The 2009-2010 academic year was another winning year for the department. We made significant gains in a number of areas and continued to make strides towards becoming one of the finest science departments in the Midwest, in spite of economic pressures facing the state and the nation. As the economy continues its slow ascent, the department hopes to make even more significant advances in 2010-2011!

On April 13 of this year, a portion of the chemistry and physics facilities was renamed. While Faraday Hall, dedicated in 1963, retained its original name, the attached 1995 structure was renamed for one of NIU’s former and most dynamic presidents. Faraday West was renamed John E. La Tourette Hall. La Tourette served as our provost from 1979 through 1986 and as our president from 1986 to 2000. He guided NIU through the financially difficult 1980’s and placed NIU in a position which spawned significant growth. During his tenure, Faraday West (now La Tourette Hall), the Convocation Center, the Engineering Building and many others were constructed. In addition, his successes for NIU included the establishment of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, the College of Law, and the Ph.D. program in Physics. We are proud that our building now bears his name.

The department received three more federal research grants in 2009-2010. James Horn received two of these grants. The first is a National Science Foundation CAREER Award entitled “Library Based Design of Linked Equilibria to Control Protein Interactions.” The second, from the American Heart Association, involves “Enhancing Small Molecule Diagnostics: Design and Evaluation of Methods to Produce Synthetic, Single Domain Antibody Libraries that Recognize Small Molecules/Peptides with High Affinity.” The Greater Midwest Affiliate of the American Heart Association awarded Dmitry Kadnikov funding for his research, “Molecular Mechanisms of Selective Activation of Liver X Receptors.” Combined with three currently active grants from the National Science Foundation (Narayan Hosmane, Douglas Klumpp, and a departmental nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer instrumentation grant) and two from the National Institutes of Health (Professor Emeritus James Erman and Klumpp), the department now has the largest number of active direct federal grants in its history. In addition, Tao Xu (“New Materials for Energy Efficiency and Environmental Applications”) and Petr Vanýsek (“X-Ray Scattering Studies of Interfaces Between Two Immiscible Electrolyte Solutions”) have garnered research contracts from Argonne National Laboratory (associated with the Department of Energy) and University of Illinois at Chicago (as part of an NSF grant), respectively.

Victor Ryzhov and James Horn both won NIU curriculum development grants for the coming year. The two will team up to teach honors mini-sections of Introductory Chemistry I and II. Secondly, Ryzhov will teach our CHEM 100 (Chemistry in Everyday Life) with a most timely environmental emphasis. Chong Zheng and Douglas Klumpp spent their fall 2009 semesters on sabbatical; Zheng traveled to Stuttgart, Germany, to study nano-scale optical catalysts at the Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research, and Klumpp learned more about bio-renewable fuels at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

The department congratulates Elizabeth Gaillard for her promotion to full professor. Her promotion became effective August 16, 2010. Timothy Hagen, an organic chemist who has contributed to the departmental teaching mission in previous semesters, now joins our faculty as an assistant professor. Hagen brings with him more than 20 years of research experience in the pharmaceutical industry (please read more on page 5). In addition to our regular faculty, Timothy Hagen, Professor Emeritus Dennis Kevill and alumni Drs. Frank Calvagna, Catherine Check, and Matthew Sheets helped out with teaching duties in 2009-2010.
Olujide T. Akinbo (Ph.D., ’97) and Michael Samide earned Butler University’s first patent. The chemistry professors developed an idea to improve the solid phase microextraction (SPME) device, a tool used to extract compounds from chemical solutions. Their version uses a refashioned metal rod with grooves that can collect the absorbent material, replacing a fragile glass fiber.

John M. Ferrara (B.S., ’51; M.S., ’53) is retired from Nalco Co. and resides in Palos Heights. He reports being the very first M.S. graduate student in chemistry with Dr. Lindbeck as his advisor.

Kathleen O’Leary Havelka (Ph.D., ’91) has been selected as a member of the 2010 class of ACS Fellows. She is among 192 scientists recognized this year by the ACS for outstanding contributions to the science and service to the society.

