippe Park in Safety Harbor on May 12<sup>th</sup>. Hamburgers, hotdogs and drinks were provided by the Dr. and Mrs. Larsen. Guests (Faculty, Staff, Grads, Postdocs, Student Assistants & Families) brought side dishes to share. Ms. Kimberly Read coordinated the effort, Ms. Linda Lowe purchased the food and supplies.



Dr. Randy Larsen provided grilling expertise; doctoral candidate Mr. Bill Maza supervised.



And look what was being grilled!



Some of the sixty persons present

The sixty persons present could take full advantage of the beach, playgrounds, boat ramp, and nature trails.

Picnic pictures were taken and provided by **B and O Photography Studio**, and we are grateful for their support.

## ***FAME 2012***

The 88<sup>th</sup> Florida Annual Meeting and Exposition (FAME 2012) was held at Innisbrook Golf & Spa resort ( Palm Harbor) May 17-19<sup>th</sup>). Chemistry was well represented by (among others) *Oral*

*Presenters:* Drs. **Jianfeng Cai**, **Wayne Guida**, **Sumnit Handa**, **Randy Larsen**, **Dean Martin**, **Arjan van der Vaart**, and **Henry Woodcock**, as well as Mr. **Christian Cioce**, Mr. **Wenyang Gao**, Dr. **Sumit Handa**, Ms. **Alaa Hashim**, Dr. **Rongfu Huang**, Ms. **Parul Jain**, Ms. **Aleksandra Karolak**, Mr. **Sameer Kulkarni**, Mr. **Arun Kumar**, Mr. **Billy Maza**, Ms. **Ranjani Muralidharan**, Mr. **Tony Pham**, Mr. **Alexander Schoedel**, Mr. **Haifan Wu**, Mr. **Kurt van Horn**, Mr. **S. L. Vankayla**, Mr. **Adrian Villalta-Cerdas**, Mr. **Chris Witowski**;

*Section Organizers:* Drs. **Shengqian Ma**, **Santiago Sandi-Urena**; as well as

*Poster Presenters:* Mr. **Chandan Barhate**, Ms. **Katherine Forrest**, Mr. **Todd Gatlin**, Ms. **Sheshanka Kesani**, Ms. **Yujuan Liu**, Mr. **Jordany Maignan**, Mr. **Andrii Monastyrskyi**, Mr. **Tony Pham**, Ms. **Christian Tang**, Ms. **MinhPhuong Tran**, Mr. **Justin White**, Ms. **Christi L. Whittington**, Ms. **Tara Word**, Mr. **Zhenjie Zhang**.

## ***Campus changes --- past and future...***

### ***“Change is in the air”***

Starting the first day of spring, smoking was “restricted on the grounds, parking lots and property under control of USF Tampa, with the exception of 25 designated smoking areas.”

**Dr. Sandy Lovins**, vice president for administrative services, noted that “healthier campus” initiatives will “strengthen our commitment to creating an environment where healthier living matters.” A new website has both background and smoking area sites: [www.usf.edu/smoking](http://www.usf.edu/smoking).

### ***Newest campus improvement***

A note from **Ms. Karla Willman** included the latest USF Tampa campus improvement ---a butterfly garden that is located just west of the Student Services Building.



Photo credit: Ms. Karla Willman

It is a great place to relax and watch the butterflies.

### ***Newly renovated Sun Dome***

After some ten months of gutting and reconstruction worth \$35.64 million, the renovated Sun Dome re-opened in May. It is supposed to be good for another 30 years.

The new Dome will seat 10,000 for basketball and has 10 Loge Suites, a 4,5000 ft<sup>2</sup> Arena Club, and a 1500 ft<sup>2</sup> student club section (a first for college basketball?).

A formal ribbon cutting was held May 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 pm with building tours immediately following the ceremony. Commencement ceremonies (five) were held May 4 and 5. Commercial events will start in June. Some 200-plus planned annual events will be coordinated by the Dome's new management firm, Global Spectrum.

The original Dome opened in 1980 a year behind schedule, and far different from the new version.

### ***Obituary***

**Mrs. Alice Monley Tuegel**, 86, passed away May 4<sup>th</sup>. Her first husband was **Dr. Lawrence E. Monley**, Charter Faculty Member and first Chair of the Program in Chemistry. (Department status began the Autumn of 1964).

### ***Chemistry Alumni Links***

Curious about fellow alumni? Who is doing what? Thanks to Webmaster **Chris Cioce**, The following links are now available:

[http://chemistry.usf.edu/alumni/phd\\_alumni.aspx](http://chemistry.usf.edu/alumni/phd_alumni.aspx) (Graduate)

[http://chemistry.usf.edu/alumni/ba\\_alumni.aspx](http://chemistry.usf.edu/alumni/ba_alumni.aspx) (Undergraduate)

### ***News and feedback***

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

**Dr. Randy Larsen**  
Department of Chemistry-CHE 205  
University of South Florida  
4202 East Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33620-5205  
rlarsen@cas.usf.edu

#### ***Web page:***

<http://chemistry.usf.edu>

#### ***Photography***

**Ms. Victoria Mothershed**

#### ***Webmaster:***

**Mr. Christian Cioce**

#### ***Graduate Student information:***

**Ms. Adrienne McCain**, who also took the awardee pictures.

#### ***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.