

CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT BREAKS THE MOLD OF *Outreach Programs*

There are excited voices and a flurry of activity coming from a lab on the second floor of the Chevron Science Center, home to the University of Pittsburgh Department of Chemistry. Some high school students are busy combining two clear solutions to make a polymer in one corner of the lab, while others are huddled around a table mixing iron and luminol to create a substance that gives off an eerie glow.

Under the guidance of undergraduate chemistry students, the Saturday Science Academy provides local high school students from groups typically underrepresented in science with a fun, hands-on laboratory experience and exposure to the basic principles of synthetic and analytical chemistry. Some of the many experiments include making crystal gardens, measuring the pH levels of favorite soft drinks, and synthesizing slime.

The Saturday Science Academy is one of many outreach programs available to area elementary, middle, and high school students offered through the Department of Chemistry's American Chemical Society-Student Affiliates (ACS-SA) group. ACS-SA, open to all majors and disciplines, is a vibrant and active undergraduate organization. Students involved in ACS-SA are dedicated to fostering a greater knowledge of the field of chemistry as well as igniting curiosity and passion for the sciences.

"Outreach is a vital part of a student's total education at Pitt," says George Bandik, director of undergraduate studies for the chemistry department. "It is our responsibility as educators to provide the necessary tools to help students become good citizens and great people." ACS-SA meets weekly and provides a wonderful opportunity for networking, not only with students from other disciplines but also with faculty and industry leaders. A lecture series in the fall is devoted to postgraduation opportunities and invites career counselors, graduate and professional school advisors, and industry representatives to speak to the students. ACS-SA members also volunteer as tutors and assist undergraduate students in general or organic chemistry. The organization is open to any student interested in the sciences. The membership is far reaching, from accounting to anthropology to biology majors.

Bandik, who also is the faculty advisor for ACS-SA, is passionate about student involvement in academically based organizations. "These outreach programs provide a great learning experience for students to give back to the community," says Bandik. "In fact, many of our former students, who include Rhodes and Churchill scholars, made time in their schedules to be involved in community outreach programs. Whether students are supervising experiments at area schools or reaching out to their peers in the classroom, it's all about service to others."

Other academic services available in the Department of Chemistry include Undergraduates Teaching Undergraduates. This is a peer-teaching program for trained undergraduates who want to help other students by being recitation or lab instructors in general chemistry classes and lab instructors in organic chemistry sections.

There also are many undergraduate research opportunities available inside and outside the department. Because chemistry is a lab science, it is essential for students to participate in lab research, which ties together the course work and actual hands-on experience.

Service, education, and research are the foundation of the University of Pittsburgh and the heart of the Department of Chemistry's undergraduate program.

For more information on the Department of Chemistry, visit www.chem.pitt.edu. More information on undergraduate research and teaching opportunities can be found at www.as.pitt.edu/oel. Visit www.chem.pitt.edu/acs-sa to check out all the news and information on the American Chemical Society-Student Affiliates.



DID YOU KNOW:

- Pitt's ACS-SA received an Outstanding Chapter Award from the American Chemical Society in 2007–08, an honor only 30 out of 900 affiliate groups across the country received. It is the 20th consecutive year the chapter has received national recognition.
- The University of Pittsburgh Division of Student Affairs named ACS-SA as the Outstanding Organization of the Year for 2008.
- The University of Pittsburgh chapter of ACS-SA was one of only 25 chapters to receive a "Green Chemistry" award for its work promoting environmentally friendly chemistry.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Forging Ahead

Every corner of our country has been impacted by the serious economic challenges that continue to face our nation. As we move forward and ride the waves of this economic storm, the University of Pittsburgh is holding steadfastly in its promise to offer an exceptional undergraduate student experience.

To stay at the forefront of technological advances and continue to be a world leader in the sciences, the Department of Chemistry recently unveiled its new state-of-the-art organic laboratory teaching facility. These laboratories incorporate technology and infrastructure that dramatically improve the teaching and learning experience for our instructors and students. There also have been significant renovations to laboratories in physics, geology and planetary science, and biological sciences. Not only are we updating our classrooms, we also are looking at ways to enhance our curriculum. To continue to be a vibrant, vital learning institution, we have expanded our course offerings for the summer term.