Ronald R. Hennis (M.S., ’69; Ph.D., ’72) writes that it was great to be at the Alumni Assembly in September 2009. He says, “Seeing Bill Hoyle, Howard Jordi, and Dr. Kevill brought back good memories.” He also still stays in touch with Dr. Spangler on a regular basis.

Matthew R. Hurt (B.S., ’09) is pursuing a doctoral degree at Purdue University and has joined Dr. Kenttamaa’s group. His main projects include asphaltene studies using laser induced acoustic desorption (LIAD) into an FT-ICR and using APCI into a linear quadrupole ion trap. He is involved with the instrumentation aspect of the group, as well, troubleshooting problems that arise and making modifications for new types of analysis. He writes, “I have passed all five exams in the first four months (three analytical and two inorganic) - this proves that you guys are getting us ready for the next step.” He recently attended the 58th ASMS Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Edward A. Levine (B.S., ’81) serves as chief of surgical oncology and professor of surgery at Wake Forest University. He has received continuous funding for research since 1994. He has been married to his NIU sweetheart Joan Feder (B.A., ’81) since 1980.

Marc A. Longino (B.S., ’70) is a senior scientist with Cellehtar, Inc., in Madison, Wis. Following his graduation from NIU, he obtained an M.S. in 1972 and Ph.D. in 1975 in Medicinal Chemistry from the University of Michigan.

Christopher C. Mulligan (B.S., ’03) obtained a doctoral degree from Purdue University following his graduation from NIU. He did a short postdoctoral stint at Purdue before joining the faculty at Illinois State University. He enjoys his position and has already obtained extramural funding from Research Corporation with a project entitled, “On-Site Monitoring of Emerging Environmental Contaminants with Ambient Mass Spectrometry.”

John T. Norton (B.S., ’03) graduated from Northwestern Medical School with a Ph.D. in 2007 and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the UCSD Cancer Center working on cancer drug discovery. He recently got engaged to his girlfriend and happily reports that his sister, Kate Norton, is now a student at NIU. Lenea Keller, for the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.”

Neal Schinske (M.S., ’73; M.B.A., ’73) designs, sells, and fabricates vacuum insulated containers for still beverages (e.g. water, wine, iced tea), biotech, electronic testing, and food (ice cream, powders, orange juice) markets for cryogenic liquids. He and his wife Ann (M.S.Ed. ’75) reside in Danville, Calif., and have three children and two grandchildren.

Michael J. Schroeder (B.S., ’69; M.B.A., ’72) is retired but continues to volunteer, working with the USO at Great Lakes, Ill. He is tutoring high school kids in math and science and is taking courses at Harper College.

Kiran Kumar Solingapuram Sai (Ph.D., ’09) is a postdoctoral research associate at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. He is currently doing research on developing new radio-pharmaceuticals in curing disorders like Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, etc. He says, “I credit Dr. Douglas A. Klumpp for all the research progress that I am making. He is the true inspiration for shaping my scientific career.”

Harold J. Vickery (B.S.Ed., ’73) earned his M.S.Ed. in 1976 from Purdue University Calumet. He is a chemistry-physics teacher at North Boone High School. Having served as president of the Illinois Association of Chemistry Teachers in 2006-2007, he was elected as regional vice president for the northwest region of Illinois for the 2009-2012 term.

Mary C. Whitten (Ph.D., ’99) and Stacey R. Gillespie (Ph.D., ’00) recently published a mystery romance novel under the writing name of Macy Diamond. The seed for this novel was planted when they were pursuing their doctorates in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. The book is entitled Diamond in the Rough: An Amazing Mystery and Romance and is available online at barnesandnoble.com and amazon.com.
Our second departmental “Alumni Assembly” was held September 24-25, 2009, and coordinated nicely with the 50th anniversary celebration of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Our event was a rousing success with an evening reception in the Sky Room on the 17th floor of Holmes Student Center, a campus bus tour, a walking tour of the department, meetings of alumni sub-committees, and the introduction of our first set of Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry Distinguished Alumni Awards. These awards tended to be, in essence, “career awards” for graduates who have experienced outstanding and sustained success. Each of the recipients was at least 25 years out from graduation. Among the three women and five men selected for these awards were: a chemist who devoted her career to chemistry service organizations, two entrepreneurial industrial chemists, and five academicians. While I would love to wax eloquently about this incredible group, I fear that the discussion would occupy far more space than allotted for my correspondence. So, I refer the reader to pages 8-9 of this newsletter.

