

## 2025-2026 DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY AWARDS & BANQUET

Missouri S&T's Department of Chemistry  
Dr. Chariklia Sotiriou-Leventis, Chair and Professor

April 24, 2026, at 6:30 PM  
*Havener Center Carver/Turner*

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Freshman Awards (\$200)**

Logan Brann  
Payton Holliday  
Jacob Webster-Brown

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Sophomore Awards (\$200)**

Cremzin Turley

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Junior Awards (\$200)**

Hossein Libre  
Mercury Lusk  
Donovin Palmer

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Senior Awards (\$200)**

Caleb Ehlers  
Katharine Gray  
Daniel Green  
Alyssa Williams

### **ACS Undergraduate Division Awards**

Catherine Skaggs – Physical Chemistry  
Daniel Green – Analytical Chemistry  
Caleb Ehlers – Organic Chemistry  
Jacob Green – Inorganic Chemistry

## **2025-2026 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award (\$250)**

### **Jenis Jivi Jevaraj, Chem 1310** (Nominator: Dr. Gary Grubbs)

*Jenis is being recognized for his excellent performance as GTA for the General Chemistry I lecture (Chem 1310). He has all the qualities of an excellent teacher promoting student learning and at the same being able to reach the students at their level. It was apparent that Jenis thoroughly enjoyed his TA assignments, starting each session with writing out the day's topics in mini lessons on the white board and guiding the students through the concepts to enhance their understanding at all levels. The biggest asset of Jenis is that students feel very comfortable with him as the TA and trust his guidance. As a GTA Jenis is stress release for the instructor and is a critical pillar for successful offering of this course to a diverse pool of students.*

### **Huaijun Guan, Chem 1305** (Nominator: Dr. Jeffrey Winiarz)

*Huaijun deserves recognition for his GTA performance In Chem 1305, for making a meaningful and lasting impact on the students. Some of his best qualities are that he possesses a rare ability to translate chemistry concepts and knowledge into clear, accessible explanations that resonate with students. His recitation sessions were consistently well-organized and responsive to student needs. It was evident that students not only understood the material better after working with him, but also genuinely appreciated his teaching style. Students regularly gravitated toward Huaijun, both during recitation and outside of class, seeking his guidance and support.*

### **Taryn Dewey, Chem 4297** (Nominator: Dr. Thomas Schuman)

*Taryn has excelled as a GTA for several lecture and laboratory courses he is being recognized especially for his service in Chem 4297, the departmental capstone course. There are many learning concepts for this course that include proper consultation and use of literature, synthesis planning and safety, the use of spectroscopic methods to understand a chemical transformation, and handling of air- and moisture-sensitive reagents. Taryn has been a critical component for this teaching course effectively by guiding the students through creative exploration safely while enhancing their learning outcome. Taryn is talented, thoughtful, and creative in his work and extremely hard-working. He goes above and beyond to help in teaching classes but also improves himself by learning the concepts associated with the lab to better teach those concepts to students.*

## **2025-2026 Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award (\$250)**

**Max Tucker** (Advisor: Dr. Greg Tschumper)

*Max Tucker is a second-year graduate student in Dr. Tschumper's group. His research on computational chemistry aimed at understanding many-body quantum effects in molecular systems has been published in several high impact journals. Some of these articles have also been featured in journal covers gaining more recognition. Max's scientific productivity, combined with his academic excellence, and sets an outstanding example for his peers. He is a dedicated, intellectually curious, and highly motivated researcher whose contributions are already making a meaningful impact.*

**Himanshu Bhatia** (Advisor: Dr. Pericles Stavropoulos)

*Himanshu is a graduate student in Dr. Stavropoulos group and his sustained efforts in developing catalytic methodologies for major organic reactions have made a significant impact in the field. Himanshu is an excellent experimentalist in the field of synthetic organic chemistry and catalysis. Several synthetic aspects of the new families of ligands that Himanshu was research proved to be very challenging, but he was able to overcome all obstacles, especially in the field of tetraamidate scaffolds. His contributions have resulted in several publications, which are very comprehensive reports of several years of research. He has very good knowledge of the literature and is constantly striving to come up with new methods to achieve new synthetic goals. Himanshu has all the qualities of an excellent graduate student that show exceptional promise for an academic career.*

**Yuwei Zhang** (Advisor: Dr Risheng Wang)

*Yuwei has been a key member of Dr. Wang's research group focusing on creating DNA based nanoarchitecture and their applications. In the Wang group, Yuwei has consistently distinguished herself as an outstanding graduate student researcher, collaborator, and teaching assistant. Yuwei has been a very collaborative and technically adventurous student and has played major roles in several interdisciplinary projects. In addition to producing high-quality results, Yuwei built strong AFM-based capabilities in the lab and created protocols and training pathways that allowed these methods to be adopted by other students. Yuwei combines technical strength, intellectual curiosity, and a steady, team-oriented working style and is a strong model for both scientific excellence and professional leadership.*

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Graduate Service Award (\$250)**

**Adam Willett** (Advisor: Dr. Thomas Schuman)

*Adam has been a consistent mentor for the department's capstone course, Chem 4297, although he was not the official GTA. Adam also assists other research groups with their projects as a collaborator and has been an excellent citizen within the chemistry department. Adam regularly assists with NMR analyses for the capstone course done on his own time beyond his assigned research and teaching duties. He taught the students NMR analyses and interpretation and provided help for acquiring superior spectral quality. Adam worked well with the students and was a true team player going above and beyond to provide a quality education to the chemistry majors without compensation other than the job well-done and the experience of having done so. Adam's performance is the true embodiment of qualities sought in a graduate service award.*

### **2025-2026 Outstanding Dept. of Chemistry Staff Award (\$400)**

**Dawn Davis, Business Support Specialist II**

*Dawn works quickly and efficiently. She consistently goes above and beyond her formal job responsibilities, demonstrating initiative, excellence, and an unwavering commitment to supporting faculty, staff, and students in the department.*

### **2025-2026 Wilbur Tappmeyer Excellence in Teaching Award (\$500)**

**Dr. Klaus Woelk, Associate Professor – Chem 1319 (General Chemistry I)**

*Klaus for reorganizing and delivering the online sections of Chem 1319 (student evaluations: 3.4 – 3.8).*

**Dr. Cindy Bolon, Associate Teaching Professor – Chem 1319 (General Chemistry I)**

*Cindy for carrying the in-house bulk of teaching Chem 1319, with very good evaluations.*

**Dr. Greg Tschumper, Castleman/FCR Endowed Professor – Chem 3420 (Intro to Quantum Chemistry) & Chem 2420 (Physical Chemistry II)**

*Greg for teaching Chem 3420 Intro to Quantum (3.93) and Chem 2420 Physical Chem II (3.95), both with excellent student evaluations.*

**Dr. En-Chi Liu, Assistant Professor – Chem 4210/5210 (Intermediate Org Chemistry & Fund Synth Org Rxns)**

*En-Chi for preparing and delivering a very successful Chem 4210/Chem 5210 (Intermediate Org Chem/Fund Synth Org Rxns; 2 undergrads/9 grads), highly scored by graduate students (3.74) (score not reported for undergrads: < 3 students)*

**2025-2026 Emeritus Awards**

For their life-long achievements and contributions to the Chemistry Department

**Nuran Ercal**

**Shubhender Kapila**

**Gary Long**

**Jay Switzer**

**Michael VanDeMark**

**Phil Whitefield**