

# Department of Chemistry, Gettysburg College

## ALUMNI NEWSLETTER 2017–2018 AY

### Faculty and Staff

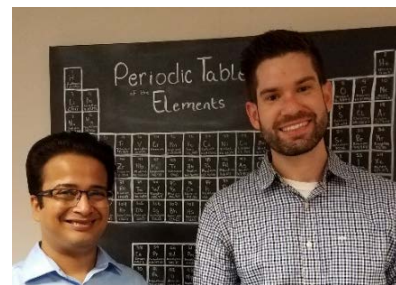
Sally Abma  
Mary Jo Boylan  
Katherine Buettner  
Shelli Frey  
Timothy Funk, Chair  
Robert Garrity  
Lisa Gregory  
Roger Heckman  
Donald Jameson  
Jeremy Kuhar  
Koren Lipsett  
James Poppiti  
Suvrajit Sengupta  
Gregory Suryn  
Anthony Thoman  
Lucas Thompson  
Michael Wedlock  
Lea Czar,  
Administrative Assistant

### The Year in the Chemistry Department

The 2017–2018 academic year was my first as chair and, like all years, was a busy one. In May 2018, eleven Chemistry majors and fourteen BMB majors completed their degrees and ten students worked with three faculty members over the summer of 2018 on various research projects. Since our last Newsletter, we hosted two Musselman Visiting Scientists, too. You can find out more information about our recent graduates, our MVS speakers, and student/faculty research elsewhere in this newsletter!

The Chemistry Department underwent two extensive searches for new faculty and finally selected **Prof. Suvrajit Sengupta** and **Prof. Greg Suryn**, who both began teaching at Gettysburg College in the 2018 fall semester. More information about our new department members is in the Staff Update section.

Last year also marked the final year of teaching for **Prof. Bill Parker** who taught Chemistry at the College for 51 years and retired in May 2018. On Homecoming Weekend in September 2018, the Chemistry Department hosted a reception honoring Prof. Parker and **Prof. Joe Grzybowski**, another recent retiree. Nearly 100 former students and friends gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of these two who served as pillars of Gettysburg College's chemistry program for a combined 88 years!



*New chemistry Department Faculty members, Prof. Suvrajit Sengupta and Gregory Suryn*



*Guests at a Chemistry Department reception listen as Chair Tim Funk describes the lasting impact of retirees Joe Grzybowski and Bill Parker on the department over their many years of service.*

The College established a fund in honor of Prof. Parker and Prof. Grzybowski to support student/faculty research in the Chemistry Department. We are pleased to note that the fund quickly reached endowment status, which means earnings from your donations will benefit generations of future chemistry students at Gettysburg. If you are interested in supporting this fund, please see the box below. – **Prof. Timothy Funk '00, Chair and Associate Professor of Chemistry**

We would like you to know that gifts to the **Chemistry Special Gifts Fund** or to the **Parker-Grzybowski Fund** directly benefit Chemistry Department programs and students. Gifts designated for the Chemistry Department *without a specified fund* go to the Gettysburg Fund, supporting ongoing, college-wide expenses. If you would like the Chemistry Department to have direct access to your donation, please make a note on your donation indicating “**Chemistry Special Gifts**” or “**Parker-Grzybowski Fund**”.

If you choose to make an on-line donation, you can do so [here](#) or by going to the Gettysburg College homepage and clicking on “Make a Gift”. In the Designations portion of the on-line form, select “Other or multiple designations”. Slide the bar to the right of the pop-up down to the bottom and select “Other Fund(s)” and hit the Continue button. In the box under “Please Specify”, type the fund name (e.g. **Chemistry Special Gifts Fund** or **Parker-Grzybowski Fund**).

