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Chemistry Department Newsletter 2014

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Dear Chemistry Alumni,

We're now in the 135th school year for Bridgewater College. After registration, assessment and safety testing, our students are filling the labs and classrooms and working on their assignments.

The department is pleased to announce that Jevone Fentress '14 has joined the chemistry staff as the part-time stockroom clerk, replacing April Queen '08. Under the tutelage of Larry White '65, we expect Jevone will continue to battle stockroom entropy and manage our laboratory resources. Jevone graduated with a biology major, but was most often on the chemistry floor in his roles as lab assistant and tutor over the last two years.

At the beginning of last year, visiting assistant professor Dr. Ian McNeil '08 replaced our long-serving physical chemist, Dr. Erich Brumbaugh '66. Erich left the department as the most published member of the chemistry faculty and a connoisseur of the scientific occult. His *Science and Pseudoscience* course was a popular Interterm respite from the traditional chemistry curriculum that engaged students during the semester.

In early October the department will submit a pre-application to the American Chemical Society for program accreditation. We will hopefully receive some constructive criticism and national validation of our program, which we feel has been strong and successful. Much of our curriculum, safety and lab assistance training, and physical/electronic resources appear to satisfy many of the ACS requirements. Instrumentation may be a challenge since the department has a large array of older, yet functional, instruments. Some of these instruments may need to be replaced as their shelf life is nearly expired. Stay tuned for updates on our progress.

The department gave out four awards last May to some talented students:

- Daniel Feivor (Roanoke, Va.) received the CRC Freshman Chemistry Award.
- Alys Harshbarger (Arlington, Va.) received the John Martin Organic Chemistry Award.
- Ibrahim AbuNada (Gaza) received the Garland Reed Endowed Award.
- Scott Griffin (Fredericksburg, Va.) received the Senior ACS award for dedicated work on his (two-year!) senior project.

I am also pleased to announce that the Suter Endowed Scholarship has joined the honors given by the department, thanks to the generous support of Dr. Stuart ('63) and Lorraine Suter. The scholarship was finalized at the end of the past academic year. The first recipient of the award is Rachel Weaver (Sugarcreek, Ohio), an applied chemistry major who will graduate in December 2015.

A whirlwind of other changes have occurred in the past year as well.

- The College has implemented a new general education program this fall, and the chemistry department has three courses in the program. One of our own, Dr. Sara Fitzgerald '03, helped to guide this process as a member of the General Education Redesign Committee.
- Renovation of Nininger Hall is complete, and students, faculty and coaching staff are enjoying the updated building.

- Dr. Joe Crockett stepped down as chair of the chemistry department after more than 14 years of official service. His “glide” into retirement will involve a few years of increased service to the Virginia section of the ACS and the handing of the chemical-safety baton to a new chemical hygiene officer as the College seeks to replace his long service as manager of chemical safety and waste disposal. As I have joked before, I have big shoes to fill when it comes to replacing Joe as department chair. If you had Dr. Crockett for organic chemistry and remember his Converse “Chucks,” you know exactly what I mean.
- Finally, four chemistry majors and our first applied chemistry major graduated in May. We have three more chemistry majors in the queue for May 2015, along with six applied chemistry majors. The applied major and minor have caused all of our junior and senior level chemistry courses to nearly double in enrollment, giving the department an invigorating boost. The department is submitting plans for a biochemistry major this fall, which will hopefully give us a third major for the next academic year.

Another alumni brunch is planned for Homecoming on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 9:30 a.m. in the third floor McKinney lounge. I hope to see many of you there. It is always great to hear about your personal and professional successes, so please keep in contact with the department and the College’s alumni office. If you plan to travel near campus, especially on Fridays during the academic year, you have a standing invitation to meet with our chemistry tech seniors, who frequently present progress on their senior projects. We would love to have you talk to them about your career in science and the various lessons you have learned along the way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Overway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ken Overway
department chair