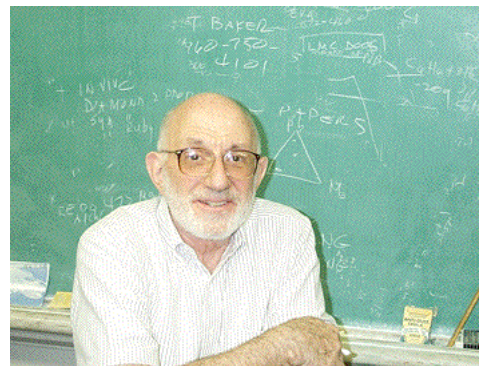


## Professor Blumberg Retires after 43-Year Career

Professor Avrom Blumberg retired in August 2006, after a 43-year career in the Chemistry Department at DePaul University. Professor Blumberg earned his B.S. in chemistry from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1949) and his Ph.D. in physical chemistry from Yale University (1953). His career at DePaul began in 1963, following stints with the Atomic Energy Commission (1949-1953), Mellon Institute (1953-1963), and University of Pittsburgh (1957-1958). Dr. Blumberg was quickly promoted through the ranks of assistant professor to associate professor (1967) and full professor (1975), and served as chair of the department for two consecutive terms (1986-1992). Dr. Blumberg also



served as head of the college's division of natural sciences & mathematics from 1966-1982, and was awarded the prestigious Cortelyou Lowery award in 1983. During his tenure at DePaul, Dr. Blumberg maintained an active research program in physical and polymer chemistry, publishing numerous manuscripts and presenting talks all over the country. Dr. Blumberg was also an expert on national security and developed courses and spoke with the press on the subject.

## From the Desk of the Chair

Much like the season Department of Chemistry is currently undergoing change. As you read above, Dr. Blumberg retired this past summer after a full and successful career at DePaul. Many of you will of course remember him from your physical chemistry courses, or perhaps you worked in his laboratory. Dr. Blumberg's interests were indeed wide ranging and he routinely contributed classes on forensics, the conquest of disease, and arms control. His daily presence in the Department, and his deep institutional knowledge, will be sorely missed.

Life in the Department marches on however, and I am pleased to announce that after a long and thorough national search, the faculty chose Dr. Cathrine A. Southern to fill the opening created by Dr. Blumberg's retirement. Dr. Southern received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and then went on to do a post-doc at Amherst College. She comes to DePaul after

two years of teaching at the College of the Holy Cross. My colleagues and I are excited about Dr. Southern's work at the intersection of physical and biochemistry, and we look forward to working with her beginning in Autumn, 2007.

Finally, on a sad note, Dr. Melford's husband, George, passed away in October after a battle with cancer. You might recall that Dr. Melford left DePaul just over a year ago and was just settling into retirement with George. Our deepest sympathies go out to her.

In the next issue, I will bring you up to date on the status of our planned new facility. In the mean time, keep up to date with us at our new web site,

<http://chemistry.depaul.edu>.

Best of wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year,

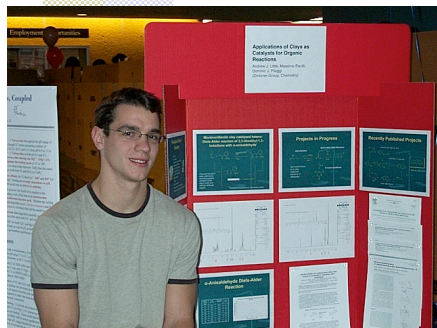
Richard F. Niedziela  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Class of 1988



### Inside:

- **2006 SMT Showcase**
- **Chemistry Club**
- **Alumni News & Notes**

## Chemistry Researchers Represent Department at 2006 Natural Sciences, Math & Technology Showcase



*"This Showcase provided an opportunity for non-scientists to learn more about the efforts of science faculty and students."*



Top: Andy Little; Middle: Elizabeth Sisler (left) and Adrienne Stich; Bottom: Selena Russell; at Right: Shannon McGinty

The College of Liberal Arts Sciences hosted the "Natural Sciences, Math & Technology Showcase" on Friday, November 10, 2006. This Showcase provided an opportunity for non-scientists to learn more about the efforts of science faculty and students. Student researchers in the sciences and mathematics presented posters in the SAC Pit from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM where they could talk to individuals and groups about their work. The event included Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geography, Environmental Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, School of CTI, Scientific Data Analysis & Visualization, and the IST Center. The chemistry liaison to this event was Professor Lihua Jin. Forty posters were presented, including seven from the following chemistry students:

