



Greetings to all Department of Chemistry Alumni! We enjoyed a busy and productive 2010-2011 year in the department and at the University. As I enter my ninth 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 year.

The economic stress that the US has been experiencing since 2008 continues to have an impact on the University and to some lesser extent the department. 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 the continuing difficult economic times with respect to achieving a college education. The primary impact on the department has been seen in a somewhat restrained rate of growth of the faculty.

Four types of financial support drive our academic programs: tuition, sponsored research, gifts, and endowment payout. The University Endowment has largely recovered from the events of 2008, but the College's (including the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering) draw on their portion of the endowment had been historically too high for overall fiscal prudence and has been scaled back to a sustainable level near ~5.5%. Most of the 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 we experienced another record year of applications to the undergraduate program at the College and the ten year growth plan for the undergraduate program is on track. Since the chemistry department anticipates that a proportionate number of incoming freshmen will participate in the chemistry curriculum and we have had one retirement, we have been able to add two tenure-track faculty (one senior and one junior) and one instructor in 2010-2011. Furthermore, despite an ailing economy, the department has increased in sponsored research to \$4.9M in 2010 and UR chemistry alumni have continued their strong, generous support of the

departmental funds.

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 as well as other state and foundation programs. Last year our faculty received both new and renewed funding for their various research programs from agencies such as the DOE, NIH, and NSF; junior faculty were successful in competing for funding from the ACS, NIH, PRF, NSF, and the Sloan Foundation as well as others. However, given the fiscal stress which the federal government is experiencing and the obvious need to reduce federal deficits, the future for government supported science research is cloudy. Science research is funded out of the discretionary portion of the federal budget and likely to come under unprecedented pressure in the coming few years as entitlement and other mandated programs take up a larger and larger portion of taxes and other revenue. NIH and NSF funding levels are already at or near historic lows; the coming years are going to present enormous challenges for academic science to find ways to fund their programs with fewer federal research dollars. This translates to greater reliance on foundations, other private sector support and alumni.

New research initiatives, such as those in systems biology, nanotechnology, renewable energy (particularly fuel cell and hydrogen production), and identification of gene function, are clearly areas of critical importance to the nation. Such research areas, in which the University and our department are well positioned to participate, coupled with the expected growth in the student body and a maturing demographic among our senior faculty, will require the continued hiring of new faculty. The growth target, although now some years in the future, is 24-26 full-time tenured or tenure track faculty. Such growth is critical to allow the department to compete effectively against our peer chemistry departments, almost all of whom are larger than Rochester, for the best faculty and graduate students.

Fortunately, as mentioned above, chemistry was selected as one of the departments permitted to make a tenure-track faculty hire this year, in one of the tightest budgetary years of any, save next year (2012-2013). We were exceedingly pleased to have attracted a superb young inorganic chemist Michael Neidig as assistant professor of chemistry. Mike received his Ph.D. training under Ed Solomon at Stanford, and spent a year in industry at Dow Chemical. At that point, he decided to pursue an academic appointment and moved to a postdoctoral position at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Mike will pursue a research program spanning mechanistic inorganic and organometallic chemistry using spectroscopic methods, particularly cryogenic magnetic CD and Mossbauer spectroscopy, as platforms for these studies. His research program has an unusual level of synergism with Pat Holland, Bill Jones, and other chemistry faculty which made him a perfect fit for Rochester. We are excited to have him. We have also hired a recent alumnus **BENJAMIN HAFEN-STEINER (B.A. '03)**, who received his Ph.D. at Scripps with Phil

Baran and a postdoctoral stint with Larry Overman at Irvine, as an instructor who will focus on instruction of our freshman and sophomore level lectures and laboratories. Ben's background and skill in synthetic organic chemistry will also benefit the research programs of several organic chemistry faculty.

Chemistry faculty received several notable awards this year, the details of which you will read in this newsletter. Most notably, Esther M. Conwell received a National Medal of Science at a White House ceremony. This was the first in the history of the University of Rochester. Rich Eisenberg was inducted into the National Academy of Sciences. David McCamant was named a recipient of a prestigious Sloan Foundation Research Fellowship. These kinds of recognitions help to sustain our efforts to recruit and retain high quality faculty and students, and enhance 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 large number of awards, opportunities, and fellowships last year, including an unprecedented seven NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Awards and Honorable Mentions. Efforts to remain on the cutting-edge of research and education are ongoing, as you will read about in the rest of the newsletter.

We were saddened this year by the loss of Professor Emeritus Jack A. Kampmeier who passed away in March. Throughout his long career here at the University of Rochester, beginning in 1960, Jack dedicated himself to the education of all students; to use his phrase, "from freshmen to postdoc". He inspired faculty here and elsewhere to raise their teaching to new levels of excellence, having helped pioneer the "Peer-Led" Team Learning workshop model. He was still very active on campus even though he retired in 2005. Jack was an esteemed colleague, an excellent communicator, a visionary and passionate leader, an untiring advocate for students, and an exemplary citizen of the University community. His passing leaves a hole in our chemistry "family". We will all miss him.

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. The newsletter is also available online and we will continue to develop the overall website.

We were pleased to have been able to make some significant improvements to our departmental infrastructure this year with the completion of construction of a new undergraduate organic laboratory in Hutchison Hall. This laboratory will serve as a model both for future renovations of our remaining organic laboratories and a basis for planning renovations of our freshman laboratories, but also for fund-raising efforts for these renovations as part of the University's major gift campaign set to begin in October. Through such generous gifts of our alumni and other university and unre-

stricted funds, we will continue the staged renovation of chemistry's research and teaching laboratories over the next several years.

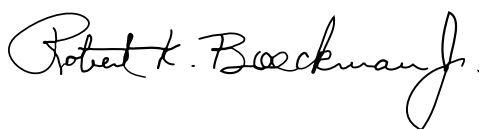
For many years we have aspired to grow our graduate program. I am happy to report that again this year chemistry has experienced sustainable growth in our graduate program with the matriculation of 17 new first year graduate students bring our departmental graduate student population to about 120 and our total researchers to over 150.

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 do so now 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 the 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 events, including the infamous Gates Happy Hour, and drop by our next ACS Alumni Social Hour to be held at the Philadelphia ACS National Meeting in August 2012.

Meliora and best wishes to all for a successful and happy year in 2011-2012.

Sincerely,



Bob Boeckman, Jr.

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