

# THE PERIODIC TABLOID

from Wayne State's Department of Chemistry

WINTER 2023



Photo by Kimberly Liorens

NOBCChE's first hands-on experiments session of the year with UPrep students.

## WSU NOBCChE never stops

By Cathleen Saraza

As pandemic health and safety policies lifted or evolved to accommodate more in-person meetings, the WSU National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers' (NOBCChE) 2021-22 academic year was once again full of camaraderie and service.

The group completed its K-12 outreach objective in the winter, working to create "elephant toothpaste" and slime, study fingerprints, and extract fruit DNA with University Prep Academy students from the Mark Murray campus. WSU NOBCChE also led enrichment sessions to solidify students' understanding of school concepts. The grand finale included a tour of WSU's Department of Chemistry, a pizza lunch and an award ceremony celebrating the students.

The NOBCChE celebrated and supported its members by hosting various professional development and social events. The group began the fall semester with a potluck at Belle Isle for new and returning members and throughout the year held virtual seminars, such as learning about the novel uses of killer snails with Mandë Holford, and job searching and finishing Ph.D.s strong with WSU NOBCChE alumni. Finally, members enjoyed Michigan pastimes by giving out candy at a Detroit trunk-or-treat event and attending a Plymouth Orchards & Cider Mill outing with hayrides, apple cider and cake donuts.

The group is eager to once again uphold its tenets of service, professional development and community in the Detroit area throughout the 2022-23 school year.

## Outstanding Alumni Awards

By Lisa Anga

This fall, the Wayne State University Department of Chemistry recognized the significant achievements of three alumni. Patrick Grohar, M.D., Ph.D.; Aldona Valicenti; and Jason McLellan, Ph.D., were presented with the department's inaugural Outstanding Alumni Award. The awards were presented in conjunction with the Urmila Gopal Singhal Endowed Lecture.

Grohar was honored for his expertise in pediatric oncology, specifically for his role in developing new treatments for Ewing Sarcoma, a bone cancer that primarily affects children and adolescents. Valicenti was honored for her leadership in the information technology sector, as well as in public service. McLellan was honored for his work in mapping the structure of the SARS-CoV-2 spike, which paved the way for the development of COVID-19 vaccines. Congratulations to all three!



Photo by Mary Iverson

Left to right: Patrick Grohar, Aldona Valicenti, and Jason McLellan



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear friends and alumni,

A lot has happened over the past year, including my appointment to a second term as department chair, for which I am deeply honored. This newsletter provides a few highlights. I encourage you to follow us on social media for more information on the current happenings of the department.

The following is a small sampling of what happened in the department over the past year: The department accomplished 80 years of continuous certification by the American Chemical Society. Carl Johnson established an endowed professorship to support junior faculty members, and Long Luo became its first recipient. Tom Linz received the Junior Faculty Award from the WSU Academy of Scholars. Jin Cha completed his time as a program officer at the National Science Foundation (NSF) and returned to campus at the same time that Christy Chow began a two-year appointment as a program officer at the NSF; Chow also received the Board of Governors Distinguished Faculty Fellowship Award from WSU. John SantaLucia retired and was named Professor Emeritus. We began preparing to host the inaugural Bettye Washington Greene (Ph.D. '65) Symposium. Kim Miller retired, Mishad Ahmed moved on to another job after completing his M.B.A., and Young-Hoon Ahn moved to be closer to his family; they will all be missed around the department, and we wish them well.

Our students and postdocs also continue to thrive. Nuwandi Ariyasingha received an F32 Fellowship from the National Institutes of Health, and Naresh Venneti was recognized as a leader in mentoring by the American Chemical Society. Bailey McCarthy Riley placed into a legislative fellowship at NOAA, and Ramiro Barraza was selected for an internship at Gilead. Gibson Kirui won the best poster presentation award at the 2021 virtual ACS Fall Scientific Meeting Symposium, Tharanga Batugedara received an award for best student oral presentation at the

42nd Annual Michigan Catalysis Society Fall Symposium, and Tepora Su'a and Thranga Batugedara received NOBCCChE symposium awards. Mohammad Shah Hafez Kabir and Asanka Dissanayake received travel awards from international conferences, and Marcos Imer was selected to participate in the 24th National School on Neutron and X-ray Scattering. We expect to see many similar successes from the department in the future as we welcome a large incoming graduate class this year.

My sincere gratitude goes to chemistry alumni Brooke Raven, Sibrina Collins, Charles Dezelah, Karl Gust, Jeff Kohrt, Jaya Lakshmi, Vahid Majidi, Jane Philip, Tomasz Respondek, Larry Roy, Rose Ryntz, Nilshad Salim, Harshani Sewwandi, Raj Gopal Sharma, and Edward Thomas for taking their time to network with our current students and share their post-WSU experiences.

