



USF Chemistry NEWS

News of Interest to
Friends of the Department of Chemistry
University of South Florida

Volume 19, No 4
Mid-Summer, 2021

Florida's only Metropolitan Preeminent
Research University

Faculty Recognition

Faculty Funding

Dr. Acevedo-Duncan

Dr. **James Leahy** (Professor and Chair) announced (May 21st) that Dr. **Mildred Acevedo-Duncan** (Research Professor) received a grant from The Leo and Anne Albert Charitable Trust in support of her research on the development of ICA-1 for the treatment of cancer.



Dr. Acevedo-Duncan

Dr. Theresa Evans-Nguyen

Dr. Leahy congratulated Dr. **Theresa Evans-Nguyen** (Assistant Professor) on receiving a three-year NSF Award for her project entitled "Exploring Acoustic Disruption of Lipid Assemblies for Mass Spectrometry" which will start July 1.



Dr. Evans-Nguyen

Dr. Xiaodong (Michael) Shi

Dr. Leahy also had the pleasure of



Dr Shi

announcing that Dr. **Mike Shi** (Professor) has been notified that his single PI NSF grant proposal entitled “Achieving Challenging Synthesis Based on Triazole-Gold Catalysis” has been funded which will ensure that he will have received continuous NSF funding for at least 15 years.

Dr. Scott Lewis

Dr. **Scott Lewis**, whose NSF grant application entitled “Development and Evaluation of a Comprehensive Utility Value Intervention for General Chemistry” has been selected for funding for 3 years and > \$278,000, ensuring that USF remains on the cutting edge of both providing innovative chemical education and conducting chemical education research.



Dr. Lewis

Graduates --Fall

Graduate students who defended their doctoral dissertations and were scheduled for fall commencement:

Sami Abdulkadir



Dr. Abdulkadir



Dr. Jiangfeng Cai, Advisor

Grace Binder



Dr. Binder



Dr. Wayne Guida, Co-advisor
with Dr. Kenyon Daniel

Elena Bray



Dr. Bray



Dr. James W. Leahy, Advisor

Persons you may know

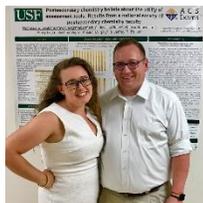
May 19th: Dr. **Ralph Salvatore** (Ph.D. 2001) Professor of Chemistry, Southeastern University, Lakeland, had lunch with Dr. **Jim Leahy** (Professor and Chair), but also stopped to visit with Dr. **Dean Martin** (Emeritus).

Dr. **Rebecca Gibbons** is a member of ODS assigned to Sarasota-Manatee Campus. Most recently she had served as Director of Evaluation at Malcolm X College, Chicago.

The ODS announcement noted: “Rebecca is passionate about the power of scholarship of assessment to generate cultural and

institutional shifts toward improving student learning.”

She had earned a PhD in Chemistry at USF with Dr. **Jeffrey Raker** as her advisor (below).



The picture was taken at her successful dissertation defense (June 12, 2018) .

She was Dr. Raker’s first doctoral advisee.

Dr. **Dean Martin** (emeritus), a member of WUSF Leadership Society was a guest of Ms. **JoAnn Urofsky** (WUSF General Manager) at an exclusive event to interview Mr. **John Lansing**, NPR CEO on June 17th .

Mrs. **Barbara Martin** (dec) and Dr. **Dean Martin** (Emeritus) were the subject of a one-page article in the summer issue of USF magazine in a section concerned with philanthropy.

Ms. **Wen-Shan** (“Venessa”) **Chang** sent a video of her scuba diving in Zodig in a later stage of her pregnancy. MS 2010 (advisors Drs. Bisht and Martin).

In Memorium

Mr. **Avijit Dey** (1987-2021), a graduate advisee of Dr. **Mildred Acevedo-Duncan**, passed away the first week of July. He was the husband of Ms. **Soma Bose**, the son of **Kajalendu Dey** (father) and **Suchita Dey** (mother). Dr. Leahy expressed sorrow at the loss to The Department.



Mr. Dey

123rd Commencement

The first live commencements since December 2019 were held May 8th at St. Petersburg’s Tropicana Field (43,000 seats). Each graduate was allowed two registered guests.

There were no lines of graduates to a central platform. Instead, each graduate stood to be recognized as their name was called.

Some 7,200 graduates attended one the two ceremonies, held at 9:00 am and 6:30 pm. They sat wearing masks on chairs distanced on the field and were evidently organized in four groups.

Graduates included 5,206 undergraduates, 1,691 masters, 289 doctorates.

Those graduated included 50 US states and 100 nations.

Planning was underway for another in-person commencement later in fall term for other graduates as well as for those not previously able to appear.

These include:

- George Ambaye - MA**
- Iman Keshavarz - MA**
- Imalka Marasinghe Arachchilage - PhD**
- Guizella Rocabado - PhD**
- Shanelle Suepaul – PhD**
- Brandt Tudor - PhD**

New Graduate Students

Dr. **Xiadong (“Mike”) Shi** (Professor) announced the new class of graduate students. A total of 29 have been accepted, half are women. The new students represent nine different nations, including Norway for the first time in memory.



Dr. Shi

Five deferred their start-up to the Spring term. Seven are USF alumni.

Fall Term -I

USF expected to admit largest freshman class yet: 7,200.

The Fall 2021 Term opened as a regular semester with regularly scheduled classes in open rooms. Opening occurred Monday August 23rd.

