

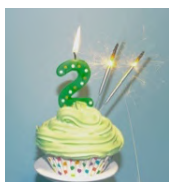
# Department of Chemistry Newsletter



## April Issue, 2023

Irving K. Barber Faculty of Science, University of British Columbia  
Syilx Okanagan Nation Territory

## Announcement



This April issue marks the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of our Department of Chemistry's Newsletter. Please continue to keep your fellow Chemistry's community members informed, inspired, and entertained with all the news you would like to share.

## Congratulations to:



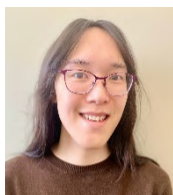
**Dr. Isaac T.S. Li** for achieving tenure, and being named UBC Okanagan's 2023 "Researcher of the Year" for his impacts and leadership as an early career researcher in DNA nanostructure and molecular forces. The nomination was put forward by Dr. Thu-Thuy Dang with Dr. Frédéric Ménard's support.



**Dr. Wesley Zandberg** for successfully renewing his NSERC *Discovery Grant*, and for securing \$ 40,000 donation (with Dr. David Grynspan, UBC's Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine and Vernon Jubilee Hospital) towards undergraduate summer researchers working on placental glycomics.



**Amanda Darbyshire** (Dr. Kirsten Wolthers' group) for winning the *Provost Award for Teaching Assistants & Tutors* with a \$ 500 prize in recognition of her excellent teaching role.



**Brooke Kwan** (Dr. Thu-Thuy Dang's group) for being awarded an NSERC's *Canada Graduate Scholarship for Master's Program*.

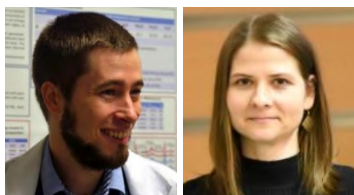


**Dr. Xia (Summer) Li** for being accepted into the UBC's *International Program for the Scholarship of Educational Leadership*, May–August 2023.



**Hannah Bourget** (Dr. Wesley Zandberg's group), **Megan Shroeder** (Dr. Frédéric Ménard's group), and **Darasimi Kola-Ilesanmi** (Dr. Kirsten Wolthers' group) for winning the 2023 Undergraduate Research Conference's Poster Awards (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places, respectively).

### New members:



**Dr. Orsolya Fonagy** and **Dr. Balazs Zsirka** from the University of Pannonia (Hungary) have joined Dr. Robert Szilagyí's group as visiting scientists. They will stay until the end of August to work on enhancing clay reactivity, functionalizing transition-metal sites in nanoclays, and study the photochemical properties and reactivity. Their visit is supported by the University of Pannonia's Tempus Public Foundation and the Foundation of

Industry for Engineering Training in Veszprem.

### Personnel change:



**Heather Hemerling**, Department of Chemistry's Senior Administrative Assistant, left to accept a program coordinator position at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. We'd like to thank Heather for her supports in the last couple of years.

Everybody's patience and understanding are much appreciated until we conclude the ongoing search for a replacement.

### Instrument:

The **quadrupole time-of-flight (QToF) mass spectrometry** instrument in Dr. Wesley Zandberg's group will be online again very soon after some time of hiatus. Please reach out to Wes if you have an application in mind.



## Recent publications



**Helena H. Chubatsu Nunes, Thu-Thuy Dang (2023).** Perspective: A booster for vaccines from plants. *Science*. DOI: 10.1126/science.adg8823.

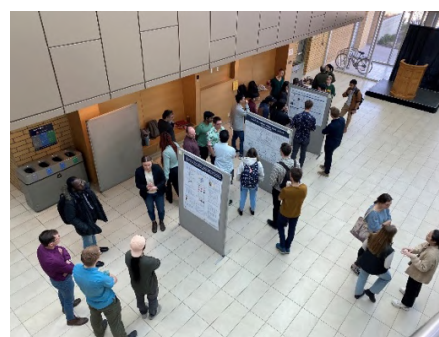


**Viki Kumar Prasad, Tamara K. Freeman (2023).** Development of an infographic assignment for an introductory chemistry laboratory curriculum. *Journal of Chemical Education*. DOI: 10.1021/acs.jchemed.3c00023

