

Aquinas College Chemistry Department

Alumni Newsletter 2009

Greetings! We publish this annual newsletter to stay in touch with all our alumni, especially those of you who have not been back to campus recently. The chemistry department currently occupies the second floor of Albertus Hall. Whenever you are in the neighborhood, please stop in to see us!

Summer Research 2009

Caylee Fias ('11) is the student researcher working with Dr. Katrina Hartman on a project involving biodiesel fuels. The emphasis will not be on the biodiesel itself but on the identification and re-use of the by-products. The trans-esterification of triglycerides to methyl esters is fairly straight-forward. However the glycerol and other material that accumulates as by-products are not as well understood and usually discarded or sold for composting. A better understand of these by-products is being sought. The project is funded through a Mohler-Thompson Summer research grant for science and math students at Aquinas.

Congratulations to our 2008-2009 Graduates!

Tien Ho	- graduate school, University of Toledo
Adrian Morales	- seeking position
Amanda Shuman	- Cutco Cutlery
James Wahmhoff, Jr.	- graduate school
Jon Wierzbicki	- seeking position

Alumni Profile:

After graduating from Aquinas, James V. Crivello earned his Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Notre Dame. He worked for 22 years at the General Electric Corporate R&D Center. In 1980, he was elected a Coolidge Fellow and spent 1986-1987 as a visiting professor at the University of Mainz in Germany. Since 1988, he has been a faculty member at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In 2007, he was elected a fellow of the American Chemical Society Division of Polymeric Materials: Science and Engineering. He is widely recognized for inventing some of the world's most advanced polymers. He has over 150 articles published and was recently awarded the 2009 Herman F. Mark Senior Scholar Award by the Polymer Chemistry Division of the American Chemical Society. His e-mail address is crivej@rpi.edu.

Annual Events

Benzene Banquet—29 October 2008; St. Albert's Day—12 November 2008;
Poje Banquet—19 April 2009; General Chemistry Poster Session—29 April 2009

Instrument Purchases

Thanks to generous donations made to the Science Initiative (see below), the department was able to purchase a new Horiba/Jobin Yvon Fluoromax-4 spectrometer. This instrument, installed in February, replaces a much older fluorescence spectrometer and will be used routinely in several courses.

2008-2009 Faculty Activities

Li-Heng Chen - became involved with the Green Chemistry Education Network at Grand Valley State University that links educators and fosters curricular development in higher education. He continues to advise our ACS Student Affiliates chapter.

Sr. Katrina Hartman - received the Aquinas Mohler-Thompson research grant for the summer of 2009. She has also been working on revamping the lab exercises for Organic II as well as Biochemistry.

Elizabeth Jensen - presented a research poster at the Central Regional ACS meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, with student Molly Soper ('10). This spring, she was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor.

Recent Alumni News: John Morris ('91) received the Clifford Faculty Service Award and the Viers Teaching Award at Virginia Tech; Nathan Kaiser ('02) received his PhD and is a postdoc at Florida State University; Josh Uzarski ('03) received his PhD and is a postdoc at the National Academies; Kerry Lucas ('03) received her PhD and is a postdoc at Doane College in Nebraska.

The Aquinas College Science Initiative

This two-part project was begun in 2003 to increase financial support for the science departments and to improve the science curriculum at Aquinas. We appreciate input from our alumni, based on your experiences after graduation. How did your Aquinas education help you pursue your career goals? What were the strengths and weaknesses of your education?

Has your address changed? Did you change jobs, get married, have children, or retire?

Do you know someone who should be added to our mailing list? Send your news and comments to Sr. Katrina Hartman, hartmkat@aquinas.edu or

1607 Robinson Road SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506!

Visit us on the Web!

<http://www.aquinas.edu/chemistry>