



## DECEMBER 2015 BULLETIN

**ANNUAL AWARDS MEETING**  
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2016**  
**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA**

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE  
AWARD**



**MR. LARRY H. WHITE**  
Adjunct Instructor of Chemistry  
Bridgewater College

**DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH  
AWARD**



**DR. NICHOLAS P. FARRELL**  
Professor of Chemistry  
Virginia Commonwealth University

### **2016 MEETINGS OF THE VIRGINIA SECTION**

**January 22** - Virginia State University, Petersburg - **Awards Meeting**

**February 19** - University of Richmond - **Dr. Dennis Liotta** (Powell Lectureship)

**March 18** - Evonik Industries, Richmond - **Dr. Frank Schmidtman**, laboratory tour

**April 15** (tentative date) - University of Virginia, Charlottesville  
- **Undergraduate Research Poster Session**

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee of the Virginia Section will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 23, 2016 at Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, 1211 Sherwood Avenue, Richmond, Virginia. More details will be provided in the January issue of the Bulletin. All members of the section are invited to attend. For questions regarding the agenda and meeting, contact the 2016 Chair of the Virginia Section, Dr. Denise Walters, at (804) 257-2828, denise.walters@pfizer.com. Officers and committee chairs should prepare reports for posting on the Section website and for distribution at the meeting.

## THE CHAIR'S CORNER



Presiding as the section Chair this 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year has been both educational and interesting. I have had the pleasure and opportunity to learn so much about the people, both present and past, as well as many of the details of the rich and colorful history of the Virginia Section. As I reflect on the accomplishments of the section, I recognize that they have only been possible through the countless volunteer hours and dedication of you, our members, which has resulted in "A Century of Service".

I want to express my extreme gratitude to the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala planning committee. You have been a wonderful team to lead in the planning and execution of this event. You all had a wealth of wonderful ideas, everyone contributed, and you collaborated and supported each other throughout this entire project. Thank you to each of you for all that you did. I would also like to thank everyone who participated in the Gala Program that evening. You all did a great job and we couldn't have done it without you. Finally, I would like to thank all the members who attended the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala event. I hope everyone enjoyed the evening and the content of the program.

I'd like to remind everyone that we are not done yet with the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Section. Larry White and Jim Beck are working diligently to update the 75 year history authored by Dr. W. Allen Powell with the history of the past twenty-five years. They have nearly completed some portions that will be posted on the section website and hope to have the update finished sometime in 2016. Stay tuned.

I would like to wish a safe and happy holiday season to you and your family.

...Todd Koch, 2015 Section Chair





## **2016 ELECTION RESULTS**

*Dr. Scott Gronert, Chair of the Nominating Committee, has reported these results of the balloting for 2016 officer positions:*

**Chair - Dr. Denise Walters**

**Chair-Elect - Dr. Colleen Taylor**

**Vice Chair - Dr. Kathleen Sink**

**Secretary - Dr. Christine Farthing**

**Treasurer - Dr. Thad Hannel**

**Councilor - Dr. Kristine Smetana  
(three-year term)**

**Alternate Councilor - Dr. Joseph Pompano  
(three-year term)**

**Trustee - Dr. Stephanie Mabry  
(three-year term)**

### **REVISION OF THE VIRGINIA SECTION BYLAWS**

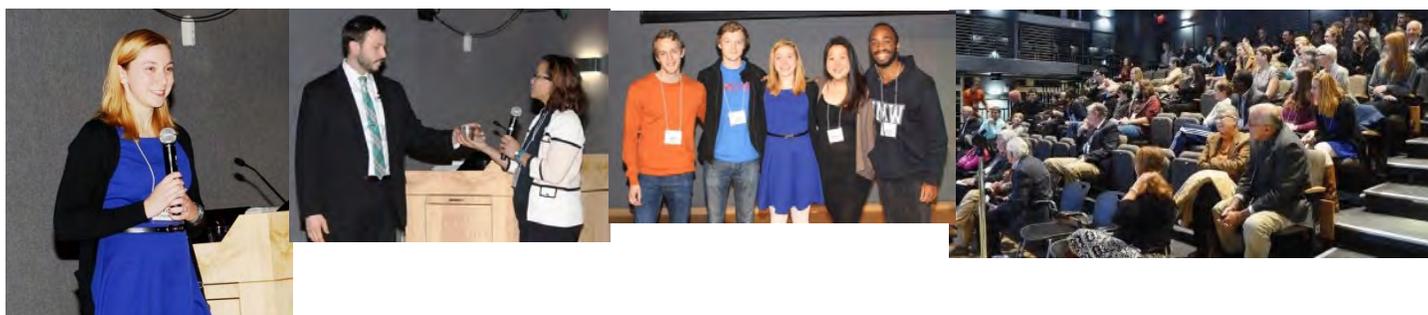
The Virginia Section operates under a set of bylaws that are approved by the American Chemical Society. The most recent version of the bylaws was put in effect in 2008. The Section has proposed some revisions of the existing bylaws to reflect changes in membership categories, electronic communication and voting, and other matters. The proposed changes were submitted to the ACS Committee on Constitutions and Bylaws for their review. They have suggested some additional changes. The complete set of proposed changes has been reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Virginia Section and now must be approved by the Section membership. The vote on the proposed changes will take place on **January 22, 2016** at the Awards Meeting, to be held at Virginia State University in Petersburg.