The remainder of this newsletter contains stories about happenings in the department from the past year, including updates from our student organizations and alumni. Alumni, please stay in touch. Send updates with your outstanding achievements and new jobs so that we can include them in future newsletters. We've made it easy to share your stories with us — we love to hear from you. Finally, next time you are in the Detroit area, please let us know and stop by to meet with friends, colleagues, and mentors.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Allen  
Professor and Chair



# ECS student chapter fosters community

By Faria Sultana

The Electrochemical Society (ECS) Detroit Student Chapter — the first of its kind in Michigan — entered its third year with five new executive committee members and 15 general members working under the supervision of faculty advisors Long Luo and Ankun Yang.

The chapter works to make a common platform for people interested in electrochemistry and electrocatalysis by arranging workshops and seminars on research tools and career guidelines, hosted by experts from industry and academia. The chapter has also carried out multiple virtual events since its inception.

Recently, the chapter hosted its annual three-day workshop conducted by Drs. Luo and Lang, where they discussed topics ranging from the fundamentals of electrochemistry to its applied field, giving the utmost importance to advanced batteries.



These events improve the analytical and leadership skills of students and professionals in the field of electrochemistry. The chapter also arranges get-togethers among its members to encourage a friendly collaborative environment.

The ECS Detroit Student Chapter looks forward to organizing more exciting events! For more information and further updates, follow the chapter on Twitter [@ECS\\_Detroit](https://twitter.com/ECS_Detroit) or email [ecs.waynestate@gmail.com](mailto:ecs.waynestate@gmail.com).

# Chemistry Ambassadors reach Detroit youth

By Aaron Rury

During the 2021-22 academic year, the Department of Chemistry's Undergraduate Recruiting Committee (URC) helped ring in a new era of recognizing student excellence by selecting three outstanding undergraduates — Zoe Harris, Vince Pallo and Justin Ahrens — as Chemistry Ambassadors. These individuals represent the

achievements within reach of Wayne State chemistry students through their dedication to learning.

The URC planned, facilitated and carried out the department's participation in July's 2022 Metro Detroit Youth Day on Belle Isle, which brought together local kids for a day of hands-on activities and musical

performances. Department members conducted interactive demonstrations of vinegar-baking soda volcanos, "elephant toothpaste" and the Mentos challenge. Students were featured on the front page of WSU's Today@Wayne newsletter to highlight their impact on local kids.

# ACS returns to in-person gatherings

By Elizabeth Ballmann

Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, the Wayne State University American Chemical Society-Student Affiliates (WSU ACS-SA) successfully captured the essence of chemistry and scientific inquiry throughout the 2021-22 academic year. This year, as virtual events transitioned to in-person gatherings, WSU ACS-SA hosted several events aimed at creating connections, including a student-faculty mixer, a social gathering with ACS student chapters from other local universities and a trip to Michigan State University's rare isotope research laboratory.

Most notably, WSU ACS-SA hosted a cancer research symposium in February 2022, featuring keynote speaker Jens Schmidt, along with supporting speakers Aliccia Bollig-Fischer and Mary Kay Pflum. The symposium also provided an opportunity for



undergraduates to orally present research and posters from their laboratories. These posters were also featured at the ACS national conference in San Diego in March, where 10 WSU ACS students presented research, attended lectures supported by the Kavli Foundation, and networked with students and professors from across the country, thanks to a generous donation from WSU alumnus Edward Thomas, Ph.D. '77.

In the coming year, the club plans to get involved with the Detroit chapter of ACS and strengthen the bond between affiliate members, faculty and the community. For membership information, email the club at [wsuacs@wayne.edu](mailto:wsuacs@wayne.edu) or follow @[WSUACSSA](https://www.facebook.com/WSUACSSA) on Facebook and @[wsu\\_acs](https://twitter.com/wsu_acs) on Twitter.

## Long Luo serves as inaugural Carl Johnson Early Career Endowed Professor

By Lisa Anga



Thanks to the generosity of former faculty member and department chair Carl R. Johnson, the Department of Chemistry has a new endowment

to support early career faculty.

Johnson recognized that talented young faculty members learn the ropes at Wayne State but are sometimes lured to other universities for their most productive years. He established the Carl Johnson Early Career Endowed Professorship to help the department retain its best and brightest.

"Wayne State University offers exemplary research opportunities and a stellar faculty, but we were losing our rising stars to schools with deeper pockets," Johnson said. "I established this endowment so that the Department of Chemistry can keep these innovative thinkers here, where they can help our students reach their potential."

Johnson established the Carl Johnson Early Career Professorship in the fall of 2021 with an endowment that will support the professorship in perpetuity. Upon hearing this news, alumni of the Johnson Lab came together to jump-start the professorship, making it possible for Professor Long Luo to begin his three-year tenure as the Carl Johnson

Early Career Endowed Professor in fall 2022, one year earlier than originally anticipated. Luo is a dedicated researcher focused on exploring new frontiers in electrocatalytic and electroanalytical sciences.