The CLAS Golden Anniversary Celebration also found several chemistry and biochemistry graduates receiving college awards. Across the college, 50 alumni awards were given, 10 for each decade. Awardees from our department included: James Jorgenson (B.S. 1974), Norman Dovichi (B.S. 1976), Susan Mini (B.S. 1980), Malcolm D’Souza (Ph.D. 1992), and Susan Tomlinson Roberts (M.S. 2001).

The undergraduate program continues to blossom. In the fall of 2009, the number of majors increased slightly from the previous year to 204. In the past academic year, a record 98 registrations were recorded for undergraduate research. This summer alone, 21 undergraduate researchers are being supported on grants in the laboratories of James Erman, James Horn, Narayan Hosmane, and Douglas Klumpp. In the spring of this year, Northern Illinois University held its first annual Undergraduate Research Day. Of the 108 posters presented at the session, the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry led the way with 15 posters. Among departmental awardees were Kate Krise and Lauren Kuta (People’s Choice Award) and Narayan Hosmane (Faculty Mentor of the Year Award). From the last completed American Chemical Society data base (academic year 2007-2008), our 24 certified graduates ranked us 34th nationally. Importantly, we maintained a high percentage of certified degrees awarded (89%) compared to the national average of 34% ACS certified degrees. Despite a sputtering economy, these graduates have been extremely successful in obtaining excellent jobs and positions in graduate and professional programs.

Our glassblower, Jason Gordon, held his first glassblowing demonstration on December 1, 2009. A fundraising event for the Chemistry Club, Jason’s good work raised record funds to help support Chem Club activities, including our annual student awards banquet. To devote additional time to his research, David Ballantine, has stepped down as Chem Club coordinator. This year, the department will be handling this important task by committee. We only hope to approach the fine job Dave has done over the last 12 years. I know I speak for the students, faculty, and staff when I say, “Thanks, Dave, for your important work and service to the department!!” Lastly, the department would like to thank the alumni for their generous donations over the past year. These resources are invaluable and are utilized for a number of purposes not otherwise well funded within the university. The bulk of the donations go towards scholarships. This year, some of the funds were directed towards you, our valued alumni, to host the Alumni Assembly. A small portion of the funds was donated to the Illinois Region V Science Fair, an event in which Andy Small, Petr Vanýsek and I served as judges. And, importantly, a significant portion of the funds go towards student travel to present scholarship at scientific meetings. Your donations are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jon W. Carnahan
Professor and Chair
James Dillon, adjunct professor with a primary appointment at Columbia University, served as a peer reviewer for the Environmental Protection Agency. The 2010 peer reviewed report, Protecting the Ozone Layer Protects Eyesight – A Report on Cataract Incidence in the United States Using the Atmospheric and Health Effects Framework Model, was released in August, kicking off cataract awareness month.

Elizabeth R. Gaillard, professor with a joint appointment in the Department of Biological Sciences and adjunct professor in ophthalmology at Columbia University, is currently serving as president-elect of the American Society for Photobiology. She will then serve a two-year term as president 2012-2014. She was also an invited lecturer on “Phototoxicity in the Human Retina” at the 46th Congress of the European Societies of Toxicology, held September 2009, in Dresden, Germany.

Ekaterina, are the proud new parents of Vladislav, born on February 26, 2010, son of Monique and her husband. Maximilian Gurgel was born on January 30, 2010, son of Christiane and her husband. Murray Gurgel was born on February 26, 2010, son of Monique and her husband.