The revised bylaws are posted on the Virginia Section website, <http://virginia.sites.acs.org/>. The proposed additions and deletions are noted there. The bylaws can be found under the "About Us" tab at the top of the homepage.

Members are asked to review the proposed changes and to come to the January 22 meeting prepared to vote on the new bylaws.

## REPORT ON THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF THE VIRGINIA SECTION

The audience at the November 13 meeting included a sizeable number of students, several of whom had insightful questions for the speaker, **Dr. Bryan Tienes** of the Naval Surface Warfare Center at Dahlgren, Virginia. Dr. Tienes described some of the work being done at Dahlgren on ways to defend against chemical, biological, and radiological agents. **Dr. Denise Walters**, Chair Elect of the Virginia Section, presided at the meeting that was held at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg. The speaker was introduced by **Ms. July Laszakovits**, a senior chemistry major at UMW and president of their student affiliate chapter. **Larry White**, Chair of the ad hoc committee on the history of the Section, gave a brief presentation on the history of the Virginia Section Bulletin. The Section was chartered in 1915 with the first issue of the Bulletin published in 1923. Thanks to **Dr. Leanna Giancarlo** at UMW, and to her colleagues and students for arranging this meeting.



### YCC ACTIVITIES IN 2015



The Virginia Section Younger Chemists Committee (YCC) had an eventful year in 2015. The YCC hosted a dinner and lecture on March 3<sup>rd</sup> titled "Chemistry of Cannabis." We were fortunate to have Dr. Aron Lichtman speak about his research at VCU Pharmacology and Toxicology. Dinner was provided by the YCC at Sine Irish Pub in Richmond.

The YCC has been collaborating with Colleen Taylor and other individuals in the Virginia ACS to launch a mentoring program for chemistry undergraduate students. We successfully completed a summer trial for the mentoring program and hosted a meeting at University of Richmond on October 8. We discussed the successes and opportunities for improvements as we begin to expand for Spring 2016. The YCC also met at Virginia Commonwealth University on October 14 to discuss plans for 2016 and current projects.

Finally, we received an award for Outstanding New Local Section Younger Chemists Committee, and look forward to future events in 2016!

(Submitted by **Kathleen Sink**, Chair of the Younger Chemists Committee, (804) 370-8097; kms2uu@virginia.edu)

## VIRGINIA SECTION OF THE ACS MENTORING PROGRAM



### Volunteer to mentor undergraduate chemistry students!

The Virginia Section of the ACS is offering a mentoring/mentee matching service in the chemical sciences. Our goal is to (1) increase participation in the chemistry community, (2) increase awareness of the types of jobs available in the chemistry workforce, and (3) help students realize their potential. We are looking for mentors to assist sophomore or junior chemistry majors in their understanding of careers in Chemistry and how they may reach their professional goals. Mentors provide a valuable link between the undergraduate student and the professional community. Please follow the instructions below to sign up if you would like to volunteer in 2016!

Examples of student questions:

“What is your daily job like?”

“What types of positions am I qualified for?”

“What experiences can I put on my resume?”

### How to volunteer:

1. Sign up here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R8WLBK9>. Provide a brief description of your work and area of expertise.
2. We will then send you instructions and a brief video on how to create a Mentor Profile on the ACS Network Site.
3. Mentees will contact you and once matched, you will need to update your status on your profile.

You can choose to mentor one time, multiple times, or throughout a student's undergraduate experience. Any amount of time devoted to mentoring will be appreciated!