**We're trying something new this year!** We emailed the Chemistry Department Alumni Newsletter to almost everyone. You received a paper copy only if we don't have your email address or if you requested no emails from the College. If you received a paper copy but would prefer an electronic version in future years (or if you received an electronic newsletter but would prefer to receive a paper copy), please let us know by emailing Lea Czar at [lczar@gettysburg.edu](mailto:lczar@gettysburg.edu), writing to the Chemistry Department at Campus Box 393, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA 17325 or calling us at 717-337-6252.

## Class of 2018

Eleven senior chemistry majors and fourteen senior biochemistry/molecular biology (BMB) majors completed their undergraduate work in the past year. Twenty graduates received the B.S. degree. Eleven seniors were awarded Honors in their major, seven were elected to Phi Beta Kappa, six graduated *summa cum laude*, two *magna cum laude*, and five *cum laude*. Eight are currently pursuing graduate work and one is studying in Germany with a Fulbright.

Austin D. Blair (Silver Spring, MD) is a quality control chemist at Supernus, and Siyan Chen (Mianyang, China), a *cum laude* graduate, is studying engineering at Washington University of St. Louis. Priscilla R. Ditren (New York, NY) is studying engineering at Columbia University, while Emily E. Harrison (Hempstead, MD), a *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa graduate and the Class Valedictorian, is enrolled in a Chemistry Ph.D. program at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Sophia J. Johnston (Birmingham, AL) is seeking employment as is Emily R. Lutz (Audubon, NJ). Anna E. Martin (Media, PA) is working for Vanguard and Jessie E. Martin (Rockville, MD), a *cum laude graduate*, is teaching high school chemistry at St. Anselm's Abbey School in Washington, DC. Fontaine E. McFeaters (Grove City, PA) is looking for work. Aphra V. Murray (Rome, Italy), a *cum laude* graduate and the Chemistry Banner Carrier at Commencement, has enrolled at Georgetown University in a Chemistry Ph.D. program, and Tyler C. Sadowski (Manchester, MD) is working for Kraft-Heinz.

BMB graduate Alex Agesen Guffey (Manheim, PA), a *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa and 12/17 graduate is enrolled in graduate school at Drexel. Sarah J. Brantley (Woodstock, MD), a *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa graduate, is attending Johns Hopkins graduate school and Elizabeth A. Burton (Wilmington, DE), a *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa Graduate is enrolled at Penn. Mikaela C. Collins (Attelboro, MA) and Emily L. Garrigan (Springdale, PA) are planning their futures. Richard J. Gawel (Drums, PA), a *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa graduate, is working as a medical scribe and applying to medical school. Jennifer A. Giannini (Schwenksville, PA), a *cum laude* graduate and the BMB Banner Carrier at Commencement, is a Fulbright Scholar in Germany before attending graduate school next year at UNC Chapel Hill. Ysabelle A. Hulet (Churchville, MD), a *cum laude* graduate is seeking employment, and Junyuan (Bruce) Jiang (Beijing, China), a 12/17 graduate, is working in the financial world. Morgan L. McManus (Downingtown, PA) is studying Genetic Counseling at Arcadia University, and Tristan M. Smiley (Auburn, NH) is looking for work. Madison S. Strine (York, PA), a *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa graduate, is attending Yale University, and Breanna M. Titchen (Cranberry, PA), a *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa graduate, is attending Harvard. Zoe C. Yeoh (Salem, CT), a *magna cum laude* graduate, is a technician at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and plans on attending graduate school next academic year.

Departmental Honors in Chemistry were awarded to Siyan Chen, Emily Harrison, and Aphra Murray. Sarah Brantley, Beth Burton, Rich Gawel, Jenny Giannini, Alex Agesen Guffey, Maddi Strine, Breanna Titchen, and Zoe Yeoh received BMB Honors.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Section of the American Chemical Society honored Emily Harrison this past spring as the outstanding senior chemistry major. In addition, Emily received the Stine Chemistry Prize, the Society for Analytical Chemists of Pittsburgh College Chemistry Award, the ACS 2018 Organic Chemistry Award, the 2017 ACS Inorganic Award, the 2016 Organic Award, the 2016 ACS Polymer Division Award for Achievement in Organic Chemistry, the 2015 Chemical Rubber Company Freshman Achievement Award and the 2018 Organic Chemistry Laboratory Assistant Award. Aphra Murray earned the 2018 ACS Inorganic Award.