Douglas A. Klumpp, professor, continues to add a research-oriented flair to his advanced organic chemistry laboratory course, CHEM 339. The last two weeks of the course are devoted to a set of research-type experiments. During the spring 2009 semester, the students examined a chemical reaction used to make plastics, dyes, and even commercial drugs. Their results were written up in a manuscript that has been accepted for publication in the scientific journal, Tetrahedron Letters. The research was supervised by Prof. Klumpp and the paper includes eight undergraduate coauthors from the CHEM 339 course.

Chhiu-Tsu (C.T.) Lin, Distinguished Research Professor and Distinguished Teaching Professor, received his sixth U.S. patent on the invention titled, “Conductive Emulsion for Preparing Surface for Powder Coating,” issued July 6, 2010. On a more personal note, he is a proud new grandpa, twice-over. His twin daughters each welcomed their first born about one month apart. Maximilian Gurgel was born on January 30, 2010, son of Christiane and her husband. Murray Gurgel was born on February 26, 2010, son of Monique and her husband.

Petr Vanýsek, professor and director of graduate studies, poses with Arden L. Bement, Jr., the then director of the National Science Foundation, at a reception of the Federation of Materials Societies (FMS) in Washington DC. The reception, held December 9, 2009, was in honor of Jeffrey Wadsworth, president and CEO of Battelle Memorial Institute, who was the winner of the National Materials Achievement Award from the Federation of Materials Societies. Vanýsek is a trustee of FMS.

Tao Xu, assistant professor, received a 2010 NIU Outstanding Mentor Award. This award is presented each year to an NIU faculty or staff member who shows exceptional commitment to advancing the career and/or educational goals of NIU women students, staff, and/or faculty.
**Staff Spotlight**

**Ray Foster** began his NIU career in August 1993. After a seven year stint with Building Services, he was promoted to assistant store supervisor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Foster successfully maintains an organized storeroom and keeps the instructional labs clean and running smoothly. Among his primary responsibilities are setting-up experiments, ordering chemicals and making solutions for all instructional labs. He also manages the hiring, training, and scheduling of storeroom lab aides/student workers.

Prior to NIU, Foster worked in the private sector for 25 years as a dye tank operator, maintenance mechanic, general supervisor and warehouse manager. However, Foster says, “My job in the chemistry department these last 10 years has been the best job by far – I work with good people and help students learn.” Foster’s contributions often extend beyond his job. He is past president of the AFSCME Union, 1997-1998, and is currently serving on his third three-year term as a member of the University Benefits Committee.

For nearly 30 years, Foster has been a member of Loyal Order of Moose. He served as an officer in the Rochelle lodge #903, currently serves as vice president of Moose Legion N.W. #57, and is running for his second term as president of the Illinois Moose Association District #4. At the state convention in February, Foster was recognized by Moose International as the Illinois 2009-2010 Moose Legionnaire of the Year. In July, he attended his first Moose International Convention in Nashville, Tenn.

In his spare time, Foster enjoys riding his 2005 VTX motorcycle, running his DJ/Karaoke service, and entertaining folks. He has been blessed with three wonderful daughters Debbie, Sherry, and Mindy, and many good friends.

**Meet Timothy J. Hagen**

**Timothy Hagen** joined the NIU faculty as an assistant professor of organic chemistry in August 2010. He received his bachelor’s degree from Illinois State University and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. He did postdoctoral research for Searle.

Prior to NIU, Tim worked in the pharmaceutical industry as a synthetic organic and medicinal chemist for more than 20 years. He worked for Searle, Pharmacia and Pfizer (all the same company through multiple mergers), and deCODE. He is an author on 35 journal articles, an inventor on 42 patents and patent applications, and a contributing author to three books. One of the compounds he worked on at Pfizer, SD-6010, is currently in Phase II clinical trials for the treatment of osteoarthritis.

Hagen’s prior teaching experience includes being an adjunct faculty at Northwestern University in Evanston, teaching graduate level courses in synthetic organic and physical organic chemistry, and a visiting professor at NIU, teaching organic synthesis and introductory chemistry.

