



USF Chemistry NEWS

News of Interest to

Friends of the Department of Chemistry

University of South Florida

Volume 18, No 4

ONE UNIVERSITY

Autumn 2020

Geographically Distributed

Faculty Recognition

Dr. Raker

Dr. Jeff Raker

Dr. **James Leahy** (Professor and Chair) announced that Dr. **Jeff Raker** (Associate Professor) received a NSF Grant, Collaborative Research: Impacting Assessment Practices of Postsecondary of Faculty Teaching Gateway Chemistry Courses.”



This will establish a mentorship program and evaluate various methods of assessment (in conjunction with the American Chemical Society at junior and senior colleges.

Dr. Theresa Evans-Nguyen

Dr. **Evans-Nguyen** (Assistant Professor) was awarded a Florida Space Research Program NASA grant for her project “Sampling Preparation for Organic Mass Spectrometry – Applications for Identification of Chiral Excess.



Dr. Evans-Nguyen

Dr. Jianfeng Cai

Dr. **Jianfeng Cai** was named a “*USF Preeminent Professor*” (8/7/2020--). He was also elected a member of National Academy of Inventors, USF Chapter



Dr. Cai

More

Dr. Cai was one of nineteen USF Faculty members to be selected for a USF 2020 Outstanding Research Achievement Award. Each recipient received the recognition and \$2,000 in consideration for their achievements for the 2019 calendar year.

Subsequently Dr. Cai was named the:2020 USF Outstanding Graduate Faculty Member by the Office of Graduate studies and will be formally recognized at a ceremony on November 9th

USF’s faculty continue to pursue innovative research that inspires our students and benefits the communities we serve,” USF President **Steven Currall** said. “I am proud to recognize this year’s recipients for their outstanding achievements and impactful discoveries.”

Alumna Awardee

Dr. **Lee Woodcock** (Associate Professor) can take extra special pride in a former doctoral advisee, Dr. **Fiona Kearns**. She is one of four recipients of an Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation award., This is highest award of the Office of Graduate Studies. Dr. Kearns will receive \$1,000 and will prepare a video introducing herself and her family for the Scholars of Excellence virtual ceremony November 9th. The announcement said, “The committee was very impressed with not only the theme of your research, but also the extent of your professional development to date.”



Dr. Kearns

Graduates – summer

Three students defended their dissertations and were graduated at summer commencement:

Dr. Yiming Li



Dr. Li

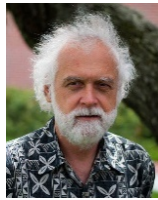


Dr. Li

Dr Sofia Kokkalaria



Dr. Kokkalaria



Dr. Baker

Dr.Linxia Song



Dr. Song

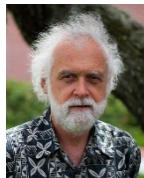


Dr.Evans-Nguyen

Dr. Bingjie Yang



Dr. Yang

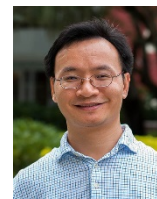


Dr. Baker

Dr Gaurav Verma



Dr. Verma



Dr. Ma

Graduates -Fall

Doctoral Masters

Graduate students who defended their doctoral dissertations later and were scheduled for fall commencements. included the following

Dr. Meng Chen



Dr. Chen

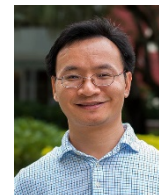


Dr. Ma

Dr. Harsh Vardan



Dr. Vardan



Dr. Ma

Gaurav Verma Dr. Ma



Dr. Verma



Dr. Ma

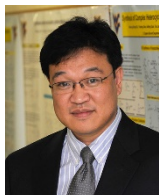
Masters

Jing Wang



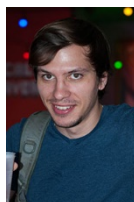
Mr. Wang

Dr. Shi



Dr. Shi

Matthew Mostrom **Dr. Space**



Mr. Mostrom



Dr Brian Space

Virtual Seminars

Dr. **Jianfeng Cai** (Preeminent Professor) organized a term of 12 seminars with six outside speaker and six Chemistry faculty members. The first was presented by Dr. **Bill Baker** (Professor) who described the background and significance of his research in Antarctic waters and its applications to our needs and interests.

NBC Morning Show Visit

A reporter for the daily NBC morning show Today visited the USF Tampa campus as an example of schools that are “doing it right” with respect to the COVID -19 epidemic. USF’s positivity rate was an impressively low 0.002%. President Currall when

interviewed indicated that fraternities and sororities had been properly cautioned against having typical social events.

The USF dormitories have fewer students than usual this year in order to facilitate social distancing requirements. When asked about violators, the response was they were being “provisionally suspended.”

This is believed to be a first visit from the program’s reporters, and the result seemed most favorable.

Virtual Homecoming- October 4-11,

The Covid 19 made a notable change, but it didn’t cut the Homecoming spirit

Oct 6 *Trivia night* 51% knew that USF Campus was once part of a bombing range

Oct 8 *-USF Digital Exhibit* –Provided by USF Library – a fascinating virtual exhibit

Oct 9 – *Virtual 5K* -however the entrant chose to accomplish this, including”virtual”

Oct 10 *ECU vs USF* Homecoming Game Raymond James

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Some Consequences of ONE UNIVERSITY

- The Department of Chemistry now includes five chemistry faculty members on the St Petersburg campus and three chemistry faculty members on the Sarasota-Manatee campus. Pictures of all members are listed alphabetically on our Webpage.