Maddi Strine and Rich Gawel shared the 2018 Biochemistry/Molecular Biology Award. Rich was also the recipient of the John B. Zinn Chemistry Research Award, the 2017 Glenn S. Weiland Summer Research Scholarship, and the 2017 Laboratory Assistant Award. Zoe Yeoh received the 2018 General Chemistry Laboratory Assistant Award, and Alex Agesen Guffey earned the 2015 Sceptical Chymists Achievement Award.

## Staff Update

During the 2017–2018 academic year, we filled two full-time faculty positions: a tenure-track position opened by the retirement of Prof. Bill Parker and a new lecturer position to help ease the enrollment pressures in our General and Organic Chemistry courses. **Prof. Suvrajit (Suv) Sengupta** is our new tenure-track faculty member, and **Prof. Greg Suryin** is our new lecturer. Prof. Sengupta, originally from Kolkata, India, earned his Ph.D. at Yale University (and even overlapped with Prof. Kate Buettner!). He joins us after completing post-doctoral research at the University of California, Irvine. At Gettysburg, he and his students will build specialized equipment to study gas hydrates and also use NMR spectroscopy to study proteins involved in the regulation of water in cells. Prof. Sengupta teaches Physical and General Chemistry classes and labs. Prof. Suryin, a mountain-biking native of Colorado, earned his Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine, in 2017. During the 2017–2018 academic year, he was a Visiting Assistant Professor at Whitman College, where he taught General Chemistry lab and Organic Chemistry lecture and lab. At Gettysburg College, Prof. Suryin teaches General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry lectures and labs. Additionally, he will take on the responsibility of coordinating the General Chemistry laboratories. We're happy they have joined us!

## Musselman Visiting Scientists

In March 2018, the Chemistry Department was honored to host **Prof. Omar M. Yaghi**, the James and Neeltje Tretter Chair Professor of Chemistry at the University of California Berkeley, as our 39th Musselman Visiting Scientist. Prof. Yaghi's research spans the fields of inorganic chemistry, materials science, and organic chemistry. Shortly before his lectures at Gettysburg College, he won the prestigious Wolf Prize in Chemistry. He is most known for the discovery and development of Metal Organic Frameworks (MOFs) and Covalent Organic Frameworks (COFs), which are highly structured, porous materials with diverse applications including gaseous fuel storage, CO<sub>2</sub> capture, and catalysts.

Prof. Yaghi's talks centered on reticular chemistry which can be described as the stitching and weaving of molecules. For his general lecture, Prof. Yaghi spoke of his youth in Amman, Jordan and his eventual career path as a chemistry professor in the United States while focusing on the human element in scientific discovery. He discussed his efforts to establish research labs in countries throughout the world, emphasizing the role of science in bringing people together, even those from politically opposed nations or cultures. Prof. Yaghi finished off his series of lectures with technical talks on carbon neutral energy cycles and efforts to harvest water from air.

Six months later, we were very fortunate to have **Prof. Sharon Hammes-Schiffer** deliver our 40<sup>th</sup> Musselman Visiting Scientist lecture series. Prof. Hammes-Schiffer is the John Gamble Kirkwood Professor of Chemistry at Yale University, where she recently moved from the University of Illinois. Among her honors, she is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the American Physical Society, and the Biophysical Society.