Tim’s research group will focus on organic synthesis and medicinal chemistry. The focus is on synthesis of small molecules that can modulate essential pathways of infectious disease organisms. The disease targets include parasitic diseases and bacterial infections. The Hagen lab utilizes protein fragment-based screening, de novo drug design and natural product chemistry to explore enzyme inhibition and selectivity. Specific areas of interest include: (1) fragment-based design of novel small-molecules to selectively disrupt key enzymatic interactions in the non-mevalonate isoprenoid biosynthetic pathway; (2) design of novel small-molecules to selectively inhibit the malarial and bacterial forms of enzymes such as MetAP2; and (3) synthetic methodology to natural products, such as the bengamides. The bengamides show anticancer, antibiotic and anti-malarial properties. The Hagen group uses a multidisciplinary approach toward achieving these research goals including synthetic organic chemistry, computer modeling, protein crystallography, molecular and cell biology. Tim currently lives in Lisle with his wife, Cindy, and three children, Amanda, Erica and Jacob.

**Icons of NIU**

Distinguished alumni award winner and Professor Mary Wirth, Purdue University, was kind enough to return to NIU in April 2010 to present a departmental seminar. She sent this photo from her visit and wrote to us, “I managed to capture four icons of NIU all in one shot: the lagoon, the student center, Altgeld, and Joe Vaughn!”
Spring 2010 Awards

ACS Introductory Chemistry Award ............................................ Lauren Sikes, Ronald Burns, & Alexa Warner
Freshman Chemistry Achievement Award ................................. Jared Trout
Freshman Chemistry Achievement Awards Honorable Mention:
   Audrey Billhymer  Lauren Jurkowski  Robert Meyers
   Joel Colwell      Michael Mackey    Sean Neuman
   Marshall Happ    Patrick Madura    Jill Weidner
   Jesse Hartpence  Marcy McClean    Jessica Wierdak
Outstanding Sophomore Award .................................................. Ticia Burgie
Outstanding Junior Award .......................................................... Lan-Yin Caroline Liu
ACS Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry ....................... Ticia Burgie
Chemistry Alumni Undergraduate Scholarship .......................... Albertina Gaebler
Van Acker-Duminy-Kovarik Scholarship .................................... Amy Pagurko
Rosalie Reynolds Memorial Scholarship .................................. Caitlin Morton
John D. Graham Scholarship ...................................................... Chi Kai Lin
Kevin Cull Memorial Teaching Awards .................................... Megan Murtaugh & Nicole Potts
Joe W. Vaughn Teaching Award .................................................. Sara Koepke
Dean’s Award ........................................................................... Daniel Renfus
NIU Chemistry Club Edwards-Hyland Award .............................. Pinal Chokshi
NIU Chemistry Club Outstanding Undergraduate
   Research Award ................................................................. Amy Dalby
ACS Rock River Section Research Award ................................. Lan-Yin Caroline Liu
American Institute of Chemists Student Award ......................... Meka Francis & Jeffrey Johnson
Outstanding Senior Award ........................................................ Meka Francis & Jeffrey Johnson

Introduction of Chemistry Graduates

Meka Francis & Jeffrey Johnson
Degrees Awarded in 2009-2010

Undergraduate Degrees

**AUGUST 2009**
Benjamin Reynolds Blickhan
Keith Robert Hermann
Adam Aaron Mitton
Tanya Mary Zafiropoulos

**MAY 2010**
Erik Michael Alberts
Katherine Quarles Baker
Andrew Michael Baumann
Kenneth Nicholas Boblak
Krysta Joann D’Amico
Amy Lucille Dalby
Meka Elizabeth Francis
Christopher Charles Frye
Robert M. Gallo
Jefffrey Douglas Johnson
Dariusz Kaminski
Allen Xun Kou

Lan-Yin Caroline Liu
Patrick William Myhre
Chris Joseph Nesmith
Philip Lee Pagano
Amy Marie Pagurko
Ketan Shailesh Pathak
Andrew John Prochaska
Daniel John Renfus
Ahlam Abdulla Shabbian
Robert Deleon Stockley
Tanjii Larai White

