

DePaul University/ (773) 325-7420

'The Catalyst' Regenerated

Years ago *The Catalyst* was a newsletter produced and distributed by DePaul's Chemistry Club to promote a sense of community in the department and keep folks up-to-date on special events and noteworthy developments with faculty, staff, and students. When she retired and headed south to Savannah, GA in summer 2005, Dr. Sara Melford left behind a collection of these old newsletters. The current department has decided to resurrect *The Catalyst* as a quarterly publication aimed at promoting communication and networking between past and current faculty and students. We will use *The Catalyst* to keep everyone up-to-date with ongoing developments within the department. We're also interested in knowing where our alumni are, what you're doing, and the possibility of providing networking opportunities among you and maintaining healthy ties with the department. *The Catalyst* will be distributed by mail at the end of every academic quarter, and it will also be posted on-line at www.depaul.edu/~alchemy. If you've got news or items you'd like for others to know about, please do not hesitate to send them to us.

From the Desk of the Chair

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to look through this initial edition of *The Catalyst*. We hope to use this newsletter to keep you up to date on what is happening back in the Department of Chemistry on a regular basis. Indeed, many changes have recently been taking place within the department, but its goal of offering a quality, personalized education in the chemical sciences to students from all walks of life remains the same.

The past two years have seen the retirement of two longtime members of the department, Drs. Thomas J. Murphy and Sara J. Melford. Together, they accounted for over seventy years of teaching experience, and I am sure that many of you have fond classroom memories of them. Over the same period of time, we have hired three new faculty members: Drs. Roger D. Sommer, Quinetta D. Shelby, and Layne A. Morsch. Each brings with them teaching experience and new, exciting research programs that our current students can participate in.

In addition to personnel changes, portions of O'Connell Hall are being renovated. By the time you read this, most every teaching and research lab will have new fume hoods. The general chemistry lab in O'Connell 400 was gutted this past summer, completely rebuilt, and can now serve a maximum of 48 students at any one time. O'Connell 170 (the site of

Dr. Avrom A. Blumberg's lab) was similarly renovated and now serves as our main wet and dry instrumentation lab. All of these renovations, however, may be short lived. The university is seriously considering the construction of a brand new science facility to serve chemistry and other natural science departments. I will pass more information along as it becomes available.

Again, I hope you enjoy this inaugural edition of *The Catalyst*. The department is interested in finding out what its alumni are up to these days, so please contact me at rniedzie@condor.depaul.edu with any information as you see fit. If you'd rather receive an electronic copy of *The Catalyst* via e-mail, please send a request to Dr. Wolbach at wwolbach@condor.depaul.edu. And, if you happen to be in Lincoln Park one day, feel free to stop in. I would be honored to meet you and give you a tour of the facilities.

Sincerely,

Richard F. Niedziela
Associate Professor and Chair
Class of 1988

Inside:

- **National Chemistry Day**
- **Student Research**
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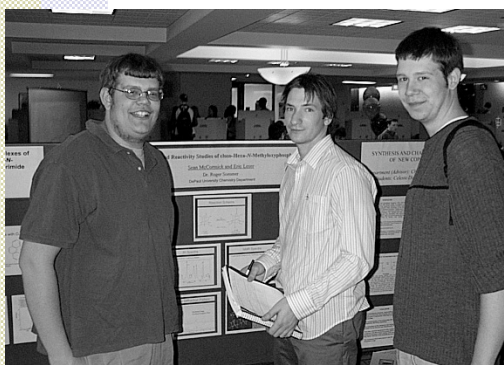
DePaul Hosts National Chemistry Day in Chicago

“Chemistry Day,” is an annual event sponsored by the American Chemical Society during National Chemistry Week (usually in mid-October) to expose high school, junior high and elementary school students to the excitement of chemistry. DePaul’s Chemistry Department and Interdisciplinary Science and Technology Center hosted this year’s event, which drew nearly 800 participants to the Lincoln Park campus on Saturday, October 15. Attendees learned about chemistry and “The Joy of Toys,” the theme of this year’s event, through a variety of colorful demonstrations, hands-on activities, and presentations.