- USF can offer additional majors, scholarships, and support services on any campus
- Students will have access to academic programs across all three campuses
- An expedited launch of a nursing program on the Sarasota-Manatee campus helped meet a local workforce need earlier this year
- About 89,000 persons are associated with USF across three campuses according to VP Donna Peterson Speaking at the fall DUP meeting.

Persons you may know

Duke D. Pore (Ph.D., 1996)

Capt (US Army) currently stationed at Joint Base San Antonio (Fort Sam Houston), having served for 17.5 years in various assignments Following 20 years of service, he plans to work for DOD as a civilian for five years, then travel , visit family, teach part time, stay active. He remembers happily withing with both Martins is their laboratory.

Dr. Santiago Sandi-Urena

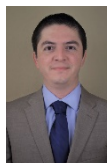
Recently wrote a friendly, complimentary letter from the University of Costa Rica where he is a faculty member in the School of Chemistry. He was a faculty member in Chemistry and was responsible for a NSF summer research program. He wrote “I still think the students I had at USF were the best students I ever had.” He added that he was giving a seminar at Purdue in a few days. His current picture is representative of his caring nature as he is growing his hair very long so that it can be cut and donated to the equivalent of “wigs for kids” in the US.

Thomas R RP Slawsky, MA 1999

He is EH&S Site Manager for Pratt & Whitney HMI Metal Powders | 2395 Main Street |Clayville, NY 13322 | He spent a decade as chemist in the flavors and fragrances industry. Subsequently he helped run a small family business before leaving to earn his MBA from University of Florida, and is now half way through his .Masters in Sustainability from Harvard. He applied to take the Certified Industrial Hygienist certification. He wrote:”The board reviews all of my academic credentials to determine eligibility and a reviewer has asked that I provide a class description of the toxic chemistry class I attended on 1997.” Dr. Martin lent him a set of class notes.

Adrian Villalta-Cerdas (Ph.D., 2014)

An assistant professor of Chemistry at Sam Houston State University, he is the sole recipient of the ACS GHS Younger Chemist Award for 2020.



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Dr Villata-Cerdas

At USF, his doctoral advisor was Dr. Santiago

In Memorium

Joseph C. Cory, Ph.D.

83, of Pointe Vepra Beach, FL, August 19, 2020.

Dr. Cory was a faculty member in Chemistry (1966-1971?) teaching biochemistry before becoming a founding faculty member of USF

Medical School. Subsequently he was Chairman of Biochemistry at East Carolina University's Brody Medical School where he taught and continued cancer research. He remained at ECU until his retirement.

University Achievements

Relative size

USF is ranked 46th among US public universities in the latest 2021 USN&WR rankings of National universities. This is behind UF at 6th and FSU at 19th. However, our trajectory of positions improved in the past 10 years is ahead of any university in the US, public or private. So, we can say that we are the fastest-rising university in the US over the past decade. (Dr. **Pritsh Mukherjee**)

Equality considerations

USF announced a funding of 23 projects created to focus on "systemic inequality, disparities and other issues of race." About 90 faculty members in eight colleges and all three campuses will participate. One topic for consideration: how skin color and facial features can have a role in police violence and racial disparities. Another topic: developing a model on how Florida should handle forgotten African American burial grounds.

Statement by President Currall

The 2021 rankings of best colleges by U.S. News and World Report confirms that [the University of South Florida is once again the fastest-rising university in America](#). This further reinforces USF's remarkable ascent in

national rankings over the past decade. While we are mindful that rankings are not the sole driver of our decisions at USF, they are, in this case, a well-deserved source of pride as well as a reflection of your hard work and dedication to support USF's commitment to academic excellence and student success. [Provided September 14, 2020]



Resident Currall

COVID-19 USF Responds

The USF Administration recognizing the financial needs faced by many students created the "USF United Support Fund." This was designed to help meet such needs as rent, buying groceries or coping with unexpected educational expenses.

President Currall reported: "As of late May more than 1,500 donors contributed nearly \$337,000 and 87 percent of the gifts came from USF alumni, faculty and staff." Over 300 deserving students were assisted.

USF Innovation Enterprise

Paul R. Sanberg, M.D., Ph.D., D.Sc., is Senior VP for Research, Innovation & Knowledge Enterprise. He is also President and Founder of the National Academy of Inventors.

Dr. Sanberg is also a highly cited author. One of 146 at USF who are among the top 1.5% of all cited scientists in the world.



Dr. Sanberg

Dr. Sanberg was named to The Inaugural Cohort of Sigma Xi Fellows for “pioneering research and bioengineering of innovative cell therapies for neurodegenerative conditions and national leadership in advancing academic innovation.”

Acknowledgments

Ms. **Kaitlyn Kroner**, Graduate Program Coordinator provided helpful information concerning dissertation defense schedules. She also provided the picture of Dr. Kearns and made a useful comment about the text.

Ms. **Paige Romero**, Webmaster, Administrative Specialist, kindly provided useful technical assistance

Dr. **Joseph Stanko** provided Dr. **Joseph Cory**'s obituary.

Equality studies information was obtained from the *Tampa Bay Times* (September 13).

Dr. **James Leahy** called attention to the NBC Morning Show visit, reviewed the segment, and also made helpful comments about the text in other segments.

One University Consequences from *USF Magazine*, Fall issue

Relative size information: Dr. **Pritish Mukherjee**

“Inaugural Cohort information“: *American Scientist* (Nov-Dec 2020, p.384)

News and feedback

If you have news of interest you wish to share, consider contacting our web page

or write to:DFMartin@USF.edu

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Dr. Leahy

Dr. James Leahy

Professor and Chair Department of
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August 2019 --

Webmaster:



Ms. Paige Romero

News for us or comments?

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

For news of interest, please write to:
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