Taking summer classes gives students a distinct advantage. With more than 450 courses in the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences, summer sessions offer students continuity of study and learning. This year, students can choose from a broader range of general education and specialized courses that include more writing classes and science lab sections. With additional classes offered during day and evening hours, students can now take popular classes that often fill up during the fall and spring terms.

Summer also is a perfect time to take advantage of the many internship and research opportunities available. Students have a unique opportunity to continue their education while working side by side with world-class faculty on leading-edge research projects. To find out more about summer sessions course offerings and registration, visit www.summer.pitt.edu.

The future at Pitt is bright with advancements in research, technology, and teaching. We continue to improve and offer students the resources they need to go out into the world and be productive citizens of our community.

Wishing you a summer full of discovery,

Juan J. Manfredi, PhD

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies



FACULTY PROFILE

A Shared Passion for Learning

In her third year as the director of the organic teaching laboratories for the Department of Chemistry, Ericka Huston has witnessed some remarkable changes. Most recent is the transformation of the entire fourth floor of the Chevron Science Center into a state-of-the-art organic teaching laboratory facility. This new facility, which opened in August 2008, boasts five new laboratories, a recitation room, and modern instrumentation.

Huston says these are exciting times for the chemistry department, its students, and its faculty: "The new organic laboratory teaching facility is a wonderful enhancement to the chemistry curriculum and shows the University's commitment to enhancing instructional services for our undergraduate students."

A main feature of the new laboratories is an open floor plan, which dramatically enhances the interaction between students and instructors. In the center of each lab sits a U-shaped teaching island. The outside of the island provides a work space for students to take notes during prelab lectures as well as a place for them to keep lab notebooks. The inside of the teaching island includes brand-new gas chromatographs, infrared spectrometers, and a multimedia center with a projector and sound system. Around the perimeter of each laboratory are modern fume hoods for students' experimentation.

Having taught general and organic chemistry for 10 years, Huston is passionate about her involvement with the student population. "I am incredibly grateful to have such a meaningful career," she says. "Whether it is hands-on teaching in a classroom or coordinating the organic teaching laboratories, I truly enjoy being able to connect with our students."

For Huston, each day in the Department of Chemistry brings something new and exciting. From finding innovative ways to help students learn to updating the organic laboratory curriculum to making the laboratories greener, Huston's day is never dull. She does, however, see one constant. "As we move forward with advancements in the chemistry department, we will continue to look for new ways to modify and update our curriculum to enhance the learning experience of our students," says Huston.



Nate Mohny and Ericka Huston, PhD, discuss molecular modeling in the new organic laboratory facilities.



FUTURE LEADERS

Learn Today

THE MIXING OF TWO WORLDS

On a particularly blustery winter afternoon, senior Nathan Mohny finishes setting up a reaction for his research on the nature of intermolecular forces, then grabs his oboe and

dashes off to symphonic band practice. For this chemistry and music major, life is a wonderful blend of chemical and musical compositions.

The combination of chemistry and music creates a natural partnership for Mohny. Whether he is composing music to produce a harmonic sound or working with chemicals to create a novel reaction, for Mohny, it is all about solving a problem that makes for an exciting collaboration.

A recipient of the prestigious Chancellor's Teaching Award, Lilly Undergraduate Research Fellowship, Richard F. Zarilla Award, and Averill Scholarship, Mohny has been interested in chemistry almost his entire life. However, he credits his high school chemistry teacher with truly igniting in him the passion to explore the sciences more deeply at the college level.

That's one of the reasons Mohny finds time in his busy schedule to be a volunteer outreach coordinator for the Pitt American Chemical Society-Student Affiliates. He is committed to making chemistry interesting for younger students. "It is imperative for kids to see that science can be fun and that there is so much to learn when working with different chemistry experiments," explains Mohny.

As an undergraduate teaching assistant for organic and general chemistry classes, Mohny also works with fellow students, helping them to understand the complexities of chemistry. He currently is working with computer software that will display molecules three dimensionally. "Some students have trouble translating a two-dimensional representation into the actual 3-D structure, which this program can easily do," says Mohny. "It is so rewarding when I can help students to understand a concept more fully."