*Students with Prof. Omar Yaghi, our 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Musselman Visiting Scientist.*



*Prof. Hammes-Schiffer (left), faculty, and students enjoying the MVS banquet in her honor.*

Prof. Hammes-Schiffer is a computational chemist and works in a wide range of scientific areas. Her public lecture was on the emergence of theoretical chemistry and included anecdotes drawn from her own career. The three technical lectures were on disparate topics that illustrated her scientific diversity: enzymes, solar energy, and proton-coupled electron transfer in catalysts. The broad range of topics Prof. Hammes-Schiffer spoke on gives some indication of how widely she has contributed to the integration of theoretical methods into studies of dynamics throughout chemistry. The importance of collaboration between theory and experiment was a recurring theme throughout her talks. It was exciting to see the many ways that computational chemistry has revolutionized the field of chemistry in recent years and it was especially exciting to hear about these developments from someone who has played such a key role in bringing them into fruition.

The Musselman Visiting Scientist for the 2019–2020 academic year will be **Prof. Helen Blackwell**, an organic chemist from the University of Wisconsin. Prof. Blackwell will be on campus from November 20<sup>th</sup> through November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019.

## Sceptical Chymists

The Sceptical Chymists had another busy year of lectures, activities, and social events under the guidance of senior **Fontaine McFeaters**.

Our first speaker of the year was **Prof. Kallie Willets** from Temple University. Prof. Willets spoke of her work on understanding interfaces on a nanoscale. **Chris Hoffman '07** returned to campus from the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab to talk about the work done at the lab, ranging from research on Kevlar to flexible batteries to ways to prevent corrosion. Our lecture



series in the fall finished off with **Prof. Ann Valentine** also from Temple University who talked about her efforts to understand the possible roles of titanium in biological systems.

The spring semester kicked off with a talk from **Prof. Jessica Anna** from the University of Pennsylvania. Prof. Anna spoke about her work using two photon spectroscopy to understand electron transfer. Our next seminar saw **Peggy Sanchez** from Picatinny Arsenal speak about her work on explosives chemistry, and the bioremediation of explosives for the army. Finally, **Prof. Jennifer Morford** from Franklin and Marshall finished our Scep Chym lecture series with a discussion on biogeochemistry.

Outside of the lecture hall, the Sceptical Chymist executive board was busy planning social activities and hands-on demonstrations that successfully increased attendance at all of our club events. Our chymists used their chemical know how to engage students by making liquid nitrogen ice cream, magnetic slime and bouncy balls. A club picnic celebrated the end of the 2017-2018 academic year. The picnic included the Sceptical Chymists' distribution of the year's student awards, induction of more than 15 new members, and election of new officers for the upcoming 2018-2019 academic year. This year we added mock seminars to the event, which involved faculty using slides they had never seen before (made by the seniors) to give seminars on unknown, non-scientific topics. Everyone had a great time!

If you would like to see pictures from the events or just keep up with the Sceptical Chymists' events and activities, please visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/scepticalchymist](http://www.facebook.com/scepticalchymist).

### Other Seminars

In addition to our Scep Chym lecture series, the BMB program brought in a number of exciting lecturers. The first talk was **Dr. Jon Palmer** from the University of Wisconsin, Madison where he talked about his studies of the white-nose fungus that is affecting bats across North America. The second talk brought **Prof. Heidi Hehnly** from SUNY Upstate to talk about her work on the microtubule-organizing center and its role in cytoskeletal dynamics. In March, **Dr. Cavin Ward-Caviness** from the EPA came and discussed his work on using big data to understand the molecular mechanisms of environmental exposures and disease. Our last BMB seminar saw **Prof. Scott Brewer** from Franklin and Marshall came to talk about his work incorporating unnatural amino acids into proteins to understand their structure.

Through the X-SIG program, the department also hosted **Prof. Larry Que** from the University of Minnesota. Prof. Que gave two lectures on his work making model complexes of non-heme iron systems in biology, and spoke to students in the inorganic chemistry course about his experiences as a bioinorganic chemist.

**Dr. Dennis Bleile '72** is the Senior Director of Research and Development at Abaxis, an *in vitro* diagnostics company in the San Francisco Bay area. Dennis reconnected with the Chemistry Department in the fall of 2017 and came back in September 2018 for the Parker/Grzybowski reception. We were fortunate that he stayed a few extra days to present a series of talks about diagnostic testing and his experiences in the industry.

