

Spring 2007  
Volume 3

# KSU Chemist

Department of Chemistry - Kansas State University / 785-532-6665 / [www.ksu.edu/chem](http://www.ksu.edu/chem) / [chemdept@ksu.edu](mailto:chemdept@ksu.edu)



## Upcoming Events:

**September**  
**Celebration for Richard Bachamp**  
**(on the occasion of his retirement)**  
Check website for date

**Sept. 20**  
**Distinguished Alumni Seminar**  
**Dr. David D. Devore**  
**DOW Chemical**  
**King Hall Room 4**  
**1:30 p.m.**

**Sept. 28**  
**Alumni Advisory Council Meeting**

Dear Friends -

As another academic year winds down, I hope this update finds you and yours happy and healthy.

It was another busy and productive year for the Department, and I'll fill you in on as much as space will allow. I'd be happy to give you the whole story the next time you stop by - which you are most welcome to do!

Our new departmental web site went live last Summer and although it is still evolving, I encourage you to visit [www.ksu.edu/chem](http://www.ksu.edu/chem) and have a look around. It is a good source for up-to date departmental information.

We're delighted to be able to welcome two new faculty colleagues to the department this Fall: Christine Aikens as Assistant Professor of Physical Chemistry, and Jun Li as Associate Professor of Analytical Chemistry.

Christine earned her Ph.D. with Mark Gordon at Iowa State, and is now finishing her postdoctoral work with George Schatz at Northwestern. As a theorist, she will launch projects studying factors that control the assembly of nanoparticles into superlattice structures. Christine is also an accomplished instructor, and we're very happy to have her as a colleague.

Jun comes to us from the NASA Ames Center for Nanotechnology in California where he has been developing sensors and devices incorporating conducting carbon nanofibers. Jun earned his Ph.D. from Princeton working with Giacinto Scoles and did a postdoc at Cornell with Hector Abruña. Having Jun on board substantially enhances our bio-analytical, materials and nanotechnology programs.

Our students are a continuing source of amazement and pride. This Spring, we

were home to four (!) Goldwater Scholars among our chemistry majors, two of whom were announced as recipients of prestigious NSF Graduate Research Fellowships valued at over \$130,000: Matt Basel will continue in Stefan Bossmann's research group here for his Ph.D. while Meg Fasulo, who was mentored by Christer Aakeröy, will pursue her graduate work at another equally fine institution (UC - Berkeley).

Late in 2006, we acquired significant new space when the Biochemistry department vacated the 4th floor of the Chem/Biochem building. We will put the space to good and immediate use although some thorny and expensive problems - such as installing many new fume hoods - remain.

We also experienced several departures last year. Vince Ortiz left to become Chair of the chemistry department at Auburn, and staff members Linda Gibbs, Karen McInteer and Jan Vaughan all retired within three months of each other. Linda, Karen and Jan had a combined 84 years of service to KSU, and all these voids made it "interesting" throughout last year.

The Department received a marvelous gift in 2006: through a Charitable Gift Annuity of \$100,000, H. Alan and Karen Bell established the Bell Scholarship. It will be used for graduate and undergraduate students alike.

So many of you have been steadfast in your support of the Department, and on behalf of all of us, I want to express our thanks: your support allows us to enrich our programs in ways that simply would not be possible otherwise.

I hope to see or hear from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Eric Maatta

## Chemistry Alumni Advisory Council Formed



*Advisory Council members receive a tour of NanoScale's impressive Manhattan research headquarters courtesy of its Founder, University Distinguished Professor Ken Klabunde, during the September meeting.*

*left to right: Ken Klabunde, Dale Hawley, Steve Bernasek, Charley Smith, Jerry Crow, Jim Curtis, John Berschied, John Sparapany*

In September 2006, a distinguished group of chemistry alumni convened on campus to establish the Chemistry Alumni Advisory Council.

Founding members of the Council include: Dr. Jim Curtis (Ph.D. 1971; Chair), Dr. John Berschied, Jr. (Ph.D. 1970), Prof. Emeritus Dale Hawley, Mr. Michael Hinton (B.S. 1991), Mr. Jerry Crow (B.S. 1966), Dr. John Sparapany (Ph.D. 1985), Dr. Charley Smith (Ph.D. 1966), and Prof. Steve Bernasek (B.S. 1971).

The Council's mission is broadly defined in two main areas: 1) providing advice, expertise and input to our undergraduate and graduate students, particularly with respect to career planning, and 2) to help the department expand its base of support.