"I feel extremely honored and proud," Luo said. "It is vital for Wayne State to have endowments like this because they help retain faculty and recruit outstanding external faculty. Faculty is essential to the success of our university."



# Alumni Profile — Calvin Emanuel, Ph.D. '99

By Christine Chow



Calvin Emanuel, Ph.D., obtained his B.S. in chemistry from Auburn University in Alabama in 1994, and his doctorate in physical organic chemistry from

Wayne State University in 1999. He is currently vice president and general manager for Net Zero Solutions and Nalco Water, an Ecolab company focused on the delivery of sustainability solutions.

Emanuel previously worked in commercial management, sales,

research and development, and manufacturing at Shell Chemical and BASF. He is currently a member of the board of trustees of the Chemical Educational Foundation, which hosts programs to build the STEM workforce.

Emanuel said he chose a chemistry career because of his curiosity and desire to know how things work at the molecular level. He was fortunate to have strong mentors who influenced and encouraged him. His undergraduate research experiences led to a publication in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*.

Emanuel attributes his success to several key beliefs: never stop

learning, be willing to be bold and fail, learn and grow from challenges, and understand who you are and what drives you. Although Emanuel acknowledges that work-life balance can be challenging, he prioritizes time to recharge so that he can be most effective at his job. He recommends that students interested in pursuing careers in the chemical profession find areas that align with their ideals and bring joy.

We are excited to learn more about Emanuel's passion for problem-solving and how he continues to help advance society with his vast expertise.

## Welcome, Isabel Botello!

By Isabel Botello



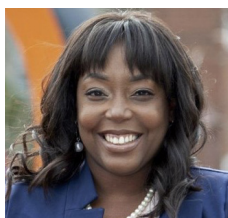
Isabel Botello joined the Wayne State Chemistry Department in the main office in August 2021. She is no stranger to the university. She received her

bachelor's in business management from Wayne State and is currently pursuing her master's in law at the university. Botello took over as facilities coordinator for the chemistry department when Jackie (Baldyga) Kennedy moved into Kim Miller's position after Miller's retirement.

Some of Botello's duties include managing the building and working with special events and safety. She is very excited to be working in the chemistry department!

# Alumni Profile — Melody Kelley, B.S. '07

By Christine Chow



Melody Kelley, Ph.D., is a Detroit native who graduated *magna cum laude* from Wayne State University in 2007. As

an undergraduate, she carried out research in the Kodanko Lab, where she synthesized amino acid derivatives for subsequent ferryl oxidation studies. Professor Jeremy Kodanko stated that Kelley was instrumental in helping him set up the lab, and her work led to co-authorship on a paper in 2009. She went on to become the first

African American woman doctoral recipient in the chemistry department of the University of Alabama, where she received her Ph.D. in organic chemistry in 2014, and obtained several prestigious fellowships.

Kelley is currently an associate professor of chemistry in Georgia State University's Perimeter College and a STEM faculty associate in the GSU Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Online Education. She specializes in operationalizing high-impact pedagogical practices to serve diverse, underserved and non-traditional student populations.

This commitment extends beyond academia to her service activity, which includes becoming the first African American to hold an elected office in Georgia's seventh-largest city, Sandy Springs.

In her spare time, Kelley enjoys spending time with her 16-year-old daughter, Kiara. We are extremely proud of Kelley and honored that she returned to provide guidance to Wayne State chemistry students at the inaugural Bettye Washington Greene Lectureship and Career Panel on Oct. 28, 2022.

# DEGREES

## AWARDED 2021-22



### BACHELOR'S

Austin Agrusa	Unsa Fatima	Sandra Nasser
Sarah Alhader	Ajna Gjyla	Ernest Orlovski
Sahar Almatrahi	Lalith Gopi Nagaruri	Paul Ortmann
Mohamed Alshaiba	Hamza Hai	Aseem Phadnis
Amanda Azar	Christopher Harnadek	Rami Razooq
Alyssa Bellon	Zoha Hasan	Varunika Savla
Elizabeth Biros	Mariam Hazimeh	Brendan Schmidt
Jason Blanchet	Zunaira Imran	Syeda Shaheen
Brandon Brown	Jayla Jackson	Hussein Sharafeldin
Hazen Campbell	Fardusee Jaigirdar	Laila Shatela
Christopher Carter	Wayne Jobman	Mateusz Silenski
Eman Dannaway	Nataly Kaadi	David Solar
Kaden Decastro	Lyric Kashou	Stephen Strobehn
Alejandra Dulworth	Sydney Kasmer	Jacob Wielgomas
Sandra El Dairi	Ci Lee	Seoyoung Woo
Sydni Alexis Elebra	Ashlyn Murphy	Mira Zaranek
Lyric Elliott	Shima Nagi	