### 2018 Summer Research Students and Faculty



*Front Row: Evan Bertonazzi, Alex Paredes*  
*Second Row: Amelia Hou, Olivia Peduzzi, Melanie Hempel, Prof. Tim Funk*  
*Third Row: Sarah Kotchey, Shelby Nicolau, Katie Madore*  
*Back Row: Prof. Kate Buettner, Claire Benstead, Tracy Tang, Prof. Luke Thompson*

## Student/Faculty Research 2017-18

In the NanoLab, the 2017-2018 academic year started off with the addition of two new members in the group. **Siyan Chen** ('18 Chem) and **Claire Benstead** ('20 Chem and Anthropology) joined the group and started projects on the quantification of epicatechin in brewed cocoa and the assembly of gold nanorods, respectively. These two joined returning students **Rich Gawel** ('18 BMB), **Fontaine McFeaters** ('18 Chem), **Aphra Murray** ('18 Chem), and **Shelby Nicolau** ('20 Chem). The summer of 2018 saw the addition of **Sarah Kotchey** ('21 Chem) to the group to pick up where Aphra left off with studying the electrostatics of polyelectrolyte coated gold nanorods.

**Prof. Frey** was on a full year sabbatical during the 2017-2018 academic year that was interrupted by a serious car accident that necessitated four months of time out of the lab (all broken bones are fully healed!). In late February, Prof. Frey resumed her research sabbatical in Potsdam, Germany working in the lab of Dr. Prof. Rumiana Dimova (Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces) where she worked on determining the effect of huntingtin peptide binding on model cell membranes. This involved learning some new techniques such as fluctuation analysis to measure the bending rigidity of the membrane and also imaging lipid vesicles in microfluidic chips using a confocal microscope to follow the peptide binding processes in real time. Additionally, Prof. Frey started a collaboration with another visitor to the Dimova lab, Hammad Faizi (in Prof. Vlahovska's lab at Northwestern), to study how charge affects the material properties of the cell membrane; this project is her current focus back at Gettysburg.

**Prof. Buettner's** lab continued their work on developing de novo proteins to function as titanium and vanadium enzymes, **Alex Paredes** ('20 BMB) and **Olivia Peduzzi** ('20 Chem), continued in the lab, and we also added a new member, **Katie Madore** ('20 BMB). Olivia gave a talk at ISCC in April on her progress in confirming vanadium binding to the proteins we have developed in our lab, and together, Alex, Katie, and Olivia presented a poster at the Penn State Metallobiochemistry Symposium in June. They made great progress over the summer, and Katie and Alex have continued work in the lab this semester while Olivia is abroad in Nantes, France for the fall.



*Summer 2018 Chemistry Department Kayak Trip*  
*First row: Olivia Peduzzi, Tim Funk, Melanie Hempel, Katie Madore, Tracy Tang*  
*Second row: Sarah Kotchey, Shelby Nicolau*  
*Third row: Amelia Hou, Evan Bertonazzi, Claire Benstead, Luke Thompson, Kate Buettner, Alex Paredes*

During the past academic year in the Lipsett Genomics Lab, **Celine Erkey** ('19 Chem) and **Haoju (Orange) Li** (Dec '18 Chem) continued their studies from Summer 2017. Celine focused on deafness in horses and Orange evaluated the exon sequences of prolactin related genes (PRL and PRLR) as well as the FGF5 and FGFR1 genes as they correlated to abnormal growth in cattle. They both submitted a sample of DNA from their pedigrees to Penn State Hershey to obtain whole genome sequence (WGS) for future analysis. This summer, **Prof. Lipsett** tested out a new bionic knee, so the research lab was a bit quiet as they waited for the WGS data. At publication time, Celine and Orange are becoming masters in bioinformatics and Linux code while they begin the task of analyzing about 500 GB of sequence data!

