



# Chemistry Connections

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A newsletter from the Chemistry Department  
at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

## Visit the University

- ☞ Junior and senior high school students who are interested in visiting Bloomsburg University can call the Admissions Office at 570-389-4316 to schedule an appointment. Go to [www.bloomu.edu/prospective](http://www.bloomu.edu/prospective) for more information.
- ☞ The next two open house programs will be March 25, and for high school juniors only on April 8.
- ☞ Visit the Chemistry department website for more information about us: <http://department.bloomu.edu/chem/Default.htm>

## New Additions

- ☞ Dr. Cindy Kepler is on maternity leave this academic year as she enjoys time off with her new daughter, Annabelle Lee, born in June.
- ☞ Dr. Hawrelak and his wife Kara are the proud parents of a baby boy, Baden Eliot, born in November.



## New Hartline Science Center Wing Dedicated

### Laboratories Open for Students

The new Hartline Science Center wing was dedicated recently in a ceremony attended by University administrators, Board of Trustee members, faculty, government representatives and town officials. This addition houses classrooms, offices and laboratories for the College of Science and Technology.

For the B.U. Chemistry department, it means the addition of new organic and biochemistry labs, as well as two research labs, which allow students to conduct research alongside professors. There is a total of nine two-person hoods in the new organic lab, ensuring that each student has a modern working space. The organic lab is also fully



Students get hands-on experience in the new organic laboratory at Bloomsburg University

equipped with two dedicated, brand new, infrared spectrometers for teaching purposes and hands-on use by students.

## Chemistry Club Fundraiser Helps Katrina Victims

The Chemistry Club recently raised funds for Hurricane Katrina relief by sending professors into a dunk tank in front of the Warren Student Services Center.

Half of the proceeds from the event were earmarked for the American Red Cross/Hurricane Katrina Fund; the rest will benefit the chemistry club, said Eric Hawrelak, assistant professor of chemistry and the club's advisor.

Chemistry professors took half-hour shifts in the dunk tank, helping to raise \$300.

Hawrelak said members of the chemistry club and the faculty members sponsored the event to have fun while raising money for hurricane victims. "We are showing that BU cares about the community," he said.



Dr. Zimmerman made quite a "splash" with his socks!

## Faculty Profile



Dr. John Morgan

The B.U. Chemistry department is fortunate to have a new faculty member who has first-hand knowledge of the research that won the 2005 Nobel Prize in chemistry. Dr. John Morgan joined the chemistry department this fall, after completing his post-doctoral work at the University of Maryland. He was a graduate student at the California Institute of Technology for five years, where he worked with Dr. Robert Grubbs, a 2005 Nobel laureate. Dr. Grubbs research focused on creating compounds that make reactions faster and more effective, to which Dr.

Morgan contributed six papers and five patents.

An organic chemist, Dr. Morgan is teaching Organic 1 and Organic 2 this year, as well as guiding students in research work. Having earned his B.S. at Haverford College in Haverford, PA, Dr. Morgan feels very comfortable teaching at a Pennsylvania university.

He and his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Gernhardt, live in Edwardsville, where Liz has a family medical practice.

## Chemistry Major Wins 1st Place at Maryland Conference

Senior Christopher DeVore earned the first place award for his division in analytical chemistry at the 8th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, held at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County. He earned the award for his presentation and oral defense of "Determination by HPLC of the Amount of Caffeine Lost in Coffee Beans Due to the Roasting Process." DeVore, advised by Christopher Hallen and Toni Trumbo Bell, is a graduate of Muncy High School. He is one of B.U.'s non-traditional students, who has to juggle work and a family, as well as a full course load.



Senior chemistry major Chris Devore

Other students who presented research at the symposium on October 15 were: Adam Detweiler and Colleen Small with their adviser Mark Tapsak; Sarah Leshinski with her adviser Eric Hawrelak; and Ronald Deeter with his advisers, Dr. Glenn S. Gerhard of the Janet Weis Research Center and Chris Hallen from B.U.

Colleen Small and Sarah Leshinski both entered research as chemistry novices and had to learn almost everything from scratch. Due to their hard work and large capacity for

learning, both gave very professional and commendable presentations at the symposium. We are delighted to have beginning students take an active interest in the chemical sciences.

In addition, Jesse Calkins of Central Columbia Area High School, with his advisor Dr. Bell, presented research. Jesse performed research with Dr. Bell over the summer after having only one year of high school chemistry at Central Columbia Area High School. This is a rarity and Jesse is to be commended on his work and excellent presentation at the symposium.

## ALUMNI NEWS

Michael Bacica, a B.U. alumnus, recently sent an e-mail to the Chemistry Department to let us know what he's doing. Michael graduated with a BS in Chemistry in 1996 and went on to the University of Houston to obtain a Masters degree. He worked at IDEC Pharmaceuticals in San Diego for five years, doing formulation development for oncology products.

Since 2004, Michael has worked as an analytical chemist at Favril, Inc., where they are currently in phase 3 of research for a personalized cancer vaccine.

## Forensics Option Explored

Blountsburg University Chemistry department is exploring the possibility of adding a Forensics Chemistry option to the Chemistry curriculum. This option would allow students to earn a BS in Chemistry, but at the same time take courses to aid them in seeking a career in the forensic science field. An experimental course "Introduction to Forensic Science" will be offered Fall of 2006.