### MASTER'S

Name	Degree	Advisor
Lalani Mawella Vithanage	M.S.	Brock
Hermeson Benicio	M.A.	Rabuffetti
Dahamsondage Nuwan Kondasinghe	M.A.	Nguyen
Chenlu Liu	M.A.	Nguyen
Zachary Owczarzak	M.A.	Tomco
Punam Paul	M.A.	Stockdill
Yanick Wanzi	M.A.	Luo



Dr. Adedayo Sanni

## Alumni spotlight: Peer mentorship opens door for career in medicine

By Lisa Anga



Dr. Ted Teknos is at the forefront of comprehensive cancer care. As president and scientific director of the University Hospitals Seidman Cancer

Center, deputy director of the Case Western Reserve University Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, and professor of otolaryngology – head and neck surgery at Case Western Reserve University, Teknos has spent

his career helping patients survive cancer and thrive in recovery. A prominent surgeon and academic expert on head and neck cancers, Teknos continues to see patients and run clinical trials in addition to his leadership responsibilities at UH Cleveland Medical Center.

From a young age, he knew he wanted to be a physician. While attending Wayne State for dual bachelor's degrees in chemistry and biology, Teknos worked at Troy Beaumont Hospital as a phlebotomist. An older friend from high school also attended WSU

and became an important mentor when he introduced Teknos to Saradindu Dutta in the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Teknos earned an undergraduate research position in Dutta's lab, conducting research that proved helpful for his next move — medical school at Harvard University.

"My experience at Wayne State proved invaluable at Harvard and beyond," Teknos said. "I'm grateful for the undergraduate education I received at WSU."



## DOCTORATES

Name	Degree	Advisor
<b>Anuththara Abesinghe Arachchige</b> Thermal Atomic Layer Deposition of Titanium Nitride Films: Synthesis and Characterization of Novel Titanium Precursors	Ph.D.	Winter
<b>Adeleye Adewale</b> Biophysical Characterization of SMYD2'S Binding with N2A TITIN	Ph.D.	Ahn
<b>Dulani Bajjala Kumbure Gedara</b> Synthesis and Luminescence of Mixed-Halide and Mixed-Metal Nanocrystals	Ph.D.	Rabuffetti
<b>Gihan Basnayake Mudiyansele</b> Probing Electronic and Nuclear Dynamics in Small Molecules Induced by Strong Fields	Ph.D.	Li
<b>Jordan Burton</b> Extending Plasma Proteome Coverage to Enable Biomarker Discovery	Ph.D.	Stemmer/Kodanko
<b>Brooke Corbin</b> Understanding the Effects of Ligand Environment on Important Properties of Redox-active Europium Using Computational Chemistry and T1-Weighted Magnetic Resonance Imaging.	Ph.D.	Allen
<b>Duke Debrah</b> Direct Measurements of the Absolute Carrier-Envelope Phases of Ultrashort Pulses and its Application, and Probing Electronic Dynamics in Molecules and Surfaces Using 3D Momentum Imaging	Ph.D.	Li
<b>Paul Dement</b> Organocatalyzed Glycosylations Accessing 2-Deoxy-2-Fluoro Glycosides	Ph.D.	Nguyen
<b>Harshani Sewvandi Gurusingha Arachchige</b> Developing Inhibitors of UCHL5 Deubiquitinase in the Proteasome	Ph.D.	Ahn
<b>Herath Mudiyansele Gedara Herath</b> Substrate Profiling of the Epigenetic Erasers HDAC1 and LSD1	Ph.D.	Pflum
<b>Chathuranga Chinthana Hewa Rahinduwege</b> Electrochemical Gelation of Metal Chalcogenide Quantum Dots	Ph.D.	Luo
<b>Rabiul Islam</b> Anin Vivo-Inducible Expression System to Determine Antibacterial Activity of Peptide	Ph.D.	Chow
<b>Joseph Knoff</b> The Design, Synthesis, and Biological Evaluation of Selective Histone Deacetylase (HDAC) Inhibitors	Ph.D.	Pflum
<b>Sudheer Kurup</b> Design, Synthesis, and Reactivity of First-Row Transition Metal Complexes Ligated by Chelating BIS(ALKOXIDE) Ligands Towards Nitrene Transfer Reactions	Ph.D.	Groisman
<b>Sydney Lavan</b> The Development of Fundamental Insights into the Electronic Behaviors of Next-Generation Materials	Ph.D.	Rury/Liu
<b>Timothy McMillan</b> Investigation of the Effects of a 3-Deoxy-3-Thio Substituent on Glycosylation Mechanisms	Ph.D.	Nguyen
<b>Hashini Munasinghe Arachchi</b> Metal Trifluoroacetates as a New Family of Organic-Inorganic Hybrid Materials: Synthesis, Structure, Reactivity, and Luminescence	Ph.D.	Rabuffetti
<b>Michael Overbeek</b> Synthesis of Molybdenum Containing Thin Films Using Organic Reducing Agents and Synthesis of Magnesium Silylintermediate Complexes for use in Atomic Layer Deposition	Ph.D.	Winter
<b>Adedayo Sanni</b> Synthetic, Mechanistic, and Structural Insights into Defect Mediated Broadband Photoluminescence in Low Dimensional Hybrid Perovskites	Ph.D.	Rury
<b>Karunamuni Silva</b> Assembly of Quantum Dots into Porous Architectures: Methods, Mechanisms, and Applications	Ph.D.	Brock
<b>Nicholas Toupin</b> Development of New Photochemical Tools for Applications in Cancer Research and Enzymatic Signaling	Ph.D.	Kodanko
<b>Duleeka Wannipurage</b> Synthesis and Reactivity of Metal Bis(Alkoxide) Complexes in Nitrene Coupling and Polymerization of Polar Monomers	Ph.D.	Groisman
<b>Aldora Devale Kapuralalage Weeraratne</b> Induction and Prevention of Electron Transport in Langmuir-Blodgett Films of 3d-Based Metallosurfactants: Studies on Current Rectification and Corrosion Inhibition	Ph.D.	Verani
<b>Maheeshi Yapa Abeywardana</b> Chemical Proteomic Identification and Functional Studies of Cardiac Protein Glutathionylation	Ph.D.	Ahn

