



Stony Brook University

College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Chemistry

Newsletter, January 2020

Dear Alumni,

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Chair of the [Department of Chemistry](#) and to wish you all a peaceful and healthy New Year! The Department had a productive and interesting 2019, and below I highlight a few recent accomplishments and events.



Faculty News and Recognition:

I would like to start by thanking the outgoing chair, Professor Nancy Goroff, who stepped down in May 2019 to run for Congress. Earlier in 2019, Professor Goroff was the Diversity Catalyst Lecturer at the OXIDE National Diversity and Equity Workshop, and we wish her the best of luck in her political campaign!

A testament to their excellence, our faculty have received grants totaling \$10 million for research; several faculty were specifically recognized for their achievements:

- Professor Iwao Ojima received the [2019 Ernest Guenther Award in the Chemistry of Natural Products](#) from the American Chemical Society (ACS)
- Dr. Maria Nagan was named a fellow of the ACS
- Professor Ken Dill won the Raymond and Beverly Sackler International Prize in Biophysics
- Professors Melanie Chiu and Ming-Yu Ngai were chosen as two of the four University-wide finalists for the 2019 Discovery Prize competition
- The SBU Chapter of the National Academy of Inventors, established by Professor Ojima, elected 20 new members, including Professors Dan Raleigh and Peter Tonge
- Professor Eszter Boros and Dr. Krupa Haranahalli won the [2019 Young Academic Inventor's Award](#)
- [Professor Stan Wong](#) was elected to the rank of NAI Fellow by the National Academy of Inventors
- Both Professors Wong and Tonge were promoted to the rank of [Distinguished Professor](#) by the State University of New York Board of Trustees
- Professor Tonge was also [one of seven SBU faculty named fellows](#) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)
- Professor Chris Johnson gave a Flygare Award lecture at the 74th International Symposium on Molecular Spectroscopy
- [Professor Stan Whittingham](#), a former Stony Brook research professor and founding co-director of the Northeastern Center for Chemical Energy Storage at Stony Brook, was awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry
- Professor Barney Grubbs became an Associate Editor for the ACS journal *Macromolecules*

Teaching and Student Recognition:

You may be interested to learn that our Department teaches nearly 10,000 seats a year! In 2019 we graduated 64 chemistry and engineering chemistry majors, 16 MS students and 31 PhD students. Our students continue to receive recognition for their outstanding work:

- [Emily Chen BS '20](#), received the inaugural Dr. Kenneth Nicholas undergraduate research fellowship award for her work with Professor Nancy Goroff on Iodocarbons
- Claire Garfield '20 and Ryan McHugh '20 received prestigious [Goldwater Scholarships](#); Claire also received the esteemed Marshall Scholarship
- Yuning Chen PhD '18, who worked with Professor Tom Allison, was a finalist for the [2019 Justin Jankunas Doctoral Dissertation Award](#) from the American Physical

Society's Division of Chemical Physics, and gave a talk at the 2019 APS national meeting

- Kristen Drury BA '05 and Dr. Christopher am Ende, MS, '08; PhD, '13 were both selected to be honored among Stony Brook's 2019 [40 Under Forty!](#)

Guest Speakers and Lectures:

Our community is enriched by seminars and colloquia that are headlined by eminent speakers:

- Professor Esther Takeuchi was the speaker at the 20th Annual [Chemistry Research Day](#)
- Seven distinguished speakers presented at the 13th annual symposium "[Frontiers of Infectious Disease Control,](#)" organized by the Institute for Chemical Biology and Drug Discovery
- Professor Chad Mirkin from Northwestern gave the [Twenty-sixth annual Jacob Bigeleisen endowed lecture](#)
- Professor Omar Yaghi from UC Berkeley was the 2019 Franklin Award Lecturer
- Dr. Stephen Demarest, PhD '00 from Lilly was the 2019 Departmental Convocation Speaker
- On May 8, 2020, Professor Tom Muir from Princeton will be the 6th Francis Johnson Lecturer