Perhaps the highlight of the day was a trio of flaming, oozing, and exploding jack-o-lanterns during the grand finale that packed the SAC 161 auditorium. DePaul’s Chemistry, Biology, Math, and Environmental Science Departments took advantage of the event to promote their programs to prospective students and to network with the many Chicago area teachers who were also participating or attending. A number of exhibitors from industry or government were also present, including representatives from Argonne, Cosmetic Chemists, McCrone Research Institute, and the Illinois State Police.



(above) Nearly 800 participants attended National Chemistry Day DePaul; (below) S. McCormick, E. Lesser, and M. McCormick at the SMT Showcase



Student Researchers Showcase Scientific Contributions at Poster Presentations

Chemistry students represented the Chemistry Department this year with eight poster presentations at the 3rd Annual Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Technology Showcase on November 4, 2005. Many students competed for research grants from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, enrolled in an Experiential Learning course, or volunteered to conduct research with faculty. With high enthusiasm, our undergraduate students displayed their research results and were on-hand to discuss their findings with all who ventured through the Schmitt Academic Center pit.

Our eight posters were:

- “Optical Properties of Mixed Organic Aerosols” by Marta Kapala (R. Niedziela)
- “Metal Complexes of Inorganic Cage Molecules” by Eric Lesser, Sean McCormick, and Mike Davis (R. Sommer)
- “Development of a Clay-Catalyzed Hetero-Diels-Alder Reaction and Application in the Synthesis of Potential HIV-1 Protease Inhibitors” by Andrew Little, Paul Wucka, Zachary Osner, and Tom Lyons (M. Dintzner)
- “Macrocyclic Tetraamides: Structural, Vibrational and Electronic Properties” by Brian Yoo (R. Parra)
- “Studies Toward the Formation of Homoallylic Products” by Lani Aston MacArtney (Q. Shelby)
- “Tetracycline and Metal Interactions” by Elissa Johnson (L. Jin)
- “Probing the Activation Mechanism of *E. coli* Arginine Repressor for DNA Binding” by Monika Zbyszynska and Nga Du (L. Jin)
- “Synthesis and Characterization of New Copolymers” by Celeste Diener and Selena Russell (G. Kharas)

An evening reception was held for the student presenters and faculty research advisors. There, Dr. Helmut Epp, Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs, presented students with certificates of appreciation.

Departmental Symposium Provides Out-of-Class Education for Students

On November 3, 2005, the Chemistry Department at DePaul University hosted its sixth "Life After DePaul" Symposium in seven years. Students learned about career services available at DePaul, research opportunities with faculty, and general ways to prepare themselves to make informed decisions about their future careers. Mr. Ed Childs, the Internship Coordinator in the Career Center, urged students to use the resources offered at the Career Center to prepare their resumes, personal statements, and other application documents for graduate school, professional school, and employment. Josh Neukom, a 2004 DePaul graduate, discussed his experiences as an EPA scientist. He offered advantages and disadvantages to consider when seeking government employment. Dr. Jim Koziarz (BS, 1971) chronicled his eventful career path to becoming the Corporate Vice-President at Abbott Laboratories.

Alumni News and Notes

Several recent grads wrote in to tell us where they are and what they're up to now: **Charlie Harrison** (BS, 2003) is living in Chicago and working as an R&D chemist at Wrigley Chewing Gum Co.; **Adam Fronczak** (MS, 2004) is living in Round Lake, IL and working as a Bio-Pharma product development research associate at Baxter Healthcare; **Darcy Fritz** (BS, 2004) is living in Chicago and working as an environmental chemist for the government at Federal Occupational Health; **Andrea (Toth) Metzler** (BS, 2003) was married this past summer and is living with her husband in Lincoln Park and working trading currency futures; **Josh Neukom** (BS, 2004) is finishing up an internship with the EPA before he starts a Ph.D. program in autumn '06; **Gilbert Villasenor** (BS, 2002) is living in Chicago and is in his fourth year of dental school at UIC, preparing to graduate in May '06; **Christine Eichendorf** (BS, 2000 & MS, 2001) is living in Chicago and working as a product development chemist at Stepan Company; **Josue Gutierrez** (BS, 2004) is living in Long Beach, CA and working as a pharmaceutical chemist; **Jorge Gutierrez** (MS, 2004) is living in Jacksonville, AR working as a chemist for Poloplaz, a