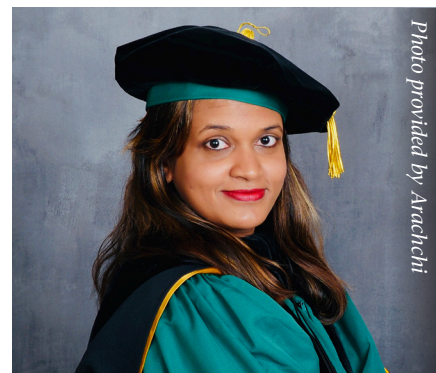


Photo provided by Arachchi

Dr. Hashini Munasinghe Arachchi



Photo by Joseph Frimpong

Dr. Duke Debrah



Photo by Dr. Young-Hoon Ahn

Dr. Harshani Sewvandi Gurusingha Arachchige (left) and Dr. Maheeshi Yapa Abeywardana (right)

# In Memoriam

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## Robert K. Boeckman Jr.

By Carl Johnson



Robert K. Boeckman Jr., former professor of chemistry at Wayne State University and the Marshall D. Gates Emeritus Professor

of Chemistry at the University of Rochester, died on Sept. 5, 2021, from complications of nonalcoholic steatohepatitis.

Bob was born on Aug. 26, 1944, in

Pasadena, California. He received his B.S. from Carnegie Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. from Brandeis University before completing postdoctoral studies at Columbia University.

Bob began his academic career as an assistant professor at Wayne State and quickly advanced ranks to full professor. In 1980, he moved to the University of Rochester, where he spent the next four decades.

Bob's research focused on the development of new synthetic methodology, applicable to the synthesis of complex multifunctional

target structures. He served as associate editor of the *Journal of Organic Chemistry*, chair of the ACS Division of Organic Chemistry and president of Organic Syntheses Inc.

Upon retirement, Bob and his wife, Mary, moved with their horses and cats to the Adirondacks. Bob was a long-term supporter and recent president of Pet Pride of New York Inc., a no-kill, cats only sanctuary and adoption center.

Bob was exemplary in his service to his department, his university, his profession and society.

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## Clayton P. Scott

By Steve Bowman



Clayton P. Scott was the definition of a hospitable person. Nicknamed "Cadillac" for his style and commitment to excellence,

he loved his family, his job and his colleagues.

Clayton had an impeccable work ethic and keen attention to detail. He cared about everyone in the chemistry department, and it was his pleasure to make sure everything was clean for everyone who worked in or visited the building.

Clayton had many friends throughout the department, especially in his sector. I had the pleasure of working with him for more than 10 years. He was truly an amazing worker, and we will miss him dearly. Clayton, may your God bless you. You will never be forgotten.

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## Tenecia Smith

By Jackie Kennedy



Tenecia Smith, office services clerk II, passed away on Oct. 29, 2021, following a long battle with leukemia. From her first day in

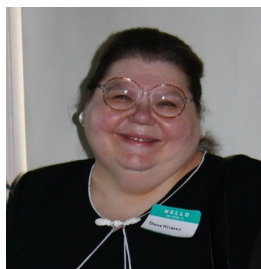
the department, Tenecia stepped into her role as if she had been in the department for years. Department members looked forward to seeing her infectious smile as they entered the building. She made many lasting impacts during her time in chemistry, especially in the hearts of

the graduate students. She always provided a listening ear and was their biggest cheerleader as they celebrated milestones on the path to their Ph.D. Not a day goes by where she is not missed by all in the department.



## Diane Klimas

By David M. Coleman and Carl R. Johnson



Long-time chemistry secretary Diane Klimas, 73, died from kidney failure on May 11 in Long Beach, California.

Born in Detroit, Diane lived most of her life in Michigan and enjoyed gardening, cooking for family and friends, and caring for her mother until she passed. She moved to California in 2011, where she lived the rest of her life at home with her son and his family.