Looking forward to graduation, Mohny has his sights set on attending Pitt's medical school or graduate school in chemistry, with the hopes of one day becoming an ophthalmologist or a professor. "I feel that I can be a more compassionate doctor and effective teacher because of my combined background in the sciences and humanities," he says.

Pitt Expands Summer Sessions Program

Summer sessions at the University of Pittsburgh offer students more ways to stay on track and graduate on time or even ahead of schedule. With a much broader course selection than in past years, summer sessions enable students to complete core requirements and explore new areas of interest. The flexibility of four-week, six-week, 12-week, and full-term sessions allows students to enroll in popular classes and labs that are often closed out during the fall and spring terms. Summer sessions offer a wider variety of core courses, upper-division classes, additional writing courses, and science lab sections. In an effort to meet better the needs of students' work and internship schedules, more courses have been scheduled on Mondays/Wednesdays and Tuesdays/Thursdays during peak day and evening hours.

In addition, there are more courses in the top 10 majors—psychology, political science, history, biology, communication, economics, neuroscience, anthropology, chemistry, and English. Students also will see courses that are completely new to the summer sessions schedule. From second-year Chinese to persuasive writing to the music of the Beatles, summer sessions give students a broad range of classes to complete their general education and major requirements.

There are many benefits to enrolling in summer session courses. Typically, class size is smaller during the summer months, so students will receive more individualized attention; new areas of interest can be explored without the pressure of taking a full class load; and students can prepare for the fall term by taking any necessary prerequisite classes.

For more information, visit www.summer.pitt.edu.



INTRUSIVE CONTACT: WHAT IS IT?

by Mary Koch Ruiz, University Counseling Center

Stalking has become much more prevalent on college campuses than among the general population. According to the most recent National College Women Sexual Victimization Study, within a nine-month period, 13 percent (more than one in eight) of female college students surveyed had been stalked. In comparison, estimates are that one in 12 women and one in 45 men in the general population will be stalked in their lifetime.

What is stalking? Contrary to the simple dictionary definition, "to pursue or approach stealthily," stalking covers a wide variety of behaviors—what researchers at Cornell University call "intrusive contact."

What are intrusive contact behaviors?

- Making repeated bothersome, threatening, and/or obscene phone calls
- Sending unwanted letters or packages
- Repeatedly communicating electronically
- Following the victim by car or foot
- Repeatedly leaving gifts at work or home
- Watching the victim from a distance
- Repeated personal approaches

According to recent surveys of college students, 30 percent reported having experienced intrusive contact after terminating a relationship. The surveys indicated that both males and females engage in intrusive contact behaviors and that both males and females are victims.

Individuals who are targets of intrusive contact may have the following physical and emotional reactions:

- Hypervigilance; paranoia
- Exaggerated startle response
- Distractibility; inability to concentrate
- Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- Fear regarding personal safety
- Anxiety
- Frequent class absences
- Stress symptoms (headaches, loss of appetite)

What can you do to help your son or daughter?

- **Take the concerns of the student seriously.** Do not question the validity of the intrusive contact and do not encourage the student to ignore it.
- **Stress the importance of documentation.** Maintain a journal to record contact made or attempts at making contact by the initiator.
- **Encourage the student to speak with a staff member at the University Counseling Center.** The counselor will be able to assist the student emotionally and inform the student of police and judicial options.
- **Encourage the student to contact the police if he or she has been threatened or feels unsafe or if the intrusive contact has been taking place for some time.**
- **Urge the student to notify family, friends, and coworkers about what is taking place.** Silence works to the advantage of the person initiating the intrusive contact.

RESOURCES

University of Pittsburgh
University Counseling Center
412-648-7930

www.counseling.pitt.edu

National Center for Victims of Crime
Stalking Resource Center
www.ncvc.org/src



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IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

- Advising Center412-624-6444
- Academic Resource Center412-648-7920
- Office of the Associate Dean
for Undergraduate Studies.....412-624-6480
- Office of Freshman Programs412-624-6828
- Office of Experiential Learning.....412-624-6828
- Office of Student Records.....412-624-6776

www.as.pitt.edu/undergraduate

Questions or concerns? E-mail us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.

News & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ampco-Pittsburgh Prize for Excellence in Advising**
Fiore Pugliano, senior lecturer and advisor in the Department of English, received the 2009 Ampco-Pittsburgh Prize for Excellence in Advising. For more than 30 years, Pugliano has touched the lives and careers of thousands of undergraduate students. He is recognized for his outstanding record of academic advising and the many contributions he has made to help students maximize their educational experience.
- Scholarship Award Invitations**
Watch your e-mail for scholarship award invitations. Eligible students (those with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5; 50-90 credits; no more than 30 advanced stand credits; and who have completed the fall term, 2009, with a minimum of 12 credits of letter grade) will receive letters of invitation and applications via Pitt student e-mail accounts in March. Scholarship awards will be for the 2009-2010 academic year.
- Dean's Stars**
Undergraduates who complete the spring term with a minimum of 12 credits of letter grade and a term GPA of 4.0 receive a \$50 Dean's Stars gift award posted to their PeopleSoft account. If your student qualifies for this award but does not see it in his or her account, please contact us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.

2009 COMMENCEMENT CONVOCATION

On Sunday, April 26, the University of Pittsburgh will hold its 2009 Commencement Convocation at the John M. and Gertrude E. Petersen Events Center. Approximately 6,000 students will receive their degrees* during this annual event. Students should look for more information about Graduation Central, held April 7-8 in the J.W. Connolly Ballroom of Alumni Hall. During this time, they will receive instructions about the ceremony, purchase their caps and gowns, and have the opportunity to learn about staying connected to their alma mater through membership in the Pitt Alumni Association. For more information about commencement activities, contact the Office of Special Events at 412-624-7100, or visit www.pitt.edu/commencement/students/prep.html. Remember that departments often have their own graduation celebrations, so be sure to contact your student's home department office for details. You can find a complete list of academic departments at www.pitt.edu/academics.html. Congratulations and best wishes to the Class of 2009!

**Note: To be eligible for April graduation, students must have completed the Graduation Application, received approval of the dean, and be in good financial standing with the University.*

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities. This is a commitment made by the University and is in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

Month	Date	Event
June	6	Summer 4-week-1 session ends; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting
	8	Summer 4-week-2 session registration ends and classes begin
July	10	Summer 4-week-2 session add/drop period ends
	20	Summer 6-week-1 session ends; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting; official date for awarding of degrees
	22	Summer 6-week-2 session registration ends and classes begin
	24	Summer 6-week-2 session add/drop period ends
August	1	Summer 12-week, 6-week-2, and 4-week-3 sessions end; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting
	8	Summer 4-week-3 session add/drop period ends; fall term deadline for continuing students to register without penalty fee
	9	Residence halls close
	26	Residence halls open for fall term
	31	Fall term classes begin

Month	Date	Event		
March	27	Last day to apply for August 2009 graduation in the dean's office		
	April	10	Last day to withdraw from all classes in the dean's office	
		17	Spring term last day for undergraduate day classes	
		20-25	Final examination period for undergraduate day classes	
		25	Spring term ends; official date for degrees awarded in spring term	
		26	Residence halls close (except for graduating seniors); annual Commencement Convocation	
		29	Spring term grades must be approved by instructors	
		30	Spring term grades available online	
		May	3	Residence halls open for summer term
			4	Summer term registration ends and classes begin
11			Summer 12-week, 6-week-1, and 4-week-1 sessions registration ends and classes begin	
13	Summer 4-week-1 and 6-week-1 sessions add/drop period ends			
May	15	Summer term add/drop period ends		
	18	Summer 12-week session add/drop period ends		
	25	Memorial Day: University closed		
	June	3	Independence Day observed; University closed	
		6	Summer 4-week-3 session registration ends and classes begin	
8		Summer 4-week-3 session add/drop period ends; fall term deadline for continuing students to register without penalty fee		
July		2	Summer 4-week-2 session ends; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting	
		3	Independence Day observed; University closed	
	6	Summer 4-week-3 session registration ends and classes begin		
	8	Summer 4-week-3 session add/drop period ends; fall term deadline for continuing students to register without penalty fee		
	8	Summer 4-week-1 session registration ends and classes begin		
August	1	Summer 12-week, 6-week-2, and 4-week-3 sessions end; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting		
	8	Summer term ends; final examinations scheduled during last class meeting		
	9	Residence halls close		
	26	Residence halls open for fall term		
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