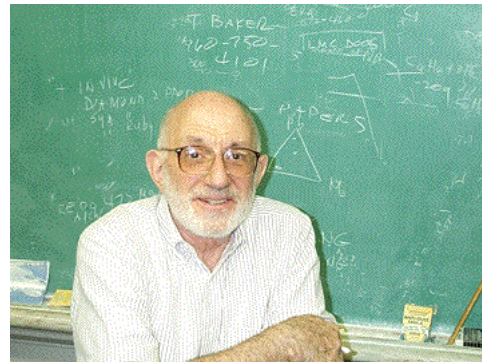


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In Memoriam – Avrom A. Blumberg (March 3, 1925-October 28, 2007)

It is with great sadness that we announce the recent passing after a long illness of our friend and colleague, teacher and mentor, Professor Emeritus Avrom A. Blumberg. Avrom retired in August 2006, after a 43-year career in the Chemistry Department at DePaul University. Professor Blumberg earned his Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1949 went on to graduate studies at Yale University from which he received his Ph.D. in physical chemistry in 1953. Upon completing graduate school, Avrom was appointed a fellow at the Mellon Institute where he refined his skills from 1953-1963 in studying the properties of glasses and polymers, the latter in the lab of Nobel Laureate (Chemistry, 1974) Paul J. Flory. His career at DePaul began in 1963. 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

Although the autumn quarter can be daunting, the winter quarter is undoubtedly the busiest time of the year on campus for faculty and students alike. This year was no exception. On top of our regular activities, the department hosted four candidates for a new faculty position in biochemistry. Each candidate gave a seminar on their research and taught a mock biochemistry class on successive Thursdays and Fridays throughout January. The good news is we made an offer that was verbally accepted and an official announcement will likely be made in the next edition of *The Catalyst*.

As you will see inside, work on our new facility is progressing nicely. I recently visited the third floor where most of our labs will be and got a sense of what is to come even without the walls fully up. At last report, the building in ahead of schedule and will be delivered on time, meaning we get to move in after Thanksgiving.

Finally, on behalf of the department, its retired faculty and staff, and alumni, I wish to extend deepest condolences to Dr. Blumberg's wife Judy and all of his family on his passing. We all lost a dear colleague and friend. He will be missed.

Richard F. Niedziela
Associate Professor and Chair
Class of 1988

Inside:

- *2007 SMT Showcase*
- *Transition States*
- *Chemistry Club*

5th Annual Showcase Facilitates Celebration of Student Research



Dr. Jin (in black), one of the Showcase coordinators, prepares for the poster session.

At the 5th Annual Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Technology Showcase held on Friday, November 2, 2007, undergraduate students who conduct research with faculty featured their research posters in the Schmitt Academic Center Pit. Professor Lihua Jin worked with other faculty from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to coordinate the event that celebrates and encourages undergraduate research at DePaul University. While at the showcase, the student researchers described their contributions and discoveries to all who inquired about their research projects. Among the different fields and disciplines represented at the event, our department had seven posters that provided an overview of research opportunities in chemistry:

- **Laura Kaatz and Pawel Zbyszynski** (Dr. Lihua Jin), “Amyloid β Peptide 1-16 Interaction with Copper and Zinc Ions”
- **Sean McCormick and Natalie Rizzo** (Dr. Roger Sommer), “Advances in Phosphorous Nitrogen Cage Chemistry”
- **Stephanie McKean** (Dr. Matthew Dintzner), “Clay-Catalyzed Hydration of Alkynes”

- **Jessica Ohlssen** (Dr. Ruben Parra), “Cooperativity Effects in 5- and 6-centered Hydrogen Bonding Interactions as a Function of Adjacent C-C Identity”
- **Massimo Pacilli** (Dr. Matthew Dintzner), “Synthesis of Phenazine and Derivatives”
- **Priyanka Pitroda and Elizabeth Sisler** (Dr. Quinetta Shelby), “Deprotonation and Reaction of P~P Ligands”
- **Torri Rose** (Dr. Richard Niedziela), “Optical Properties of Fatty Acids”

The celebration continued later at a reception held for the student presenters and their faculty research advisors. There, CTI Dean David Miller and LA&S Dean Charles Suchar awarded students with certificates.



Chemistry students discuss their research discoveries. A yellow poster background represented research projects from the chemistry department.

Chemistry student, Massimo Pacilli (left), receives a congratulatory certificate from LA&S Dean Charles Suchar.



Transition States (and Other Exciting News)

The department welcomes our newest faculty member, Dr. Cathrine Southern, who joined us in Autumn 2007. Dr. Southern is a physical chemist whose research focuses on single molecule spectroscopy applied to the examination of the structures of proteins and nucleic acids. She earned her B.S. degree from the University of Notre Dame and her Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago.



The department also congratulates Dr. Ruben Parra on his tenure and promotion to associate professor this academic year. Since his arrival in 2001, Dr. Parra has made noteworthy contributions to the DePaul community: he has taught general and/or physical chemistry each year; he has chaired the departmental Academic Program Review Subcommittee from 2002 to 2004 and the award-winning Chemistry Department's Assessment Committee (see below); and he has published 11 journal articles, 6 of which include DePaul students as co-authors.



The east side of the building gets the finished brick exterior.



In November 2007, the Chemistry Department's Assessment Committee (Drs. Jin, Meskauskas, Rajan, Shelby, and chaired by Dr. Parra) won the Liberal Arts and Sciences award, a \$350 gift certificate to a Lettuce Entertain You restaurant, for best assessment project for the 2006–2007 academic year. The Assessment Committee develops and completes a student-learning assessment project that is submitted to the University's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Committee each year. Kudos goes to all contributors to the project. Let's work toward a repeat in 2007–2008!

Progress continues on the new home for chemistry. The Monsignor Andrew J. McGowan Science Building is now 4 stories tall and has several walls built. The current faculty and students are very excited to move in and for the building to open during Winter 2009.



The plumbing is beginning to be installed.

Dr. Southern joins the faculty, Dr. Parra earns tenure, the Assessment Committee wins award, and the department sees its new home being built.

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Chemistry Club News and Notes

Members of the Chemistry Club successfully rented lockers in O'Connell allowing them to fund several events throughout the academic year, including an afternoon Ice Cream Social held on September 17, 2007. The Chemistry Club is also active in community service; they served as judges at the Lincoln Park High School Science Fair on December 18, 2007.



Natalie Rizzo, one of several DePaul students to judge at the science fair, dons her Chemistry Club shirt as she asks a high school student questions about her poster.

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