Diane worked in the chemistry department for more than 30 years. She typed with remarkable speed and accuracy, and was quick to learn new technology as computers penetrated the office environment. She provided office support for the organic and analytical divisions, and was administrative assistant to Carl Johnson during his service as associate editor of the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*.

Diane was a key player in the administration of the Lumigen Instrument Center, supported the International Federation of Analytical Chemistry and Spectroscopy Societies

in generating their annual programs, and much more. She developed countless close friendships with her administrative colleagues, professors and graduate students. Following retirement, she exchanged countless letters and greetings with friends, always in impeccable penmanship, and often including photos of her grandchildren.

Diane's memorial service was held in June in Long Beach. She is survived by her son, Josh (formerly a WSU physics major); his wife, Lisa; and their children, Gabby and Alex.

## Lewis Throop

By Lisa Anga



Lewis Throop earned three degrees from the Wayne State Department of Chemistry, culminating with a Ph.D.

in analytical chemistry in 1957.

Throop studied under Professor Carl Djerassi and was heavily involved in the development of the first oral contraceptive pill.

Upon graduating from WSU, Throop moved to Mexico to work with Djerassi at Syntex. He then spent five years with Mead Johnson in Evansville,

Indiana, before returning to work at Syntex's new headquarters in Palo Alto, California. After a 30-year career, Throop retired as Syntex's director of analytical chemistry and environmental analysis in 1994. His memory lives on through his family's support of the analytical division.

## Walter "Wally" Pociask Jr.

By Nawana Lawson



Walter "Wally" Pociask Jr., associate director in the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, passed away on Jan. 19.

Wally was born in Detroit in 1947 and lived in Grosse Ile. He was a proud Cass Tech alumnus and received a bachelor of science in industrial management from Lawrence Technological University.

Wally began his career at Wayne State University in 2001. He started on a temporary assignment, was later hired as hazardous materials manager and then promoted to associate director. His primary responsibility was to legally manage disposal of the university's hazardous waste. He particularly anticipated Earth Day, when he hosted a community event, collecting more than 3 million pounds of e-waste over the years.

Wally served on several committees and was a stickler for safety. He was

also an OSHA trainer and a part-time faculty member, training and certifying students and serving as mentor and dear friend to many.

Wally is survived by his wife, Susan; son, Ken (Scarlette); and three grandchildren, Abigail, Allison and Jacob. He is also survived by his sister, Nancy Matschekowski, and brothers Robert, Gary and Tom.

# ALUMNI Updates

**Peter Frade**, B.S. 1968, M.S. 1971, Ph.D. 1978, retired from the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Wayne State University.

**Nicholas Meanwell**, postdoc 1979-82, received the 2022 American Chemical Society Alfred Burger Award.

**Philip Pokorski**, B.S. 1987, is an assistant professor in the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Wayne State University, and was highlighted in a faculty profile: [cphs.wayne.edu/news/do-or-do-not-there-is-no-try-dr-phil-pokorski-leads-by-example-43527](https://cphs.wayne.edu/news/do-or-do-not-there-is-no-try-dr-phil-pokorski-leads-by-example-43527).

**Sibrina Collins**, B.A. 1994, is now writing and editing discussion pieces for the American Association for the Advancement of Science's #Disruptor blog, about contributions from women or people of color in STEM. Collins was also the executive producer for a documentary about Bettye Washington-Greene (Ph.D. 1965): [youtube.com/watch?v=7cVw7VhwC8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cVw7VhwC8o).

**May Khanna**, B.S. 1995, Ph.D. 2001, moved her laboratory from the University of Arizona to New York University.

**Jason McLellan**, B.S. 2003, was named a finalist for the Blavatnik National Award for Young Scientists.

**Hrant Hratchian**, Ph.D. 2005, became vice provost and dean for graduate education at the University of California, Merced.

**Minako Sumita**, Ph.D. 2006, received tenure and was promoted to associate professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

**Rajendra Shakya**, Ph.D. 2007, is a professor at Broward College and received an Endowed Teaching Chair Award.

**Sanjaya Abeyirigunawardena**, Ph.D. 2008, received tenure and was promoted to associate professor at Kent State University.

**Dinuka Abeydeera**, Ph.D. 2009, started a new position as director, in-vitro biology – biophysics, at WuXi AppTech in Cranbury, New Jersey.