The Spring 2018 edition of Gettysburg College's alumni magazine featured the [research](#) of Prof. Lipsett and her students using horses to study deafness in humans.

In **Prof. Funk's** lab, explorations of the catalytic reactivities of (cyclopentadienone)iron carbonyl compounds continued. **Xintong (Amelia) Hou** (Dec '18 Chem) and **Emily Harrison** ('18 Chem) synthesized a few new catalysts over the course of the year, and Emily ran some reactions that were included in a publication in the spring. During the spring 2018 semester, **Melanie Hempel** ('20 BMB) and **Evan Bertonazzi** ('20 Chem) joined the lab and worked with Amelia and Emily on their projects. Amelia, Melanie, and Evan were joined over the summer of 2018 by **Yidan (Tracy) Tang** ('19 Chem and CS), who had also done research in the group during the summer of 2016. Amelia and Evan synthesized a class of iron compounds containing electron-donating

and electron-withdrawing groups on the cyclopentadienone ligand (thanks to Emily for making one before she graduated, too) and explored their reactivities in carbonyl transfer reductions and alcohol transfer dehydrogenations. Melanie discovered that furfural, a compound synthesized in one step from agricultural waste, was an excellent terminal oxidant in our transfer dehydrogenations, and Tracy continued to work on the oxidative lactonization of diols. Amelia, Tracy, and Melanie are continuing their projects during the fall 2018 semester, and **Kim McCaskey** ('20 Chem) has been working with Tracy to synthesize a few more diols for her project.

### **Faculty/Student Publications, Presentations, Grants and Awards 2017-18**

**Prof. Luke Thompson** joined **Prof. Kurt Andresen** in presenting a talk, entitled “*Interdisciplinary work turns into science gold: nanoparticles, polymer wrapping, and publishing with students*”, at the Gettysburg College Friday Faculty Lunch (April 2018). Prof. Thompson also gave a poster presentation entitled, “*Secondary structure transitions in electrostatically adsorbed poly-L-lysine as an approach for gold nanorod assembly*”, at the Noble Metal Nanoparticles Gordon Research Conference in South Hadley, MA (June 2018). In March, **Rich Gawel** ('18 BMB), **Fontaine McFeaters** ('18 Chem), **Aphra Murray** ('18 Chem), and **Siyan Chen** ('18 Chem) traveled with Prof. Thompson and other members of the department to the ACS national meeting in New Orleans to present posters on their work ranging from quantifying polyelectrolyte adsorption to the pH mediated assembly of gold nanorods. In April, Rich presented his work at the Intercollegiate Student Chemists Convention (ISCC) hosted by Elizabethtown College where he won 1st place in analytical session for his work on polymeric modifications of gold nanoparticles for environmental toxicology studies. Rich also won 1st place in 2017 at ISCC.

**Prof. Jameson** gave an invited talk at the spring ACS meeting in New Orleans in a symposium honoring Prof. Andy Borovik (UCI), who won the A. F. Cotton Award in Synthetic Inorganic Chemistry. His talk was titled “*Troger’s base: a versatile platform for supramolecular chemistry.*”

**Prof. Buettner** and her group had two poster presentations. The first was at the American Chemical Society meeting in New Orleans, LA (March 2018), and the second was at the Pennsylvania State University Frontiers in Metallobiochemistry Symposium (June 2018). Both were titled “*Towards new titanium and vanadium enzymes.*”

**Prof. Shelli Frey** and **Prof. Luke Thompson** secured a grant of \$150,000 from the George I. Alden Trust for the acquisition of an atomic force microscope (AFM) for research and training of undergraduates at Gettysburg College. As part of this grant, half of the existing Science Center stockroom will be renovated into an Imaging Suite and will house the AFM alongside two existing shared instruments, a transmission electron microscope and a fluorescence microscope.

