Welcome to a new issue of the beaker! We have a brand new image that we hope you, our readers, will enjoy. If you have any suggestions about what you would like to see in an upcoming issue, let us know!

Chemistry Department Updates

- The Chemistry Department is Awarding Scholarships and Internships to undergraduate and graduate students! Apply today! Applications are due March 7, 2011 at MLSC-304 (http://chemistry.csulb.edu/department-awards.html)

- 33rd Annual Nobel Laureate Lectures by The 2007 Nobel Prize winner Mario R. Capecchi will be held March 1, 2011. General Lecture from 11:00-12:00pm and Technical Session from 4:00-5:00pm located at PH2-110 (Hosted by: CNSM Student Council)

- The Design, Formation, and Reactivity of Aza-oxyallylcation Intermediates: Aza-[4+3]-Cycloaddition Reactions for Heterocycle Synthesis by Christoper S. Jeffrey from University of Nevada, Reno will be held March 9, 2011 from 4:00-5:00pm in PH2-110 (Hosted by Dr. Schramm, Please Contact him for more info and for the FREE luncheon)

Announcements

FAFSA:
- Applications are due March 2, 2011.

SAACS:
- Next General Meeting will be on March 8, 2011 at 5:00pm in PH1-127.
- Teach-Student Coffee and Donut Hour for all will be held every Friday at the MLSC Patio (1st Floor) from 9:30-10:30 AM.
Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Paul Buonora

Interviewed by: Andrew Sykahua and Ian Henley
Written by: Andrew Sykahua and Karen Yu

Dr. Buonora began his road to becoming an organic chemistry professor as a political science major. A knack for history and encouragement from high school guidance counselors pushed him this direction. Despite a mutual hate for chemistry from his seven brothers and sisters, he switched his major to chemistry after just two political science classes. He received his Bachelors degree in chemistry from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). Here he received training as an analytical chemist and worked in this field after graduating. After gaining real world experience, he made the decision to return to IUP for a MS degree in organic chemistry.

When he began his Masters in Organic chemistry study he had no intention of getting his PhD, much less a Post-Doctorate. Experience as a teaching assistant and tutor, and with a little convincing from his masters research mentor, he went on to receive his PhD from the University of Virginia. His PhD research was done on the “Synthesis of Polyacetate Polyols”. It involved synthesis of a molecule called Amphotericin B, an antifungal compound referred to by doctors as “amphoterrible” because of how hard it is on the body. Dr. Buonora recommends this same route of education if students are unsure if they want a PhD or are unable get into a strong program. Otherwise, he recommends going directly to PhD.

Today, Dr. Buonora is part of the tenured staff here at CSULB where he currently teaches Organic Chemistry to Biochemistry and Chemistry majors and is the coordinator for the Seminar Series held on campus. His inspiration for becoming a teacher came from his sister. Together, they took the same 6-week course for two semesters of summer undergraduate organic chemistry. Although she is smart, her struggles with the material led her to repeat both the first and second semesters. He felt that there must be a better way to learn the material, which was all memorization at the time. From this experience, he focused his teaching style to help students learn material through logical thinking and to take emphasis off memorization. On exams, for example, when students must rank compound properties they must also explain why. He stresses “the key to understanding something is your ability to explain why.” What he loves most about teaching are the moments when seeing the look on a student’s face shows that he has helped them finally understand a concept and its larger context.

Aside from teaching, his second passion lies with research. His general area of research is organic synthetic methods development. The purpose is to find better ways to make organic molecules, particularly ones that can be used for pharmaceutical purposes. Currently, his main project involves making nitrogen heterocycle compounds, which he has been working on for 15 years. A second project he is working on involves synthesizing pseudo-carbohydrates, which are molecules that behave like sugars. Students who research with Dr. Buonora will gain experience beyond what advance organic lab can offer. He accepts two students every semester, including summer, and is looking for individuals who have good hands and a passion to find answers.

What struck us the most was how early he knew he was going to be a scientist. As a child in the sixties, he watched a show called “The Twenty-First Century”. It looked forward to what life was going to be like in the near future and discussed how science was going to change the ways we were going to live our lives. Dr. Buonora is a Professor, who will strive to make you the best young scientist of your time, as long as you put in the time and energy to learn.
Seminar Series On Campus

Written by Ian Henley & Karen Yu
Coordinator: Dr. Paul Buonora

The department’s seminar series offers students the opportunity to hear professors from all over the nation present their research. Seminars are held Wednesdays at 4:00pm in PH2-110; complimentary coffee and cookies are served at 3:50pm. Students that attend gain insight into life at a PhD institution by learning about unique types of chemistry in use today and interacting with speakers. One-on-one time with the speakers can be scheduled the day of the seminar, giving prospective applicants the opportunity to network with professors. If luncheons with a speaker are scheduled, they are usually held on Wednesdays from 12:00pm to 1:00pm and spots are reserved through the seminar host. Further questions for the professor can be answered by acquiring their contact information from the host. A list of seminars and hosts can be found in the display cases outside the conference rooms on the second and third floors of the MLSC.

Buonora Fun Facts:

- Use to sneak out of lab in graduate school to watch classic black and white movies on campus
- Worked on farms as a kid
- Grows raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, grapes, apples, plums, peaches, and lemons at home
- His wife also works at CSULB teaching organic chemistry labs
- Played RISK on a weekly basis in college
- Eclectic in musical tastes listening to anything from classical and jazz to folk and blue grass
- Likes Sudoku
- Favorite movie character is Kingsfield from the movie “The Paper Chase”
- High school chemistry teacher gave out her first 100% on an exam to him
Last issue, we asked “What would you like to research here on campus?” We received many interesting responses, as well as humorous suggestions. Here are some of our favorite choices:

- “I would like to research trends in the mutation of the seasonal flu virus.”
  o Adrian M.
- “Synthesis for synthetic fossil fuels from inexpensive means.”
  o Yolanda G.
- “Why can’t dogs eat chocolate?”
  o Vanesa S.
- “Medication to counter the effects of Lactose Intolerance.”
  o Andrew S.

We loved reading your suggestions. Please send your answers to our Beaker Box questions to thebeakersculb@gmail.com or leave a message at (562) 204-6222.

Next issue, we will feature your responses to the question:

“What is your favorite piece of lab equipment, and why?”

College and Career Center

(All CCC events are held at BH-250)

- Resume Writing for International Students will be held March 1, 2011 at 12:30pm.
- Preparing for the Job Far will be held March 2, 2011 at 1pm and March 8, 2011 at 12:00pm.
- Resume Clinic will be held on March 3, 2011 at 12:00pm.
- 39th, Annual Meet the Industries Expo will be held March 4, 2011 at 11:00am Job Search Essentials: Interviewing Techniques will be held on March 9, 2011 at 1:00pm.
- SPRING JOB FAIR will be held on March 10, 2011 at 12:00pm.
- GRE/GMAT strategy session March 14, 2011 at 3:00pm.
- MCAT Strategy Session on March 15, 2011 at 3:00pm.