**Mark Saly**, Ph.D. 2010, was promoted to senior director of process chemistry at Applied Materials.

**Eric Cueny**, B.S. 2012, accepted a position as an assistant professor at Boston University.

**Shreyashi Ganguly**, Ph.D. 2012, started a job as a process engineer at Mantle3D.

**Irina Pala**, Ph.D. 2012, started a new position as deputy division chief, RT, at the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

**Dakshika Wanniarachchi**, Ph.D. 2013, was appointed senior lecturer at the University of Kelaniya.

**Asha Bandara**, Ph.D. 2014, started a new position as research chemist II at MacDermid Enthone Industrial Solutions.

**Lakmal Kalutarage**, Ph.D. 2014, was promoted to manager of process chemistry at Applied Materials.

**Akhila Kuda-Wedagedara**, Ph.D. 2015, joined NAMSA as a senior study director.

**Asha Hitihami Mudiyansele**, Ph.D. 2015, started a position as a research chemist at MacDermid Enthone Industrial Solutions.

**Sunalee Gonawala**, Ph.D. 2016, began a position as a research scientist at Dulux Paints.

**Sue White**, B.S. 2016, M.A. 2020, was elected 2022 chair elect of the Detroit Section of the American Chemical Society and will become chair in 2023.

**Yasmine Elghoul**, B.S. 2017, completed her M.D.

**Alberto Lopez**, Ph.D. 2017, started as the Organic Chemistry Lab instructor and coordinator at Haverford College.

**Thilini Hollingsworth**, Ph.D. 2018, started as a development chemist at BASF.

**Chamika Lenora**, Ph.D. 2018, is now a senior scientist at Nanovox.

**Jacob Lutter**, postdoc 2019-22, started as an assistant professor at the University of Southern Indiana.

**Zachary Devereaux**, Ph.D. 2020, took a position as a process engineer and materials scientist at Applied Materials.

**Aparni Gamage**, Ph.D. 2020, is now an analytical scientist at MilliporeSigma.

**Tyler Jenks**, Ph.D. 2020, began a new job as a plant chemist at GM.

**Natalie Kelly**, B.S. 2020, completed an M.P.S. in forensic chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania and accepted a position at the Forensic Investigation Center in Albany, New York.

**Jessica Stachowski**, postdoc 2020-22, is now an assistant professor at Nazareth College.

**Isuri Weeraratne**, Ph.D. 2021, is now a senior lecturer at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

**Samudra Amunugama**, Ph.D. 2022, started a research and development position at Intel.

**Tharanga Batugedara**, Ph.D. 2022, started a position as a logic technology development interconnects process integrator engineer at Intel.

**Brooke Corbin**, Ph.D. 2022, is the program facilitator for MARC at Wayne State University.

**Chathuranga Hewa**, Ph.D. 2022, began a position as a senior scientist at TCG GreenChem Inc.

**Jessica Hovey**, Ph.D. 2022, started as a senior quality control analyst at Cambridge Isotope Laboratories.

**Courtney Kondor**, Ph.D. 2022, started as a scientist in the natural products and biocatalysis chemistry group at Cayman Chemical Company.

**Fredricka Morgan**, Ph.D. 2022, started a position as a thin films process engineer at Intel.

**Jackson Mort**, M.A. 2022, is now an analytical development chemist at MilliporeSigma.

**Ruchiranga Ranaweera**, Ph.D. 2022, started a new position at Intel.

**Karunamuni L. Silva**, Ph.D. 2022, started a job as a senior scientist at Eurofins.

**Tepora Su'a**, Ph.D. 2022, started a new position as assistant director of the Institute for Diversity, Equity, and Access at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

**In remembrance of alumni and friends who have passed away over the past year:**

**Joan Geiger**, departmental secretary, 1979-98

**Vera Kerastas**, B.A. 1945

**Laurence Stevens**, Ph.D. 1962

**Norman Watkins Jr.**, M.S. 2006



# Awards, Scholarships and Fellowships

## GRADUATE AWARDS for 2021-22

### Departmental Citations for Excellence in Teaching Service

Md Raduanul Chowdhury  
Daniel Corey  
Courtney Cunningham  
Kodikara Arachchige Ishadi Kodikara  
Courtney Kondor  
Nuwangi Kulasekara  
Shuxiao Li  
Rukshana Mohamad Ramshan  
Shiraz Nantogma  
Elizabeth Odewale  
Timothy Quainoo

### Esther and Stanley Kirschner General Chemistry Teaching Award

Vinicius Alevato

### Herbert K. Livingston Award for Excellence in Teaching

Sun Jeong Im

### David F. Boltz Award in Analytical Chemistry

Mario Cornejo  
Disni Gunasekera  
Yakubu Seidu

### Esther and Stanley Kirschner Graduate Award in Inorganic Chemistry

Hashini N. Munasinghe

### Dan Trivich Memorial Award for Research in Physical Chemistry

Aleksandr Avramenko  
Olugbenga Adeniran

### Biological Chemistry Graduate Student Award

Saheed Ayodeji  
Rukshana Mohamad Ramshan

### Norman A. LeBel Endowed Graduate Award in Organic Chemistry

Hawau Abdulsalam  
Shuxiao Li

### Organic Division Excellence in Graduate Research & Teaching Award

Larry Mendoza  
Lauren Kotsull

### Organic Chemistry Top Graduate Student Award

Rana Morsy

## GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS and FELLOWSHIPS for 2021-22

### ARC and Surendra Gupta Family Endowed Scholarship

Sayak Gupta

### Dr. Cal Stevens Memorial Scholarship (created by the Surendra and Karen Gupta ARC Foundation)

Daniel Corey  
Maddy Denison  
Connor English  
Hannah Laatsch  
Joseph Wakpal  
Mahesh Yadab