Sign up to mentor by scanning this QR Code with your smartphone, or copy the link below.

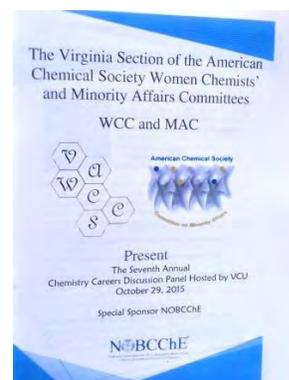
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R8WLBK9>

If you have questions contact Colleen Taylor, [cmtaylor@vsu.edu](mailto:cmtaylor@vsu.edu) or Kathleen Sink, [kms2uu@virginia.edu](mailto:kms2uu@virginia.edu).

## 2015 ACTIVITIES OF THE MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The minority affairs committee of the Virginia Section of the ACS created a successful 2015 program with a focus on collaborative educational programs for college students. The year started with a presentation co-sponsored by Pfizer Consumer Healthcare and the ACS. **Denise Walters**, Virginia Section Chair Elect and **Kamala Payne Chapman**, both with Pfizer, shared a talk at Virginia Union University on "Careers in Chemistry." They spoke about the importance of chemistry and the number of different job opportunities related to chemistry, referencing the ACS website and they shared their personal stories. The program grew exponentially when the Virginia Section Minority Affairs Committee partnered with NOBCChE in a series of events designed to increase the professionalism of students in chemistry and to highlight the value of belonging to chemistry professional organizations. Initiating this collaboration, **Talitha Hampton**, President of NOBCChE, presented "Building your Brand in STEM" at the April section meeting at the University of Virginia. The workshop was attended by students from the University of Mary Washington, Virginia Union University, and Virginia State University. In June, she spoke to a large group of faculty about the value of service-learning during the 2015 Process Educators Conference at Virginia State University. These two events led to a collaboration entitled "Networking in October" which was advertised heavily across the section. The first networking event in October was via *WebEx*, with students from Virginia Union University, Virginia State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and James Madison University involved. Talitha Hampton focused on the transition from building a brand in STEM to building a professional profile on *LinkedIn*. This theme was continued as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Career Panel co-sponsored by the Virginia Section's Womens Chemist Committee (WCC) and the Minority Affairs Committee. Talitha Hampton was the featured speaker at the close of the event, addressing over 75 students from Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Union University, J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College, Virginia State University, and the University of Richmond. The collaboration of the Virginia Section Minority Affairs Committee and NOBCChE continues with efforts to build student chapters/affiliates in the region that would include membership in both organizations. We intend to continue this successful and exemplary partnership for an expanded effort in 2016. We will focus on continue networking events that expand the earning potential and success of students in the section.

...*Editor's Note*: This article was contributed by **Dr. Colleen Taylor** and **Dr. Denise Walters**



## SCOTT GRONERT RECEIVES FULBRIGHT AWARD



**Dr. Scott Gronert**, Professor of Chemistry at Virginia Commonwealth University, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar Award. He will work with researchers in France on a new process that could help surgeons more accurately remove cancerous cells. His colleagues in France will include professors Isabelle Fournier and Michel Salzet at the Lille University of Science and Technology in Villeneuve-d'Ascq. Their project will develop methods for using mass spectrometry to find biomarkers for cancerous cells. The technique will use a laser to probe cells that are known to be cancerous and try to find molecular signatures for the cancerous cells. Using this technique during surgery could result in more accurate removal of cancerous cells without affecting healthy cells. The Fulbright Award is for work that will last from Jan. 1, 2016 through July 15. The program is administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Gronert was the Chair of the Virginia Section in 2014, and has served as Chair of the Department of Chemistry at VCU.

## NATIONAL CHEMISTRY WEEK - 2015



The Virginia Section joined in the 2015 celebration of **National Chemistry Week** (NCW) with a day of activities at the Children's Museum of Richmond. This was the first time that a Virginia Section event was held at the Children's Museum. **Dr. Kristine Smetana**, Chair of the Virginia Section's Committee on Community Activities, coordinated the NCW event. There were sixteen tables of chemistry-related hands-on activities, including making super balls and slime, examining fall leaves and their color changes, making rocket balloons, kinetic sand, chromatography butterflies, light sticks, and chemical energy. Students and faculty from **John Tyler Community College**, **J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College**, and **Virginia State University**, along with several ACS members, conducted demonstrations and assisted students with the many interesting activities. Thanks to Dr. Smetana for organizing this event and to all who helped to make it a big success. Chemistry does indeed color the world!