**Prof. Frey** had five presentations, two of which were talks and three posters. At the Biophysical Society Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA (February 2018), Prof. Frey presented two posters, “*Enhanced ordering in monolayers containing glycosphingolipids: impact of carbohydrate structure*” and “*Lateral phase behavior of skin lipids.*” During her sabbatical in Germany in March 2018, Prof. Frey gave an invited lecture in the Theory & Bio-Systems Seminar Series at the Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces titled “*Interaction of Huntingtin with model cell membranes.*” In June 2018, she also attended the Biointerface Science Gordon Research Conference: Surfaces and Compartments in Biology and Medicine in Lucca, Italy and presented a poster, “*The role of membrane composition in the interaction of polyglutamine peptides with lipid membranes,*” which was chosen from ~90 posters to be a “late breaking topic talk” of the same name on the last day of the conference.

**Prof. Tim Funk** published “*Synthesis and catalytic activity of (3,4-diphenylcyclopentadienone)iron tricarbonyl compounds in transfer hydrogenations and dehydrogenations*” in *Organometallics* with student co-authors **Andrew Mahoney** ('17 BMB), **Becky Sponenburg** ('14 Chem), **Kathryn Zimmerman (Fodale)** ('16 Chem), **Daniel Kim** ('12 Chem), and **Emily Harrison** ('18 Chem). This article was also featured in the Undergraduate Research Contributions to Organometallic Chemistry Virtual Issue of *Organometallics*. Emily Harrison presented a poster titled “*Synthesis and evaluation of a (cyclopentadienone)iron tricarbonyl catalyst in oxidative and reductive transformations*” at the ACS meeting in New Orleans in March 2018, and **Xintong (Amelia) Hou** (Dec '18 Chem) gave “*Toward the synthesis of cyclopentadienone iron tricarbonyl compounds with strong electron-withdrawing groups for transfer hydrogenation and dehydrogenation*” as an oral presentation at the Intercollegiate Student Chemists’ Convention at Elizabethtown College in April 2018.



## “John B. Zinn: Professor, Mentor, Friend”

**Prof. Jeanne Scott Robinson '57** was one of the many chemistry students whose lives were touched by **Prof. John B. Zinn** during his 35-year tenure at Gettysburg College. Robinson delved into the College archives and collected anecdotes from other former students to write a book entitled “*John B. Zinn: Professor, Mentor, Friend*”. The book traces Prof. Zinn's academic and personal life from 1905 when he enrolled as a freshman at Gettysburg until his death in 1979. The book includes many pictures of the campus and the Chemistry lab in the early days and then later in Breidenbaugh Hall. Robinson says, “I was fortunate to have access to letters written to and from Zinn, both from the chemistry department files and the Musselman Library's special collections archives. It is fun to read some of the letters which show the great lengths he went to get “his boys” admitted to medical school”.



Prof. Zinn arrived at Gettysburg as permanent department chair in 1924, replacing Dr. Briedenbaugh and remained at the college until he retired in 1959. His years at Gettysburg were a time of enormous changes in the way chemistry was taught, and so this book is also, in some ways, a history of the Chemistry Department during those years.

Prof. Robinson graduated from Gettysburg in 1957, and, at Prof. Zinn's urging, went on to obtain a master's degree and then a Ph.D. in physical chemistry at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She says, “I've taught college chemistry pretty much ever since; my first college class was in 1962 and I taught my last class was just four years ago. Just once during those years did I give a multiple choice test, and I felt that the ghost of Dr. Zinn was wagging his finger at me and saying, ‘That’s not the way we do things.’”

All proceeds from the sale of the book are divided between the Chemistry Department and the library archives. The book is available from [Amazon](#) for \$15. Signed copies are also available directly from Jeanne. You may contact her at [jeanne@theoldbank.net](mailto:jeanne@theoldbank.net).