### Joseph Jasper Endowed Fellowship

Gabriel Stewart

### Dr. Bacon Ke Annual Scholarship

David Solar

### Schaap-Rumble Graduate Research Fellowship

Olugbenga Adeniran  
Tharanga Batugedara  
Dissanayake G Asanka Dissanayake  
Chathuranga Chinthana Hewa

Rahinduwege  
Dhanushika Kukulage  
Rana Morsy  
Sachini Dilrukshi Rodrigo  
Nambukarawasam Payagala  
Welivitage Don  
Shakila Peli Thanthri  
Nilanka Sirikkathuge  
Amali Subasinghe

## UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS for 2021-22

### John H. Secrist Memorial Award

Duane Sommers

### J. Russell Bright Award for Distinction in General Chemistry

Nour Ghosn

### Harold B. Cutter Memorial Award in Organic Chemistry

Shridula Kotakondla

### Wiley Award in Advanced Organic Chemistry

Livia Philip

### Esther and Stanley Kirschner Undergraduate Inorganic Chemistry Award

Sydney Kasmer

### American Chemical Society, Division of Inorganic Chemistry Award

Unsa Fatima

### Merck and Company Award in Biochemistry

Donald Jones

### David and Beverly Rorabacher Award in Quantitative Analytical Chemistry

Isa Ahmed

### David and Beverly Rorabacher Research Award

Tyler Danielson  
Christopher Federlein  
Norah Krayem

### American Chemical Society, Division of Analytical Chemistry Award

Sydney Kasmer

### Wilfried Heller Award in Physical Chemistry

Alexander Turner

### Clifford G. Drouillard Annual Chemistry Award

Norah Krayem

### Hugh and Mary Ann Kelly Chemistry Undergraduate Endowed Research Scholarship

Cyrus Alan-Lee

### American Chemical Society, Detroit Section Award for Outstanding Chemistry Graduate

Zunaira Imran

## UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS for 2022-23

### Uzoma Azuh Endowed Memorial Research Scholarship in Chemistry

Rei Fejzulla  
Amanda York

### Ralph E. and Helen G. Carter Endowed Scholarship

Tejas Karun

### Chemistry Undergraduate Scholarship

Zoe Harris  
Ryan Snyder  
Caitlin Tremucha

### Dale H. Chidester Memorial Endowed Scholarship in Chemistry

Noor Mian  
Tristan Wrong

### James C. French Undergraduate Chemistry

Rei Fejzulla  
Faith Fowler

### Dr. Bacon Ke Annual Scholarship

Alyssa Erlenbeck

### George H. Wheatley Memorial Scholarship

Melanie Kajj

### Mary G. Wood Endowed Scholarship

Justin Ahrens

## CHEMISTRY INDUSTRY MENTOR PROGRAM

Dr. Sibrina Collins and Mareim  
Abdullah

Dr. Vahid Majidi and Hussein  
Shareef

Dr. Jane Philip and Varunika Savla  
Dr. Larry Roy and Marilyn Williams  
Dr. Rose Ryntz and Justin Ahrens  
Dr. Edward Thomas and Michelle  
Mort

## CHEMISTRY GRADUATES for 2022 ELECTED to PHI BETA KAPPA

Brandon Brown  
Zunaira Imran  
Sydney Kasmer  
Varunika Savla

## FACULTY AWARDS

### Darrell Ebbing, Ph.D. Endowed Faculty Development Award

James Bour  
Charlie Fehl  
Tom Linz

## Your support matters

The Department of Chemistry benefits from the support of many generous donors. In the last year, philanthropic support has helped the department maintain the successful peer mentor program, support members of the

American Chemical Society Student Affiliates during travel, provide free lab coats for students, and create endowed faculty positions and lecture series. Donations can be made via stock transfer, IRA rollover, or gifts

from your will or trust. For more information, contact Lisa Anga, associate director of philanthropy and alumni affairs, at [lisa.anga@wayne.edu](mailto:lisa.anga@wayne.edu) or 313-577-6828.



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UNIVERSITY

# THE PERIODIC TABLOID

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Detroit, MI 48202

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YouTube: [go-wayne.edu/chem-youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgo-wayne-edu-chem-youtube)

To keep up to date with what our  
students are doing, follow NOBCCHE, the  
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and Twitter [@ECS\\_Detroit](https://twitter.com/ECS_Detroit).



*Chemistry staff and students came together to win the Wayne State University Homecoming Office Decorating Contest for the second straight year in 2021. Thanks to all for their participation!*

*Photo by Jackie Kennedy*