- **Andrew Little, Massimo Pacilli, and Dominic Pileggi** (Professor Matthew R. Dintzner): "Applications of Clays as Catalysts for Organic Reactions"
- **Shannon McGinty** (Professor Richard F. Niedziela): "Optical Properties of Oleic Acid/Water Aerosols"
- **Geralyn Dickey** (Professor Richard F. Niedziela): "Mixing Rules for Two-component Organic Systems"
- **Priyanka Pitroda and Elizabeth Sisler** (Professor Quinetta D. Shelby): "P~P and P~O Coordinated Palladium Complexes"
- **Selena Russell** (Professor Gregory B. Kharas): "Novel Copolymers of Vinyl Acetate and Alkoxy Rings-Substituted 2-Phenyl-1, 1-Dicyanoethylenes"
- **Adrienne Stich** (Professor Wendy S. Wolbach): "Search for evidence of Impact-Triggered Fires at the End Pleistocene"
- **Alex Han** (Professor Lihua Jin): "Calorimetry of Ca<sup>2+</sup> and Mg<sup>2+</sup> Binding to Tetracycline: Distinct Stoichiometries, Coupled Deprotonation, and Conformational Change"

Following the poster presentations a reception was held in the Student Center for participating students and their research advisors. Refreshments were served and students received awards certificates from University Provost, Helmut Epp.



## *Chemistry Club Affiliated with the ACS*

DePaul's Chemistry Club became official Student Affiliates Chapter of the American Chemical Society (ACS) this year, under the leadership of its new officers: President **Sean McCormick**, Vice President **Mike Wemhoff**, Treasurer **Adrienne Stich**, and Secretary **Marina Damiano**. The Student Affiliates program supports undergraduate students, their faculty, and local section members in promoting professional development, mentoring, and peer-support mechanisms for those majoring in the chemical sciences. Among other benefits, affiliation means the club is now eligible for prizes and student scholarships.

The club has become increasingly active in the last few years, boasting over thirty student members. The club welcomes any student interested in chemistry. One benefit to club membership is that it provides a place for students to discuss chemistry and chemistry-related issues that affect all chemistry students, such as their classes, professors, the GRE exam, etc. **Professors Matthew Dintzner** and **Layne Morsch** serve as faculty advisors. The organization started the school year strong with a number of activities. To raise money, the club assumed responsibility for cleaning and renting the hall lockers in the O'Connell Center (home to the Chemistry Department).

Members held a root beer float social in early September to introduce themselves to new and returning students. Working with a campus community service organization Circle K, Chemistry Club members performed a chemical demonstration show for elementary students in order to give these young students a glimpse of college while exciting them about science. The club members have also assisted Instructor and graduate student **Mike Davis** with his professional chemical demonstration shows in the

first annual Chicago Science Expedition at Daley Plaza.

The Chemistry Club also hosted guest speaker in October, Dr. Pat Dussault from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln who spoke on the topic, "Organic peroxides; some new chemistry for an old functional group" and "The chemical basis for quorum sensing in pathogenic fungi" as well as the graduate chemistry programs available at UN-L. The club organized and advertised the talk, dinner, and provided an honorarium to the speaker.

Upcoming activities include assisting the department as it co-hosts (with Northwestern University and under the direction of the ACS) the Student Social for the ACS Spring Meeting in Chicago. Like last year, the club will recruit student assistants to help orchestrate the event, which is designed to bring together high school and middle school science teachers and their students. One of the goals of this annual event is to help recruit students into the sciences and to interest them in attending the host university. The Chemistry Club is also planning a T-shirt sale; it is awaiting the final design from one of our artistic chemistry students. A party for chemistry majors is also in the works.

The club has a web (<http://groups.msn.com/DePaulChemistryClub>) for those interested in learning more. Contact information for club officers can be found there. The club welcomes your feedback and ideas for future activities.

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*The club has become increasingly active in the last few years, boasting over thirty student members.*

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*Chemistry Club Officers: Marina Damiano (Secretary, top left); Adrienne Stich (Treasurer, top right); Sean McCormick (President, bottom left); Mike Wemhoff (bottom right)*





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## *Alumni News and Notes*

**Charlie Harrison** (BS, 2003) co-authored a paper published in the Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry, titled *Identification of Components Responsible for the Odor of Cigar Smoker's Breath*. This paper was then presented last week at the ACS National Meeting, where a reporter from C&EN wrote a story on it (for details, see the following link: <http://pubs.acs.org/cen/news/84/i38/8438cigarbreath.html>). **Bedrija Isic** (BS, 2005) is currently at UIC College of Pharmacy as a third year student in the program (P-3), and will be starting her rotations (practical learning) next May. In addition to being a pharmacy student, she is also involved in several student organizations. Currently, she serves as the Educational Policy Committee Student Representative for

the college. As such, she sits in on committee meetings once a month, and is currently working on preparing for UIC's next accreditation visit from Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. Some of the other positions she holds are Vice President of Muslim Pharmacy Student Association (MuPhSA) and ICHP student Representative for Illinois Council of Health-Systems Pharmacists (ICHP).

### *Catalyst Contributors...*

Matthew Dintzner, *Writer and Coordinator*  
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