One significant Council achievement already accomplished is the establishment of the **Chemistry Alumni Graduate Fellowship**. This new fund addresses our department's most serious challenge: it enables the department to supplement our graduate student stipends, and to better compete for top Ph.D. students. Thanks to generous lead contributions from Jim Curtis and John Berschied, the fund has been launched on a positive trajectory and is now "open for business".

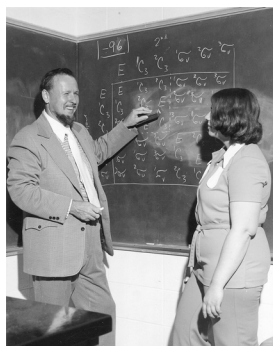
For this Fall's meeting, plans are to have Council members participate in an interactive presentation with our students, describing their diverse career responsibilities and how best to prepare for life "after college".

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*"I am pleased to be able to serve the needs of the Department through the re-constituted and re-energized Advisory Council".*

*– Jim Curtis*

## Remember When?



This classic image of Bill Fateley merrily working through a  $C_{3v}$  character table with a student is undated, but is almost certainly from the mid-1970s shortly after he arrived at KSU as Department Head.

His research collaborations with Bob Hammaker led to many significant advances, perhaps most notably in Hadamard Transform Spectroscopy and in Open-Cell Long Path FTIR.

Bill's long editorial leadership of *Applied Spectroscopy* was a labor of love, and he was justly awarded many accolades including the Meggers Award, the Pittsburgh Spectroscopy Award, and a KSU Distinguished Professorship. An accomplished woodworker with a rollicking sense of humor, Bill continues to be a great friend of the Department. He and Wanda have recently moved to Arizona and we wish them all the best.

## Donors to the Chemistry Department in 2006: Thanks to one and all for your support!

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Call, write, e-mail, or  
better yet, stop by.  
We'd enjoy hearing  
from you.

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New website is live!  
visit us online at:  
[www.ksu.edu/chem/](http://www.ksu.edu/chem/)

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## High School Symposium Launched

May saw the first in what will be an annual series of chemistry symposia presented by the Department for high school and community college students and their faculty.

This year's symposium was organized by Prof. Ryszard Jankowiak around the theme of bio-relevant chemistry research at K-State. It was co-sponsored by the Department, NanoScale Inc., and KSU's Center for Basic Cancer Research.

Approximately 25 students and teachers from around the State gathered for a day of short presentations by faculty, hands-on experiences with various instrumentation and equipment, lab tours, and a hugely popular Magic Show put on by our AXΣ chapter. Food, refreshments and T-shirts were provided, and initial feedback has been excellent.

We foresee these symposia as being effective outreach tools to broadcast the vibrancy of our research programs and to encourage students from diverse backgrounds to make our Department the top destination for undergraduate chemistry in the region. Planning for next year's symposium has already started, and its theme will be nanotechnology as applied to energy-related issues.

### *A Closing Anecdote . . .*

In the Fall of 1970, I had the experience of taking Honors Chemistry from Bill Fateley at Carnegie-Mellon. As a naïve 16 year-old freshman, I was unprepared for lectures often given by a professor wearing a Superman shirt and a red cape!

We used Bruce Mahan's high-level text, and on one occasion I made an appointment to go over a homework assignment with Professor Fateley.

His office was in Mellon Institute - an

imposing neo-classical structure of limestone, granite, marble and rare woods. When I arrived for my meeting, Bill's secretary told me that he was unexpectedly tied up and that his advice was that I should continue working the problems until he was free. Every 15 minutes, I'd check with his secretary, who would relay the same advice from Bill. After an hour and a half, I'd solved all the problems and had learned the material very thoroughly - there are at least a couple of valuable lessons in this!

### **A Round of Applause for:**

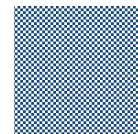
*Prof. Duy Hua*, who was awarded the title of University Distinguished Professor in April 2007.

*Mike Reppert*, sophomore Chemistry major in Ryszard Jankowiak's group, who was awarded a Goldwater Scholarship in 2007 (our 14th overall).

*Assoc. Prof. Chris Culbertson*, recipient of the ACS Young Investigator in Separation Science Award, given at PittCon's Spring 2007 meeting.

*Dr. Yasmin Patell*, selected as the speaker for the College of Arts and Sciences' Dec. 2006 Commencement ceremonies.

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