## MENTORING PROGRAM MEET-AND-GREET

On October 8, mentors and mentees who participated in the pilot trial of the Virginia Section ACS **Mentor-Mentee Matching Program** met at University of Richmond for a Meet-and-Greet. The meeting was also extended to out-of-town students by *WebEx*.

The goal of the mentoring program is to assist sophomore and junior chemistry majors in their understanding of careers in Chemistry and how they may reach their professional goals.

This pilot project helped us to do the following:

- match students with professional chemists based on type and length of interaction and interests;
- utilize the ACS Network site and create professional profiles; and
- highlight ways we can expand and improve the program.

We had the opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges of mentoring during the summer. Pfizer mentors Jim Saunders and Heather Lourenco had particularly great success with their matches with UVA junior Caitlyn Holzknecht and Hampden-Sydney College sophomore Jason Halmo. Both of these students are now shadowing their mentors. Kathleen Sink, Lancaster Laboratories, and her mentee, VCU junior Ashley Parks, enjoyed lunch and conversation. VCU junior Gregory Domaleski and Brooke Van Zandt, also from Lancaster Laboratories, were able to meet each other for the first time at the Meet and Greet. Mentors Genya Prepelitskaya and Ashleigh Feely provided great feedback regarding the logistics of the program. Ashleigh Feely was able to make a match with VSU

senior Hillary Mosely at the meeting. Ideas were shared about how to better match mentors with undergraduate students in the future.

We sincerely thank the mentors from Pfizer, Lancaster Laboratories, and Evonik for helping us make this pilot program possible. The program, initiated by Virginia section Vice-Chair **Colleen Taylor**, will now be the long term responsibility of the section's Younger Chemists Committee (YCC), currently under the direction of **Kathleen Sink**. The YCC is now in the phase of soliciting mentors for the spring semester and ask for your help in identifying mentors for this important program. We know we can count on section members to improve the value of our section activities. Please see the flyer on page 5 of this issue of the *Bulletin* for information on joining the program.

## CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PERSON?



The photo is from around the year 2000. At that time, the subject was teaching chemistry at Harrisonburg High School. He was born in Elyria, Ohio and raised in the central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. He received a B.A. degree in Chemistry from Bridgewater College and an M.S. in Biochemistry at Virginia Tech. His wife Amy taught at Keezletown Elementary School in Rockingham County. They have two daughters, Laura and Jenny. He has been active in the Virginia Section for nearly 50 years and received the Section's Distinguished Service Award in High School Chemistry Teaching in 1991. In 1996, he became the first high school teacher to serve as chair of the Virginia Section.

The persons in the photo from the November issue of the *Bulletin* were (left-to-right) **Diane Nolan**, **Will Lewis**, and **Liza Schmieder**. Ms. Nolan taught science at the Ni River Middle School in Spotsylvania County. Ms Schmieder taught chemistry at Prince George County High School. Dr. Lewis was Chair of the Virginia Section and was employed at Philip Morris Operations Center in 2007 when the photo was taken.



## QUESTIONS FROM THE PAST

This question was asked in the November *Bulletin*: Tours of the Ethyl Corporation Research Laboratory in Richmond were featured at a December meeting of the Section with nearly 120 persons in attendance. The meeting included an outstanding dinner served around a large Christmas tree in the Ethyl Pavilion Dining Room, overlooking the James River and the Christmas lights of Richmond. At the meeting, four members of the Section received special handcrafted Christmas ornaments that were made by Katherine Wingfield of Kid Chem Ltd. **In what year was this meeting held?** The meeting was on **Dec. 1, 1995**. Staff members conducted tours of the new Ethyl Research Center, including the engine test labs, the chromatography and SEM labs, and the fuel and additive storage facility. Presentations were made by **Joe Valcho**, **Tom West**, and **Al Demange**. Section Chair **Betty Hairfield** presented handcrafted Christmas ornaments to Helen Kizer, Jim Beck, Wayne Rose (to be shared with Phyllis James), and Bill Bailey (to be shared with Don Magin). The ornaments were made by **Katherine Wingfield**.

