



Greetings to all Department of Chemistry Alumni! We enjoyed a busy and productive 2008-2009 academic year in the Department and at the University. As I enter my seventh year as Chair of the Department of Chemistry, I am happy to share with you some of the developments within the Department and University from the past academic year.

Inevitably, the economy had an impact upon all of us, and the University of Rochester is no exception in feeling the stress from the economic events of the last year. I am proud to say that it appears Rochester will weather this crisis far better than many of our peer institutions. The University has made sustaining the quality and distinction of our undergraduate programs one of its highest priorities and is devoting a considerable proportion of available resources to help students, and their families, weather these difficult economic times with respect to achieving a college education.

In June 2009, President Seligman reported that the endowment had lost approximately 20% (after withdrawals for spending) and dropped from about \$1.7 billion on June 30, 2008 to approximately \$1.35 billion on May 31, 2009. The University responded promptly to the economic crisis last fall by significantly reducing endowment payout with various cost saving measures and putting some major projects on hold. However, loss in the endowment, while serious, is only a part of the financial equation for most schools that make up the University. Four types of financial support drive our academic programs: tuition, sponsored research, gifts, and endowment payout. Most of UR's academic divisions in the College of Arts, Sciences and Engineering, including the Chemistry Department, are tuition driven. The *very good news* is that this was a record year for applications to the undergraduate program at the College, and the Chemistry Department anticipates that

a proportionate number of incoming Freshmen will participate in the chemistry curriculum. Furthermore, despite an ailing economy, UR Chemistry alumni have remained constant in their generous support of the Department, and the Department is highly regarded with respect to its sponsored research program.

Like all those involved in basic science research, we are encouraged by the emphasis that our current presidential administration has placed on research and development. The Department of Chemistry's annual sponsored research expenditure reached nearly four million in federal dollars last year. As a top-tier research university and department, we are particularly well positioned to contribute to an expansion of sponsored research, and thus, the education of the next generation of chemistry scholars. We hope that better days are ahead and are gratified by the government's efforts to redirect national priorities toward spending more of our nation's gross domestic product on R&D. As a central science, chemistry has an essential part to play in the nation's research enterprise. UR Chemistry faculty have successfully applied, and will continue to apply, for federal funding under the auspices of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, as well as other federal and state programs. Last year our faculty received both new and renewed funding for their varied research programs from agencies such as the DOE, NIH, and NSF; junior faculty were successful in competing for funding from the ACS PRF, NSF CAREER and other Young Investigator awards.

The major strategic plan for controlled growth by the University over the next ten years has slowed in pace although the initial vision remains unchanged. We are confident that UR will continue to make progress in implementing the plan outlined a few years ago, namely an intended growth of approximately 25% in the size of both the undergraduate and graduate student bodies, as well as corresponding growth in the faculty body over the next decade, once the economy stabilizes and improves. We hope that, as part of this growth, Chemistry faculty will grow to 24-26 over that period, both to accommodate increasing enrollments as well as to expand our faculty expertise in emerging research areas, particularly in areas of emphasis identified during our strategic planning, and to deepen our areas of traditional strength. Although Chemistry was not selected as one of the departments permitted to make a faculty hire this year, University leadership is aware that enlisting vigorous young and mid-career faculty, who excel in research and teaching, is critical going forward. Ultimately, new research initiatives, such as those in systems biology, nanotechnology, renewable energy (particularly fuel cell and hydrogen production), and identification of gene function, coupled with the expected growth in the student body, and a maturing demographic among our senior faculty, will precipitate hiring of new faculty. Proactive effort to retain faculty, in an era of increased mobility, also remains a critical focus.

Chemistry faculty received several notable awards this year, the details of which you will read in this Newsletter. Esther Conwell was the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Science from SUNY Geneseo. Jack Kampmeier and his colleagues in chemical education and Peer-Led Team Learning, David Gosser and Pratibha Varma-Nelson received the ACS NE Section's Jack Flack Norris Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Teaching of Chemistry last November. Doug Turner and Lewis Rothberg were awarded University Provost's Multidisciplinary Awards in 2008 and Todd Krauss was a recipient of this award in 2009. Dave McCamant was awarded the NSF CAREER award, Bill Jones was awarded the ACS Arthur C. Cope Scholar Award, the University's Edward Peck Curtis Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, as well as a Fellowship Award from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. Rich Eisenberg was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and I was honored with the William H. Riker University Award for Graduate Teaching. Rich Eisenberg and I were also recently elected to the 2009 class of Fellows of the American Chemical Society. This kind of recognition helps to sustain our efforts to recruit and retain high quality faculty and students, and enhances the reputation of the Department and the University. Faculty innovation in research, coupled with excellence in teaching, comprise the core of our Ph.D. program, providing a rich environment for the student knowledge and research that is fundamental to science education in the 21st century. Chemistry students, too, received a record number of awards, opportunities, and fellowships last year. Efforts to maintain a cutting-edge in research and education are ongoing, as you will read about in the ensuing pages.

In January 2009, Chemistry launched its newly redesigned website. We are proud to showcase our department with this informational Internet presence which is now more accessible and utilizes more links, cross references, quick facts, and substantially more graphic detail. The contemporary site is not only more attractive and standards-compliant, but has greater functionality and security built into its administrative system. Alumni are invited to visit us at [www.chem.rochester.edu](http://www.chem.rochester.edu).

We were pleased to have been able to make other improvements to our departmental infrastructure this year with the completion of renovations to various labs in Hutchison Hall, including renovation to the basement to accommodate a Bruker FTMS. Hutchison Hall 421 was converted into a user facility housing microwave and hydrogenation apparatus. In the near future, we plan to seek an upgrade to our ESR and Mass Spectroscopy facilities, and are working with University leadership to seek NSF funding to upgrade ventilation and electrical systems in our building. Through the generous gifts of our alumni and other University and unrestricted funds, we will continue the staged renovation of Chemistry's research laboratories over the next several years.

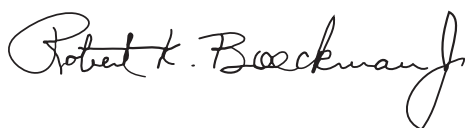
For many years we have aspired to grow our graduate program. I am happy to report that this year Chemistry has experienced significant growth with regard to our incoming first-year graduate students: a record number of 31 graduate students entered our doctoral program this fall, bringing the total

number of graduate students in the Department of Chemistry to approximately 120.

Finally, let me close by thanking all of you for your continuing support of the Department over the year. We are fortunate to have the strong support of the College in all our efforts, however, the support and advice of our alumni is an invaluable resource. We are happy to receive news and proud of your achievements in your respective fields. Please let us know how you are doing by using the reply form at the back of this Newsletter or online at <http://www.chem.rochester.edu/alumni/submitnews.php> and we will pass the word on in next year's edition. Please remember to update your contact information (you may now do so online) as you move from place to place, and stay in touch with your *alma mater*!

One of the defining characteristics of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Rochester is our warm relationship with Chemistry alumni and our collegial atmosphere. Over the years, we have endeavored to establish and nurture a sense of community for our alumni. We encourage you to take this opportunity to acquaint yourself with current members of the Department and reconnect with old classmates, through the Newsletter, through attending events, and through our website. We greatly appreciate your communication and feedback and moreover, want our current students to appreciate the legacy of our extended "Chemistry Family" through a bond with their predecessors. We invite you to visit Rochester, attend Meliora Weekend, and drop by our annual ACS Alumni Social hour.

Meliora and best wishes to all for a successful and happy year in 2009-2010.



Bob Boeckman

*Hutchison Hall*