Fall Classes to end December 2.

Test-free week: Nov 26-Dec 2 .

Winter Intersession: Dec 13-Jan 7.

Fall Term -II

Athletics

USF football returned to full capacity for games at Tampa’s Raymond James Stadium. For the first time, the U. of Florida team came to play the USF Team on September 11th.

Fall Term -III

CHEMINARS

The seminar program returned to being held in the 200 seat CHM 100 auditorium with live speakers and a live audience.

Dr. **Jiangfeng Cai** (USF Preeminent Professor) arranged for colleagues and guests



Dr. Cai

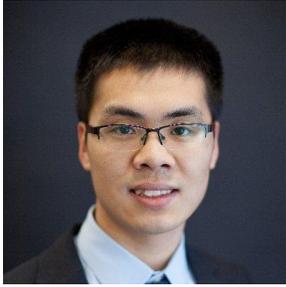
to present Wednesday morning seminars 9:30-10:30 am starting in late August and ending at the end of the term.

New Colleagues

Dr. **Jim Leahy** (Professor and Chair) provided good news about two new colleagues, who are joining us at the assistant professor level:



Dr. **Ioannis Spanopoulos** received his Ph.D. from the University of Crete under the tutelage of Dr. **Pantelis Trikalitis**, followed by a postdoctoral position at Northwestern in the labs of Dr. **Mercouri Kanatzidis**. He is an inorganic chemist.



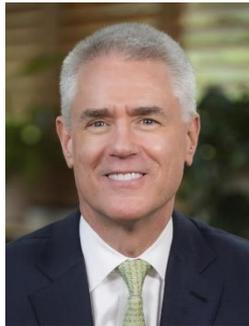
Dr. **Wenqi “Vince” Liu** received his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame with Dr. **Bradley Smith**, and is currently a postdoc with Nobel Laureate Dr. **Fraser Stoddart** at Notre Dame. He’s officially an organic chemist.

Both will be working in areas of materials.

University Administration

Dr **Steven Currall**, President and Professor

Dr. Currall addressed those attended the Spring Commencements on May 8th.



Dr. Currall

President Currall noted that while every commencement speaker tells their classmates their group is special, this year’s truly were for all they endured.

“Our graduates have shown resilience that no other graduating class has shown in living memory...your graduation at this unprecedented time represents a new future that is yet to be defined. ”

Resignation

President Steve Currall, citing family and health concerns announced his resignation effective August 2nd.

Donations

The following donations were received between January 1, and June 30, 2021.

Individual Donors

Henry Euler
Lorene Hall-Jennings
Maria Gallardo-Williams, Ph.D.
Milton Johnston, Jr., Ph.D.
Jennifer E. Lewis, Ph.D.
Rafael W. Blanco M.D.
Scott E. Lewis, Ph.D.
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John Martin
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Robert Potter, Ph.D.
Frances M. Salo
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The Bradley Zankel Foundation Inc.

The George O'Brien/Joseph Linberg
Charitable Foundation Trust
Yolanda & Salvatore Gigante Charitable
Foundation.

We are sincerely grateful for all the financial support the Chemistry Department has received.

USF Innovation Enterprise

Dr. **Paul R. Sanberg**, FNAI, FRSC., Distinguished University Professor, is Former Senior VP for Research, Innovation & Knowledge Enterprise.

Dr. Sanberg is one of 146 at USF who are among the top 1.5% of all cited scientists in the world.

He is also President and Founder of the National Academy of Inventors.



Dr. Sanberg

He announced the NAI 10th Annual Conference would be held in Tampa Oct 31 - Nov 3 at the JW Marriot Tampa Water Street.

Dr. Sanberg initiated a series of “Florida Inventors Hall of Fame” at the Florida House DC, and the Cade Museum for a Meet the Inventors Virtual Series. The series accompanies the Cade Museum (USF Campus) series exhibit, “In a State of Innovation”. This can be seen at the Florida House in Washington, D.C. from May 2021 through December 2023. The Florida State

Embassy on Capitol Hill connects, celebrates, and champions the Sunshine State to the world. Dr. **Paul Sanberg** initiated the series on Tuesday June 15th.

Abbreviations

ODS: Office of Division Support

CAS: College of Arts and Sciences

Acknowledgments

Ms. **Kaitlyn Kroner**, Graduate Program Coordinator provided helpful information concerning dissertation defense schedules.



Ms. Kroner

Ms. **Paige Romero**, Webmaster, Administrative Specialist, kindly provided useful technical assistance.

Information concerning the commencement was obtained from an article by **Divya Kumar** and **Natalie Weber** *Tampa Bay Times* Staff writers, May 9.

Dr. **Jeffrey Raker** provided useful information concerning a Chemistry alumna.

Ms. **Ann Serota**, Development Specialist, CAS provided the list of donors.

Information concerning the resignation of President Currall from an article by **Divya Kumar** *Tampa Bay Times* Staff writer, July 25.

Administration

Chair:



Dr. Leahy

Dr. James Leahy
Professor and Chair

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The Florida Center of Excellence for Drug
Discovery & Innovation
Department of Molecular Medicine
University of South Florida
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Tampa, FL 33612

813-974-4642

August 2019 --

Webmaster:



Ms. Paige Romero

For past issues you may have missed, please
see the departmental Web page.

News for us or comments?

Please write to: dfmartin@usf.edu