

2024 DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY AWARDS & BANQUET

Missouri S&T's Department of Chemistry
Dr. Chariklia Sotiriou-Leventis, Chair and Professor
Dr. Garry "Smitty" Grubbs, Associate Chair

April 19, 2024, at 6:00 PM
St. Pats Ballroom B, Havener Center

2024 Outstanding Freshmen Awards

Rebecca Benjamin
Carley Bills
Caleb Ehlers

2024 Outstanding Sophomore Awards

Finnegan Jokerst

2024 Outstanding Junior Awards

David Myers

2024 Outstanding Senior Awards

Jada Ayars
Jamie Christensen
Josie Glenn
Justin Goerger
Madelyn Mason
Christopher Ryan

2024 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award (\$250)

Himanshu Bhatia, Chem 1310 (Nominator: Dr. Jeffrey Winiarz)

Himanshu has been selected as an excellent TA for the general chemistry lecture course. As per the course instructor, he is truly an exceptional GTA and teacher. Apart from executing his primary duty of running several recitation sections, he also provided valuable behind-the-scenes assistance going beyond the typical TA duties which included preparing exam materials, LEAD and recitation notes. Himanshu showed good mastery of the material and maintained a coherent presentation during his teaching sessions. He dealt with the students with extreme patience and compassion, earning their respect and satisfaction in the process. Himanshu truly is a talented educator at heart on many levels.

William (Billy) Rice, Chem 3459 (Nominator: Dr. Garry (Smitty) Grubbs)

Billy has been nominated for his exceptional performance in teaching the accelerated P-chem lab. Billy has been the go-to person for this lab and has taken an active role in developing a new session for the lab during fall semester. More importantly, he is very efficient in communicating with the students, fielding questions from them and grading lab reports with promptness and executing his teaching duties with collegiate level professionalism.

Pallavi Soni, Chem 2219 (Nominator: Dr. Terry Bone)

Pallavi has been nominated as an excellent TA for the organic chemistry lab (Chem 2219). Pallavi is very efficient in executing her assigned duties, highly punctual, and extremely diligent in grading and other responsibilities. She also communicates very well with the students and meticulously handles the various questions and issues from them.

Yuwei Zhang, Chem 4619 (Nominator: Dr. Risheng Wang)

Yuwei has been nominated as an excellent TA for the biochemistry lab. Her vibrant personality and proactive approach significantly enhanced the learning experience for students. Her diligence in preparing for the lab made it possible to have seamless execution of the challenging experiments. She has also maintained a good rapport with the students facilitating not only the practical aspects of lab work, but also instilling a profound understanding of the fundamental principles of biochemistry.

2024 Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award (\$250)

Harmeet Bhoday (Adviser: Dr. Rainer Glaser)

The focus of Harmeet's research has been the design and realization of polar crystalline materials of substituted donor-acceptor and conjugated organics for non-linear optics. During his doctoral studies at S&T, Harmeet has evolved into an independent researcher and has demonstrated creativity in project design and realization. He is an excellent collaborator working well with his peers, mentors and mentees. Harmeet's diligence in research has led to 4 publications in high-impact journals, some of which were also featured as the journal cover. Harmeet has also received the 2022 Graduate Student Award from the American Institute of Chemists. Overall, Harmeet is an extremely talented, motivated, and skilled researcher with good work ethics.

Xiaoting Zhang (Adviser: Dr. Jay Switzer)

Xiaoting is a thorough and innovative researcher with a perfect GPA of 4.0. She is an exceptionally bright researcher who has carved out a unique area of research on epitaxial electrodeposition of highly ordered Metal Organic Frameworks. She has published a paper in ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces. Moreover, she amazed the audience with her well-articulated, and information-laden seminars which clearly showed the depth of her knowledge and understanding of the research project. Xiaoting can be considered as the glaring example of an ideal graduate researcher.

2024 Outstanding Graduate Service Award (\$250)

Zachary Mayes (Adviser: Dr. Klaus Woelk)

Zac's service to the chemistry department is not only exceptional but goes above and beyond what could ever be expected of a research-active and teaching-active graduate student. Apart from his active participation in teaching the general chemistry lab, Zac also provides critical assistance in maintaining the NMR instrumentation, which literally includes heavy lifting. He was also instrumental in formulating the online-synchronous Chem 1319 lab course offered during summer semester and worked diligently along with the instructor leading it to be recognized as the "most successful summer course for the chemistry department". Zac is always there, ready, available and eager to help whenever needed.

2024 Outstanding Dept. of Chemistry Staff Award (\$400)

Nathan Leigh, Director of the Shared Instrument Lab

In addition to his duties, Nathan has been the director of our very first Chemistry Summer Camp: "Discovering Chemistry," in SS2023 and he is continuing in this role in the SS2024.

2024 Wilbur Tappmeyer Excellence in Teaching Award (\$500)

Dr. Terry Bone, Teaching Professor – Chem 2219 & Chem 2229

Terry manages the large load of organic chemistry teaching labs (organic chemistry I & II), implementing new experiments, and getting continuously high evaluations and good comments from the students.

Dr. Gary (Smitty) Grubbs, Associate Professor – Chem 3459

Smitty teaches an accelerated physical chemistry lab with very high teaching evaluation scores. Students in this class say that “he is knowledgeable, friendly, cares about his students, and always available for help.”

Dr. Thomas Schuman, Professor – Chem 4850/5850

Tom is the only chemistry faculty who handles the various polymer courses and labs in our department in addition to teaching an organic chemistry course and a lab. He is always willing to take up new teaching assignments when needed.