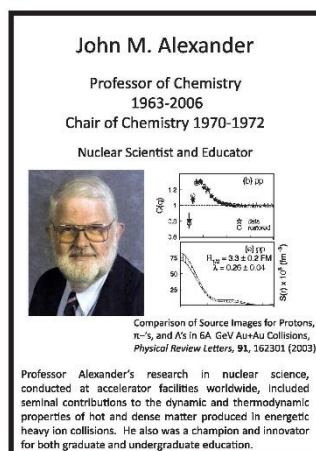
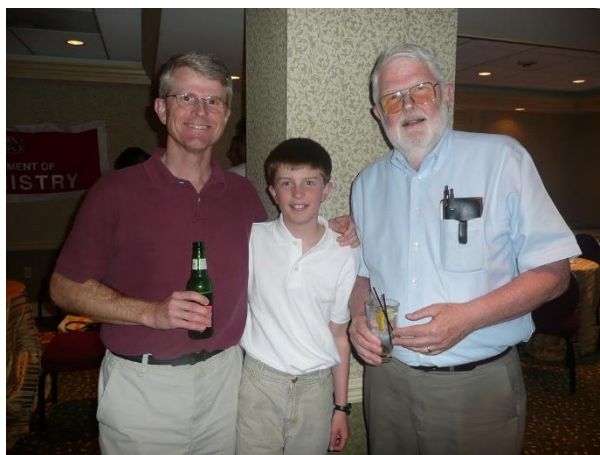
The Department is very grateful to the organizers and supporters of these outstanding events!

Arrivals and Departures:

The Department welcomes Drs. Alicia Mullaley and Dan Amarante, two new lecturers and congratulates Dr. Amarante on being the incoming Chair-Elect for the Long Island Subsection of the ACS. We also welcome Dr. Nan Wang, who is the Instrumentation Supervisor in the newly created Center for Advanced Study of Drug Action (CASDA).

We said goodbye to two long standing members of the faculty, Dr. Troy Wolfskill and Dr. Mohammad Akhtar, as well as Professors Jarrod French and Greg Rushton, Ms. Nazanin Karimi, Ms. Laretta Viteritte and Ms. Nicole Fanelli-Burke. We wish all of them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

In Memoriam:



Professor John M. Alexander (1931-2019)

On a more poignant note, I am sad to report the passing of Professor John M. Alexander (1931-2019) one of our emeritus faculty and a former Department chair. Professor Alexander was recruited to Stony Brook in 1963 by founding Department chair Professor Francis Bonner, after they met at a Gordon Conference on Nuclear Chemistry. In his memoirs, Professor Bonner wrote that "it seemed to me natural, and perhaps imperative, for a major Chemistry Department located near BNL to include nuclear chemistry among its research dimensions." Professor Alexander subsequently served with high distinction as both an educator and scholar in our Department and is honored with a tile on our [Leaders in Chemistry Wall](#).

I also sadly report the passing of Ms. Linda Dixon, who spent 16 years at Stony Brook partly in the Department where she was a Project Staff Assistant to Professors Alexander, Lacey and Jia.

We Appreciate Your Support

We hope you will consider giving back to our Department, as we depend on our alumni and friends to build and improve our research infrastructure through support of instrumentation, graduate fellowships, and building new laboratories. Your gift helps strengthen and support the educational experience for our students and faculty. Please consider giving to our [Fund for Excellence](#) today or speaking with Christina Rosa-Ragona, Director of Development, at Christina.Rosa-Ragona@stonybrook.edu or (631) 632-4380.

I invite you to reconnect with our Department soon, as we'd love to hear your news, how you're doing, where your career has taken you, and any life events you would like to share. And if you haven't already, please join our alumni group on LinkedIn: [SBUChemistry Alumni](#) so that we can stay connected.

Best wishes,

Pete

Peter J. Tonge
Distinguished Professor of Chemistry
Chair, Department of Chemistry

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