## News from our Graduates

We enjoy hearing from you so keep those cards, letters and e-mails coming! If you can provide information about your classmates, we like that, too. For those who prefer to correspond electronically, you can find our email addresses through the [departmental web page](#): <http://www.gettysburg.edu/academics/chemistry/>

**40s:** We are sad to report that **Lt. Colonel John B. Zinn '41**, son of the late Chemistry Professor and Chair John B. Zinn, died at the age of 99 in June. After a distinguished career in the military that took him all over the world, he settled in Gettysburg in 1974 and served as the president of the Gettysburg College Alumni Association in the early 1980s. He was a regular attendee at our Musselman Visiting Scientist lectures well into his 90s.

**60s:** Prof. **Tom George '67**, professor of chemistry and physics and Chancellor at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, co-authored a textbook entitled “[Understanding Molecules: Lectures on Chemistry for Physicists and Engineers](#)”. We heard from **Annabel Lindley Griffiths '62** who mentioned fond memories of **Prof. Rowland, Prof. Weiland, Prof. Schildknecht and Prof. Benson. Ron Myers '69** recently received the [Marquis Who's Who Lifetime Achievement Award](#), recognizing his 40+ year career accomplishments as a scientist/chemist, inventor, educator and international consultant. Ron is now semi-retired, enjoying family activities, reading, and golf while still consulting for chemical and materials science companies, writing scientific reports. He invites fellow alumni to visit his website for more information about his work (<http://myersconsultingservices.net/index.html>).

**70s:** **Dennis Bleile '72**, is Senior Director of Research and Development at Abaxis, an *in vitro* diagnostics company in the San Francisco Bay area. Dennis returned to campus in Fall 2018 to present a series of talks. **Martin Brechbiel '79** retired from the National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute but continues to play a role at NIH/NCI as an Emeritus. He is also serving as the Editor in Chief of “[Cancer, Biotherapy and Radiopharmaceuticals](#)”. **Brian Schimpf '72** earned an MSE degree in Industrial Engineering from West Virginia University. He served in the U.S. Air Force, then continued his career in software development, retiring from IBM in 2013. Brian credits his interest in computers to **Prof. Fortnum's** classes in Physical Chemistry. He and wife, **Cindy Eichelberger '72 (Biology)** are now enjoying retirement in San Diego!

**10s:** **Steph Maiocco '10 (Chem)** and **Julia Vrana Miller '10 (Chem)** came back for Homecoming Weekend and sat on a panel to discuss graduate school and life beyond with current students. **Amanda (Pellowe) Reynolds '12 (BMB)** received her Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering in March 2018. She is now a consultant at Bain and Company in Boston. **Taylor Plank '12 (Chem)** and **Luke Cuculis '12 (Chem)** got married in McKnightstown, PA in September 2018, and they had a chemistry-themed reception. Congratulations to the happy couple! **Dan Kim '12 (Chem)** returned to campus for Homecoming Weekend this year to appear on a grad school panel, and is a postdoc at Princeton with Prof. Dave Mcmillan. **Molly Rincavage '13** visited campus as an X-SIG career panelist in July, and is now a pharmacy resident at Valley Health in Baltimore. **Savannah Miller '17 (BMB)** also returned to campus to be an X-SIG panelist, but on the grad school panel, and is in a Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland. **Abby Flanagan-Frankl '16 (Chem)** started work this summer with a law firm. **Andrew Mahoney**

'17 (BMB) started a chemistry Ph.D. program at Emory this August. **Sarah Francisco '17 (BMB)** hiked the Appalachian Trail this year.

## **Gifts to the College**

The Chemistry Department would like to thank the generous donors who supported the Department and the college with financial gifts in the last year. All gifts are welcome and appreciated.

The following donors made gifts to the Chemistry Special Gifts Fund: Pauline Dale Platt '53 & Robert Platt, Anne Kuhlmann Taylor '66 & Gerard Taylor, Ali Craig '07, Angie Mendel Hunter '96 & Jeffrey Hunter, Jim O'Brien '59.

Sally Benner Uehara '61, Jennifer Swon Lawless '94 & Charles Lawless made gifts to the Andrew L. Muns Scholarship Fund which supports a student majoring in chemistry, biochemistry and molecular biology or biology.

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