A new question from the past: The Virginia Section has been involved with *Star Wars* for a long time. The topic for the talk at the October 23, 1987 meeting was "Star Wars, the Technical Aspects." The meeting was held in Lexington. **Who was the speaker?**

## WORDS OF WISDOM FOR DECEMBER:

*"Talent Without Hard Work Is A Tragedy"*



# 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA

The **100th Anniversary Gala** was held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Richmond on Saturday, October 24. Over 140 persons attended the reception, dinner, and program to celebrate the Section's centennial. Highlights of the evening included the recognition of 33 special persons, including Section chairs, award winners, and ACS Fellows, and the presentation of the first R. Gerald Bass Award for Exceptional Service. **Larry White** gave a brief history of the Virginia Section and **Dr. Diane Grob Schmidt**, President of the ACS, presented the keynote address. **Todd Koch**, Chair of the Section, presided at the Gala. Over the next several months, reports on the Gala will be included in *The Bulletin*.



*Happy Holidays*



## ANNIVERSARY GALA GREETING FROM THE CHAIR

Here is the welcome statement from Todd Koch, 2015 Chair of the Virginia Section, that was included in the commemorative program booklet for the *100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala*.

“On April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1915 the Virginia Section was established by the American Chemical Society. On behalf of the planning committee, I would like to welcome you to the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala. Our theme tonight is “A Century of Service”. The Virginia Section of today is the result of a century of commitment and volunteerism. Chemistry defines our environment and touches our lives in countless ways. One of the primary goals of this Society is to highlight the transformative power of chemistry within our communities. Our section has sustained 100 years of community outreach and education. We promote awareness of the contributions chemistry makes to the world around us. We hold informative meetings with workshops and lectures, provide opportunities for students to share their research, and conduct hands-on activities for students. We host networking opportunities by connecting chemists in government, academia and industry. Our volunteers work with and acknowledge teachers and students, striving to convey their passion for chemistry to the next generation. Each of these activities serves to strengthen the local chemistry community. The planning committee welcomes your attendance at this event and hopes you will join us in celebrating our past and helping to shape our future.”



*Todd Koch, Chair*

## ARTICLE ON ANNIVERSARY GALA PUBLISHED IN CEN



An article titled “CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION FOR ACS VIRGINIA SECTION” appeared on page 43 of the November 23, 2015 issue of *Chemical and Engineering News*. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala was described, with emphasis on the presentation of the R. Gerald Bass award for Exceptional Service to Dr. Bass and on the recognition of the centennial by various political persons and entities and by the American Chemical Society. A photograph of **Dr. Diane Grob Schmidt**, President of the ACS, presenting a commemorative ACS certificate to **Dr. Todd Koch**, Chair of the Virginia Section, is included with the article. Niti Shah prepared the article and arranged for its publication. The November 23 issue of *CEN* can be accessed online at **CEN.ACS.org**.

## PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE GALA

Numerous photographs from the *100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala* are posted on the Virginia Section website: <http://www.virginia.sites.acs.org/>. Click on the “**Recent Photos**” tab located on the right side of the homepage, then on “**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala**.” Currently, there are 343 photos posted there. These include 73 that were taken by Dr. James Demas (his photos are also available as a shareable Googled Drive at <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B2vNlvP8yo4XQzRKejZaZ2lkN3M&usp=sharing>).

Most of the remaining photographs were taken by **Jennifer Walters**, the official photographer for the Gala. Additional photos are welcome. Contact Jim Beck at (804) 733-5286, [beckjd1977@comcast.net](mailto:beckjd1977@comcast.net) if you would like to contribute some.



### ...AND THE REVIEWS ARE IN!

A number of persons have provided positive feedback on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala. Here are a few comments.



“I want to thank you and congratulate you and your colleagues for the spectacularly successful 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala.”

“...I appreciated all that you did to make the recent Gala a success.”

“I had a fun evening.”

“I want to compliment Chair Todd and the entire Gala Committee for the excellent planning and execution of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event last Saturday.”

“The planning for the Gala was outstanding and resulted in a wonderful event.”

“I heartily concur!!”

“A perfect balance in all respects.”

“Stellar!!! Had a fantastic time.”

“As for the event, it was grand indeed.”

“My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed it, and the program is a great memento.”

“Please share my thanks and congratulations to all those many who were responsible.”



“The Gala Committee did a fantastic job in organizing this outstanding event.”

“I especially enjoyed the slide show, brought back many special memories to me.”

“You and your outstanding team envisioned and produced an event rich in history and in the Section’s future.”

## ***THE BULLETIN***

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**Todd Koch**

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