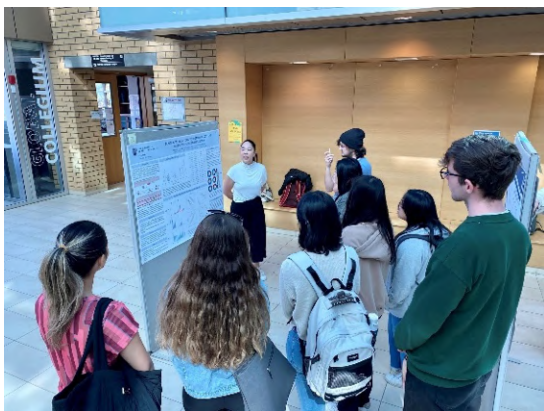
## Recent events

### 2023 Undergraduate Research Conference

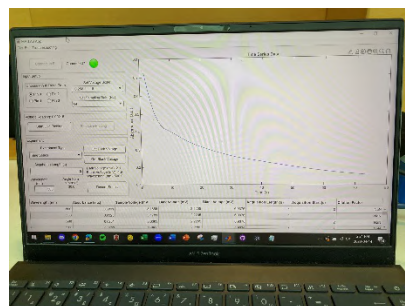
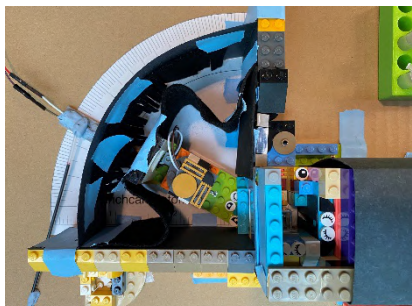
The URC took place on April 14<sup>th</sup> with oral presentations in the Commons and posters in the EME Foyer. As always, the URC was an excellent time for students to showcase their hard words and insights, and for everyone to discuss the science we do in the Department.







Especially, the URC this year also included a demonstration of a CHEM 319's scientific instrumentation pilot project by students.



## Dr. Karen Perry's end-of-semester celebration

Karen is set to retire in July after decades-long career beginning at Okanagan University College, now UBC's Okanagan Campus. Karen's last lecture on April 12<sup>nd</sup> was followed by a "supposedly" surprise celebration with many colleagues in SCI 204. Congratulations Karen!



## Recent presentations

**Dr. Orsolya Fonagy** and **Dr. Balazs Zsirka** (visiting scientists in Dr. Robert Szilagy's group) introduced their research programs on the April 21<sup>st</sup> Department's seminar with presentations entitled "Heterogeneous photocatalysis: From lab to practical applications" and "Surface modified clay minerals and their applications", respectively.

**Dr. Isaac T.S. Li** gave a seminar entitled "Seeing molecular force through DNA" for the *Physical Chemistry* seminar series at the University of Toronto in the week of April 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Dr. Robert Godin** gave a presentation entitled "Spectroscopy-led development of carbon-based photocatalytic materials for solar fuel production" to the *Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage* delegation from the Danish Academy of Technical Sciences and Denmark's national environmental cluster CLEAN during their visit to UBC's Vancouver Campus on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The event was jointly organized by Canada's Trade Commissioner Service and Green Hub Denmark.

**Dr. Thu-Thuy Dang** recently spoke at McGill University's *Plant Science* seminar series and Laval University's *Integrative Biology & Systems* seminar series with a presentation entitled "Plant-based anticancer drugs".

## Upcoming events

### Chemistry Colloquium Series: "Synthesis of cyclic bioactive peptides, their analogues and unusual amino acid building blocks"



**Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>** (time and room: TBA)

**Speaker: Dr. John Vederas FRSC FRS** | *Distinguished University Professor*, Department of Chemistry, University of Alberta



## Conferences/meetings:

### **Biophysical Society of Canada's 8th annual meeting in Calgary**

<https://event.fourwaves.com/bsc2023/pages>



### **2023 Canadian Chemistry Conference & Exhibition in Vancouver**

<https://www.cheminst.ca/conference/canadian-chemistry-conference-and-exhibition-2023/>

### **Phytochemical Society of North America's 62<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting in East Lansing (Michigan, USA)**

<https://bmb.natsci.msu.edu/about/bmb-events/psna-2023/index.aspx>



## Classifieds

**Wanted: Owner of tongs** left behind after the Department's Christmas party last December. Please contact Dr. David Jack to retrieve them.



**Wanted: A good home for a laminar flow hood.** Please contact Dr. Karen Perry for more information.



**We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) Peoples. Kukwstsetsemc / kwu kwukwstp !**

If you would like to contribute to, or have any suggestions for, our Department's upcoming newsletter, please contact Thuy Dang ([thuy.dang@ubc.ca](mailto:thuy.dang@ubc.ca)).