



Double Bond

The Newsletter of the Western New York Section of the American Chemical Society

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2024 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The Western New York local section will hold its Undergraduate Research Symposium on Saturday, April 13, 2024, on the North Campus of the **University at Buffalo, SUNY**.

This year's symposium is hosted by the Department of Chemistry at UB, and will feature a Keynote Address by **Prof. D. Kwabena Bediako** from UC Berkeley. There will be awards for the best student poster and oral presentations.

There is a \$5.00 registration fee for this year's symposium. This includes a light breakfast and buffet lunch. A vegetarian option will be available. We ask that attendees register using the attached form and pay (cash) at the registration table on April 13.

Undergraduate researchers may opt to present a poster or a 15 minute oral presentation at the symposium. The abstract submission form has been circulated to mentoring faculty at area colleges and universities, and can be downloaded from the WNYACS web site:

wnyacs.org/undergraduate-research-symposium/

Abstract Submission is Underway!

Abstracts for consideration in the Oral Session must be submitted by Friday, March 15, 2024. Poster abstracts may be submitted until Thursday, April 4, 2024. Acceptance of presentations will be on a rolling basis while space remains in the sessions.

Attendees, whether presenting or not, are encouraged to register in advance, by sending the registration form to:

Dr. Timothy Gregg
greggt@canisius.edu

OFFICER CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHIES

The following slate of candidates for 2024 WNYACS Executive positions has been established. In accordance with our bylaws, an election ballot will be circulated. Look for a separate email with an election link to our provider, **ElectionBuddy.com**. You need the Access Key and Password that are included in the notification email from ElectionBuddy.com in order to vote. Brief biographies of the officer candidates are presented below.

For Chair (2024):

Luis R. De Jesús Báez was born and raised in Puerto Rico, and obtained his B.S. in chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey. From there, he worked for Prof. Sarbajit Banerjee to pursue his Ph.D. at Texas A&M University where he focused on mapping electronic structure inhomogeneities and modeling spectroscopic signatures of electrode materials. During his graduate studies, Luis obtained the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and the American Physical Society Robert S. Hyer Graduate Award.

Additionally, he was awarded the IUPAC-Solvay International Award for Young Chemists and the 2019 ACS-Division of Inorganic Chemistry Young Investigator Award. He started his postdoctoral fellowship in 2018 as a Eberly College of Science Postdoctoral Fellow at Pennsylvania State University working under the supervision of Prof. Thomas E. Mallouk. He then moved in 2019 to the University of Pennsylvania with a Provost Postdoctoral Fellowship following his postdoc advisor. His research interests involved the synthesis and functionalization of 2D layered MXene materials. Luis is currently an assistant professor in the department of chemistry of the University at Buffalo – SUNY exploring the relationship between strain and electronic structure modification in solids for developing novel electrodes for energy devices and catalytic systems. He was recently awarded the NSF – AGEP Lighthouse Beacon Fellowship for his DEI work in STEM.

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For Chair-Elect (2024):

Chris Li is currently an Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. Chris received his undergraduate degree at the University of California, Davis in Chemical Engineering and he subsequently worked as an R&D engineer in chemical industries for three years. Chris received his Ph.D. degree in Chemistry at Pennsylvania State University with Prof. Tom Mallouk working on CO₂ reduction and electrochemical system design. From 2018 to 2020, Chris joined Prof. Ted Sargent's group as a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Toronto. At the University at Buffalo, SUNY, Chris' research group focus on developing electroanalytical techniques to study chemical mechanisms in electrocatalysis reactions, and reactor design for energy storage and environmental applications.

For Vice-Chair (2024):

Jason Benedict is an Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry at the University at Buffalo. His research seeks to understand and ultimately control the interaction of light and matter in crystalline materials. From photo-responsive metal-organic frameworks to low-flux upconversion materials, his research is focused on the design and synthesis of next-generation smart 'materials by design'. Jason is also active in outreach programs; he recently chaired and organized the 7th annual Western New York Undergraduate Research Symposium and the U.S. Crystal Growing Competition – a fun STEM activity for students in grades K-12.

Jason received his B.S. in Chemistry from Arizona State University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington with Bart Kahr. Jason worked as a postdoctoral researcher with Philip Coppens at UB before joining the faculty in 2011.

For Treasurer (2024-2025):

Robert Stewart is seeking reelection as WNYACS treasurer; in his previous term, Rob maintained a balanced budget while seeking low-risk growth opportunities to expand the section's operating capital by approximately 2%. Rob leveraged his position on the board to develop the Science Café series, which has hosted numerous successful events in past years – sponsoring seminars by speakers in academia, local industry, and federal government. He is a senior scientist at Honeywell International, Inc. Rob received his BS in Chemistry from Canisius College in 2011 and PhD in physical chemistry from Penn State University in 2016.

Rob was a member of the ACS student chapter at Canisius from 2007 to 2011 and served as chapter president from 2010 to 2011. In his free time, Rob enjoys the outdoors, glassblowing, and family; he can be reached at robert.stewart@honeywell.com.

For Member at Large (2024-2025):

Lindsay Rose is a Buffalo import! She grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio and was hooked on chemistry through the influence of her high school teacher. She attended Butler University as a chemistry major and went on to earn her Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Cornell University. She is an Associate Professor of Chemistry at Niagara County Community College and received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2019. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, photography, and spending time with her family.

THE LOCAL SECTION NEEDS YOU

Our thanks go out to the members who have worked to keep WNYACS activities coming through the COVID crisis and its aftermath. We are always happy to get input and help from more of you, the membership. So we again ask that anyone interested in what we do, or interested in what we are NOT doing, but could be doing to contact us. The information on the last page of this newsletter is up-to-date for the current and ongoing leadership team, and we can find ways you can help, too.



"I'M ON THE VERGE OF A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH, BUT I'M ALSO AT THAT POINT WHERE CHEMISTRY LEAVES OFF AND PHYSICS BEGINS, SO I'LL HAVE TO DROP THE WHOLE THING."

WNYACS Section Chair 2024

Open

Schoellkopf Award Chair 2024

Open

Chair Elect 2024

Open

Education Committee Chair

Open

Vice-Chair 2024

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National Chemistry Week

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Senior Chemists

Open

Member-at-Large 2024-2025

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