Graduate Degrees  (Faculty Advisor in Italics)

**AUGUST 2009**
Courtney Alexandra Cherok (Ph.D.) - Jon W. Carnahan
Danielle Marie Corgliano (M.S.) - Oliver Hofstetter
Kirin Kumar Solingapuram Sai (Ph.D.) - Douglas A. Klumpp

**DECEMBER 2009**
Martin Kocanda (Ph.D.) - Chong Zheng
Ihor Kulchytskyy (M.S.) - Tao Xu

**MAY 2010**
Jay Kent Barre (M.S.) - Dmitry V. Kadnikov
Brendan Charles Dutmer (Ph.D.) - Thomas M. Gilbert
Jessica Marie Kassa (Ph.D.) - Douglas A. Klumpp
Ang Li (Ph.D.) - Douglas A. Klumpp
Laura Sue Murdaugh (Ph.D.) - Elizabeth R. Gaillard
Matthew John O’Connor (M.S.) - Douglas A. Klumpp
Yuriy Pyatkivskyy (Ph.D.) - Victor V. Ryzhov
Michael Joseph Topinka (M.S.) - Douglas A. Klumpp
Zhenzhen Yang (M.S.) - Tao Xu
Michael Anthony Zickus (Ph.D.) - Victor V. Ryzhov

Graduate Student Highlights

**Kenneth Boblak** (M.S. candidate) submitted a paper to the 240th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society. The paper describes charge migration in organic molecules. He is coauthor with two other graduate students in the Chemistry Department, **Rajasekhar Neredla** (Ph.D. candidate) and **Matthew O’Connor** (B.S., ’08; M.S., ’10).

**Barada Dash** (Ph.D. candidate) presented his research on boron chemistry at the Boron in the Americas XII Conference held June 2010, in East Lansing, Mich. Dash has also coauthored four recent publications describing his research on boronated dendrimer in the Journal of the American Chemical Society, Dalton Transactions, Organometallics, and Collection of Czechoslovak Chemical Communications.

**Anila Kethe** (Ph.D. candidate) submitted a paper to the 240th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society. The paper describes her work on the chemistry of fluorinated aromatic compounds.

**Sara Koepke** (M.S. candidate) presented at the 58th ASMS Conference on Mass Spectrometry held May 2010, in Salt Lake City, Utah. She presented a poster, entitled “Reinvestigation of the Thermochemistry of Sulfuric Acid-Related Ions.”

**Megan Murtaugh** and **Sean Fanning** (Ph.D. candidates) presented their research at the 23rd Annual Gibbs Conference on Biothermodynamics held October 2009, in Carbondale, Ill.

**Matthew O’Connor** was first author on a recent publication in the Journal of the American Chemical Society. The work described the effects of trifluoromethyl groups on the chemistry of organic molecules. He was joined by coauthors: NIU undergraduates, **Kenneth Boblak**, **Jason Briski**, and **Patrick Kindelin**; graduate student, **Michael Topinka** (M.S., ’10); and Profs. **Douglas Klumpp** and **Chong Zheng**.

**Erum Raja** (Ph.D. candidate) submitted a paper to the 240th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, describing her work on the acid-catalyzed chemistry of nitrile compounds and the synthesis of heterocycles.


Congratulations to our 2009 Distinguished Alumni

The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry established a Distinguished Alumni Award program in recognition of alumni who have made exceptional accomplishments and significant contributions in one or more areas of academia, industry, and research. An inaugural group of eight recipients of this “career” award was recognized in September at the Alumni Assembly. Congratulations to the following distinguished alumni!

Norman J. Dovichi
B.S. Chemistry, 1976
B.S. Mathematical Sciences, 1976
Following his graduation from NIU, Professor Dovichi obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Utah. After a postdoctoral fellowship at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, he accepted an assistant professorship at the University of Wyoming in 1982. He moved to the University of Alberta in 1986, and then onto his current position, Endowed Professor of Analytical Chemistry, at the University of Washington in 2001. He is most widely recognized today for his work in high-throughput electrophoresis and fluorescence spectrometry as applied to human genome sequencing.

