



The Schlieren

Fall 2007

NEWS

Chemistry graduate student William Spencer, senior biochemistry major Jessica Smith, and senior chemistry major Brett Granger from the Tina Collison lab, along with Bioinformatics graduate student Amanda (Sitterly) Strassner, junior biochemistry major Jackie Hill, and sophomore biochemistry major Josh Thomson from the O'Handley lab accompanied Dr. O'Handley to the Fall Meeting of the ACS in Boston at the end of August. There was much science and seafood to be had, and a spontaneous visit to Harvard gave the students an opportunity to meet one of the meeting's speakers (Dr. Greg Verdine) on his turf....the students thought that was very cool.

Biochemistry majors Julian Ramos and Liz Ransey are both scholars in the American Chemical Society's Scholars Program. Julian is a senior and is busy studying for GRE's and applying to graduate programs in Biochemistry. Liz is a junior still exploring the vast array of options open to her.

Third year biochemistry major Jackie Hill was part of the first place Human-Powered Vehicle Team at the 14th annual Great Moonbuggy Race at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville Alabama. Way to go Jackie.

Josh Thomson, a second year biochemistry major, just successfully completed his first marathon! He ran the Rochester Marathon on Sunday September 16th in just under 3 and 1/2 hours, and came in first in his age group. Way to go Josh.

Chemistry was again very well represented at the annual Undergraduate Research Symposium 2007. Dr. Destler gave the opening address and the keynote address was given by an alumni of the chemistry department : Dr. Donna A. Chen. Dr. Chen is associate professor at the University of South Carolina and spoke about her research on surface chemistry on supported metal nanoparticles.

If you missed our Maize Maze event during week 6, stay tuned and plan to get involved with our next event....Laser Tag!

Word In The Hood

Liz Ransey BS '09

Biochemistry

Mentor: Dr. Yun-Ru Chen

Research:

Degrading amyloid beta fibrils of Alzheimer's disease

Liz did her research in Taipei, Taiwan over the summer of 2007 through a program at Texas A&M. She worked at the Academia Sinica's Genomics Research Center with amyloid beta peptides, which are cleaved from a protein called APP. Once these peptides are outside of the cell, they gather into structures called fibrils. These fibrils affect kinases, which in turn affect microtubules in the axon causing them to die. When these axons die, the transport of food and nutrients becomes inhibited. Research in this field may help to someday find a cure for Alzheimer's disease in humans.

Liz did admit that she chose Taiwan because their program was the first to accept her, but she insists that it was a great choice in the end. She enjoyed the independence given to her in her research lab, and above all relished the opportunity to be submerged into such a "different world". She enjoyed the challenge of adapting to Taiwan's culture and lifestyle.

If you would like to participate in a program like Liz's, search online and you will find hundreds! Application deadlines are usually December through March, so be sure to start looking into your options now.

Currently Liz is working in Dr. Suzanne O'Handley's research lab with characterizing Rv3908 protein. She wishes to do more international research in the future.

—Lisa Hawver BS '08



Liz Ransey B.S. 2008

Liz Ransey in Taiwan, Summer 2007



Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Jeremy Cody



Welcome Dr. Cody, RIT's new organic professor. Dr. Cody, a Rochester native, originally started as a biology major at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Deciding that biology was too broad a field, he graduated with a degree in biochemistry. His undergraduate research included isolating enzymes as well as doing some organic research. His favorite memories at IUP involve random experiments he performed for fun, including placing a rose into a beaker filled with benzene. Sadly, the only reaction the flower underwent was to dry out, as is the normal course after a flower is clipped. Dr. Cody then headed to the University of Rochester to pursue his Ph.D. in organic chemistry. Why organic and not biochemistry? He wanted to understand the chemical interactions at the molecular level. While at the University of Rochester, Dr. Cody met one of our other organic professors, Dr. Christina Collison, as their research was in the same field.

Upon graduation, Dr. Cody worked at AMRI, a contract research organization that designs, prepares, and makes molecules for bio-tech and pharmaceutical companies. Working in chemical development he learned about bringing drugs to market and the difficulties associated with running reactions on kilogram scale compared to working with milligram and gram quantities. However, his ultimate goal was to teach. When the opportunity at RIT arose, Dr. Cody decided to switch from industry to academia.

Dr. Cody is settled in the Rochester area, with his wife and two adorable daughters. Aside from being a father, husband, and professor, Dr. Cody enjoys playing indoor soccer (specifically goalie) and Fantasy Football. Texas Hold-em Poker is also an activity that he enjoys. Dr. Cody is also an advisor for ChemClub.

Stop by room 08-3272 and meet Dr. Cody today!

—Stephanie Dorn BS '08

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Donna Chen BS '92 received her Ph.D. in physical chemistry from Harvard University in 1997 and spent two years as a postdoctoral associate at Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore. In 1999, she joined the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, and is currently an Associate Professor. Her research program has focused on molecular-level understanding of chemical reactions that occur on metal, semiconductor and oxide surfaces.

Erik Kuckhoff MS '84 has held positions at the Dow Chemical Company in Technical Service and Development and with Cytec Industries in Marketing Management, Mergers and Acquisitions, and eventually became the VP of Global Marketing, Sales and Technology. In January of 2002 he created his own company Polystar.

Roger B. Kuntz, BS '71 was employed as a polymer chemist by the Eastman Kodak Company until 1975 and was responsible for the development of many of the organic products that were employed in the manufacture of cameras, projectors, photocopiers, and photofinishing machines by Kodak during the '70s and '80s. He received his D.V.M. degree from Cornell University in 1979 and since that time has been engaged in the practice of veterinary medicine and surgery.

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