company that makes finishes for hardwood floors; **Kristen McClelland** (BS, 2004) is living in Chicago working as a pharmaceutical sales representative for Merck. **Chris Horeth** (BS, 2004) is living in Chicago and working full-time as an accountant for Fitness Formula Health Clubs, where he also teaches group exercise classes; he also instructs various styles of dance at gyms throughout the city, and choreography/dance in shows around the country. In addition to that, he works with the Lake Park High School marching band as a color guard instructor during their fall season, and is on staff for their winter guard throughout the winter season.

For those of you who didn't make the list this time, it's only because we haven't heard from you yet! We'd love to know where you are now and what you're doing, so please send us an e-mail (mdintzne@depaul.edu) and we'll post your whereabouts and updates in the next issue of *The Catalyst*!

To contribute to the Chemistry Department in LA&S, contact Rhiannon Rossi of DePaul's Advancement Office at 773-325-4759 or visit the following site: <http://www.giving.depaul.edu>.

During his extraordinary career in industry, his research team developed Abbott's line of HIV tests. Dr. Quinetta Shelby suggested some questions for students to consider when choosing a graduate school and research advisor. She advised students to conduct undergraduate research to demonstrate their interest in scientific exploration. Dr. Matthew Dintzner encouraged students to consider nontraditional career options in chemistry if the traditional paths are less appealing. He explained how research skills such as attention to detail, communication skills, and time-management are very relevant to careers in law, graphic design, and culinary arts. The chemistry faculty briefly described their research projects and distributed corresponding pamphlets. Guest speakers, students, and faculty enjoyed pizza and conversation at an informal reception held after the symposium.

"Dr. Jim Koziarz (BS, 1971) chronicled his eventful career path to becoming the Corporate Vice-President at Abbott." Laboratories."



Drs. Shelby and Dintzner advise a student at the department's quarterly Advising Open House



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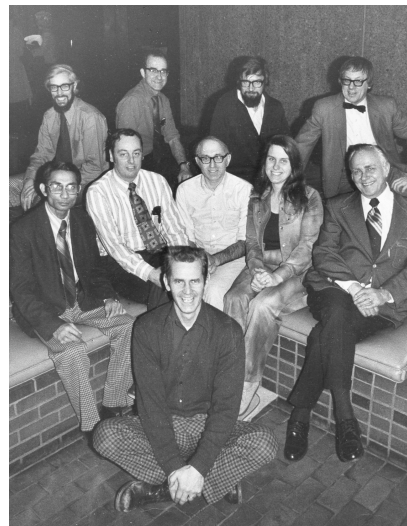
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DePaul Chemistry Faculty: Now and Then



2005

top row: Q. Shelby (organic), L. Jin (biochemistry), R. Parra (physical), N. Rajan (chem. ed.), G. Kharas (organic); *middle row:* R. Sommer (inorganic), M. Dintzner (organic), **A. Blumberg** (physical), W. Wolbach (inorganic), M. Meskauskas (biochemistry), L. Morsch (organic); *front and center:* R. Niedziela (physical)



1970s

top row: T. Murphy (organic), R. Novak (biochemistry), J. Anysas (physical), F. Prout (organic); *middle row:* S. Dhar (inorganic), F. Breitbeil (organic), **A. Blumberg** (physical), S. Melford (inorganic), W. Pasterczyk (biochemistry); *front and center:* E. Meyer (physical)

Catalyst Contributors...

Matthew Dintzner, *Writer and Coordinator*
Richard Niedziela, *Department Chair*
Quinetta Shelby, *Writer*
Layne Morsch, *Writer*
Roger Sommer, *Photographer*
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