William C. Hoyle
B.S. Chemistry, 1966
B.S. Mathematical Sciences, 1966
M.S. Chemistry, 1969
Following his graduation from NIU, Hoyle obtained his Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from Iowa State University. He has more than 30 years of experience in the packaging industry. He joined Continental Can Company/Crown as a chemist and regulatory affairs advisor. He worked his way through the ranks to become the vice president of materials & packaging technology for more than 10 years. Currently he is an industry consultant in the areas of regulatory affairs, material selection, project selection, and project sequencing.

Howard C. Jordi
B.S. Chemistry, 1967
Ph.D. Chemistry, 1974
After receiving his Ph.D., Jordi served over three years as a captain in the US Army at Walter Reed Army Institute of Dental Research, worked as a chemicals applications manager for Waters Associates and as a senior chemist for LC Laboratories. In 1980, Jordi launched his own company, Jordi Associates Inc. He has spent 29 years developing polymeric resins and HPLC columns, has several patents and publications to his name, and is still actively doing research at Jordi Labs. Today he is responsible for the research and development of the entire Jordi HPLC product line.

James W. Jorgenson
B.S. Chemistry, 1974
Following his graduation from NIU, Professor Jorgenson obtained his Ph.D. from Indiana University. He joined the faculty of the University of North Carolina as an assistant professor in 1979. He was promoted to associate professor in 1985, professor in 1987, appointed the Francis P. Venable Professor of Chemistry in 1994, and the William Rand Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Chemistry in 1999. He served as the chemistry department chair from 2000 to 2005. He is one of the originators of capillary electrophoresis, with his first publications on this topic appearing in 1981.

Susan M. Mini
B.S. Chemistry, 1980
After receiving her bachelor’s in chemistry, Dean Mini earned an M.S. in physics and a Ph.D. in molecular science from Southern Illinois University. In 1994, she returned to NIU as an assistant professor in the Department of Physics, became associate professor in 2000, then full professor in 2004, and served as department chair from 2003-2008. She continues to publish regularly and has garnered well over $1,000,000 in federally funded grants. Today she serves as associate dean of research and graduate affairs for the NIU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Michael J. Sepaniak
B.S. Chemistry, 1974
Following his graduation from NIU, Professor Sepaniak obtained his Ph.D. from Iowa State University. He accepted an assistant professorship at the University of Tennessee in 1981. He rose through the ranks to full professor, served as department chair from 1996-2003, and was named Ziegler Professor of Chemistry in 1998. He has published more than 165 manuscripts, directed more than 60 doctoral students and 20 postdoctoral associates, and in the last five or six years alone, has garnered more than $1,500,000 in extramural funding.
Anne Barrett Swanson  
B.S. Chemistry, 1970  

Following her graduation from NIU, Swanson obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has since served as a cancer researcher, professor and department chair at Edgewood College, Wis., program director for the National Science Foundation, and associate academic dean at the College of St. Catherine, Minn. In 1992 she became professor and dean of the School of Natural Sciences at Sonoma State University, Calif. Upon retirement in 2000, she was named dean emeritus by the university president. She continues to serve as a consultant for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Mary J. Wirth  
B.S. Chemistry, 1974  

Following her graduation from NIU, Professor Wirth obtained her Ph.D. from Purdue University. She immediately took an assistant professorship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She then worked at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory before joining the faculty at the University of Delaware in 1986. She rose to the rank of C. Eugene Bennett Professor of Chemistry before moving on to the University of Arizona in 2004. Today she is the W. Brooks Fortune Professor of Chemistry at Purdue University and the founder and CEO of bioVidria, Inc.

