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 2014

Lindsay Armstrong (‘16) and Dr. Jonathan Fritz are working to develop conditions that would allow direct arylation reactions of simple aryl halides to be run in “under air” conditions. Suzuki-Miyaura cross-coupling reactions have found widespread use in carbon-carbon bond formation. Direct arylations offer an inherently greener alternative to Suzuki-Miyaura cross-couplings for the synthesis of the (hetero)biaryl scaffold. However, several challenges currently limit the feasibility of using direct arylation as a general synthetic strategy. This research strives to make this tool more accessible to the synthetic community.

Nick Pierce (‘16) and Dr. Tim Henshaw are studying a protein from *B. pertussis*, the causative agent of whooping cough. This protein has no identified function, but seems to be closely related to another family of proteins which initiate the biodegradative pathway of the widely used herbicide, 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D). The amino acid sequence of the *B. pertussis* protein will be manipulated in hopes of mimicking this biodegradative activity.

Both of these projects are funded through Mohler-Thompson summer research grants for science and math students at Aquinas.

Congratulations to Chemistry Lab Coordinator Kari Zeller on her recent marriage to Richard McCluskey of the Aquinas Geography department!

Join the Aquinas College Chemistry Alumni group on LinkedIn!
(http://www.linkedin.com)
Search groups for “Aquinas College Chemistry Alumni” or request an invitation from jenseeli@aquinas.edu
2013-2014 Faculty Activities

Li-Heng Chen — After Sr. Katrina's retirement, I picked up two of her classes this year: General, Organic, and Biochemistry in the Fall and Preliminary Chemistry in the Spring. I broke my wrist in February. Dr. Jensen suggested it was from 'skateboarding practice' which won me more sympathy than stepping on the ice. In addition, when I had the first surgery in my life, they gave me 'Michael Jackson's drug', as a result, I could not wait to show off his dancing steps.

Jonathan Fritz - This year we welcomed a new addition to the Fritz family! Hazel Katherine was born April 12th 2014. I continued teaching organic chemistry and general chemistry labs. I also taught environmental chemistry for the first time.

Timothy Henshaw — I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my first year at Aquinas. My first time teaching the biochem class went off (almost) without a hitch, and I look forward to teaching it again. I also had a chance to take the nursing students through similar material. I always enjoy watching students as they see how chemistry and life intersect.

Elizabeth Jensen — I continue to advise the Aquinas Chemistry Society and traveled with them to the ACS National meeting in Dallas this spring. I contributed a chapter to *Developing and Maintaining a Successful Undergraduate Research Program*, published by the ACS.

Congratulations to our 2013-2014 seniors!

Emily Hall (Env. Sci.) seeking position
Alvaro Romero-Gibu (Env. Sci.) pursuing Master of Sustainable Business
Marissa Saladin grad school at Penn State University
Jenny Vyskocil pharmacy school at Rochester University
Andy Zahrt grad school at U. Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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 Dr. Elizabeth Jensen at jenseeli@aquinas.edu or 1607 Robinson Road SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506!

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