Alumni Assembly 2009  
September 24-25, 2009  

The NIU Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry hosted 25 alumni to an evening reception on Thursday and a meeting on Friday, September 24-25. Alumni and friends traveled from Delaware, Massachusetts, Colorado, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, and all areas of Illinois to participate in this year’s festivities. From the class of 1963 to 2009, the group had plenty to reminisce about and great stories to share.

On Friday, Dean McCord welcomed the alumni group, recipients of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award were introduced, and Chair Jon Carnahan presented on the State of the Department. Alumni enjoyed a bus tour of campus and walking tour of the department, with lunch in-between. Following the afternoon working groups (alumni advisory group, distinguished alumni award, and collaborative teaching and research), the assembly concluded with a “bang” of Chem Club chemistry demos.

Please Join Us in Fall 2011  

We hope to make this a biennial event and are planning to hold our next Alumni Assembly in fall 2011. Specific dates have not yet been set, but please keep an eye out for details to come!

Stay Connected...  


If you have any questions, please contact Shannon Gates, slgates@niu.edu.
Thank you alumni and friends! The faculty, staff, and students of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry wish to express our appreciation for your continued support and generosity, especially in this challenging economic environment.

We are proud to acknowledge gifts from the following alumni and friends during the 2009 calendar year (January - December 2009). Organizations listed below in italics represent corporate/matching gifts.

Michael Faraday Society ($1,000 & above)
Michael (B.S., '73) & Norma Cornell; Susan M. Mini (B.S., '80); William (M.S.Ed., '50) & Dolorce (B.S.Ed., '51) Minkema

Marie Curie Circle ($250–$999)
Charles (B.S., '68) & Ann Achilles; Steven W. Anderson (Ph.D., '85); Robert M. Arduini (B.S., '85); John (B.S., '58) & Mary Davison; Diane M. Edwards; Dennis Evans & Mary Wirth (B.S., '74); Ronald (M.S., '69; Ph.D., '72) & Elizabeth Hennis; Thor (B.S., '65; Ph.D., '72) & Darlene Jondahl; James Jorgenson (B.S., '74) & Carolyn Morse; Robert V. Kennedy, Jr. (B.S., '67); Gary & Isabelle (B.S., '80; M.S.Ed., '87; M.S.Ed., '07) Kovarik; Edward Levine (B.S., '81) & Joan Feder (B.A., '81); Raymond (B.S., '70; Ph.D., '77) & Leela Lohr; Carol E. Rolf (M.S.Ed., '75); Michael Schroeder (B.S., '69; M.B.A., '72); Paul (B.S., '05) & Virginia Weber; Thomas M. Zydowsky (B.S., '75; M.S., '78); Abbott Laboratories Fund

Mendeleev Group ($100–$249)
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Top Scholars of 2009-2010

On April 29, the department held its annual Chemistry Club Awards Banquet, recognizing our top chemistry students for their academic achievement, service, and leadership. Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends, many student awards were presented including the following endowed scholarships:

**Chemistry Alumni Undergraduate Scholarship (CAUS)** is awarded to a continuing undergraduate based on overall academic excellence. The 2010 recipient is Albertina Gaebler.

**Kevin Cull Memorial Teaching Awards** are presented to outstanding graduate teaching assistants at all levels of instruction. This year’s recipients are Megan Murtaugh and Nicole Potts.

**NIU Chemistry Club Edwards-Hyland Award** is given to a junior who is an active member of the Chem Club. The 2010 winner is Pinal Chokshi.

**John D. Graham Scholarship** is given to a graduate student based upon scholarship, including both academic and research achievements. This year’s winner is Chi Kai Lin.

**Rosalie Reynolds Memorial Teaching Scholarship** is given to a junior or senior based on overall grade point average and intention to pursue a career in teaching. The 2010 recipient is Caitlin Morton.

**Van Acker-Duminy-Kovarik Scholarship** is awarded to an incoming undergraduate or graduate student with preference given to students planning to study inorganic chemistry and/or pursue a career in teaching. The 2010 recipient is Amy Pagurko.

For a complete listing of awards and recipients, see page 6 or visit www.niu.edu/chembio/giving.