

Alan Katritzky's Legacy

Early last February the Department lost one of its most esteemed colleagues when Alan Katritzky passed away at the age of 85. During Alan's 34 years on our faculty, he consistently maintained the largest research group in our Department, with more than 30 graduate students, postdocs, visiting scholars and visiting faculty. The intellectual output of his research program was prodigious, with more than 2170 papers published, plus authoring or editing more than 200 books during his sixty years of research. He supervised the research of more than 300 graduate students and the work of 500 postdocs and visiting scholars. While at UF, he was particularly recognized for his strong collaborative interactions with chemical industry, bringing in more than \$30M of funding to UF as a result of collaborations with these companies. A Fellow of the Royal Society, he received a plethora of other national and international awards, honorary degrees and other honors.

All of this activity took an enormous amount of drive and energy, but he still found time to express his humanitarian principles by founding, in 2000, the free online journal, "Arkivoc", which was designed to provide less well-endowed research workers, especially those in the developing world, with the opportunity to publish in the primary literature. He was also known for initiating the now-well-established and highly successful Flohet Conferences in heterocyclic and synthetic organic chemistry, the 16th of which will be held in March of 2015.

Alan's teaching, mentorship and research are a tribute to his phenomenal talent and industry, and his name will rightly stand in perpetuity with the creation of the Katritzky Chair at the University of Florida, which was endowed by Alan and his wife, Linde. Since his passing, Alan has been greatly missed, not only by us at UF, but by the world-wide chemical community, but his boundless legacy will continue to provide inspiration for generations to come.

keep in touch

with Chemistry

We want to hear from you! Send us career updates or memories of "how it used to be" to: Kerstin Erickson, PO Box 117200, Gainesville, FL 32611-7200 or email chairadmin@chem.ufl.edu. Join us in our efforts to keep UF Chemistry a top-notch program by your donations. To make online contributions, go to <https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/CLAS.asp>. Select "Chemistry 001401" and continue through the prompts. By phone, call 877-351-2377 or mail us a check made out to the University of Florida Foundation. Please designate or include the fund number.

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FALL 2014
University of Florida
Department of
Chemistry

Welcome new Faculty

Dr. Kari Basso, Director of Mass Spec Services.

Kari was born and grew up in Canada. She received her bachelors in 1994 from Concordia College in Moorhead Minnesota and graduated from Louisiana State University in 1999 with a Ph.D in Analytical Chemistry. She began her career at The Ohio State University bringing biological mass spectrometry expertise to the university and was promoted to Director of Mass Spectrometry and Proteomics Facility in 2002. While at OSU she brought in over 5 million dollars worth of new mass spectrometers, led the facility in the addition of new services, and developed new methodologies for proteomic, lipidomic, metabolomic and glycomic applications. She joined the UF chemistry department in March 2014 and is eager to advance mass spectrometry instrumentation and capabilities at UF.



Dr. Alex Grenning, Assistant Professor, Organic Division



Alex was born and raised in the Chicagoland area. He first realized his passion for organic chemistry during his sophomore year at Lake Forest College. As a graduate student at the University of Kansas he developed the palladium-catalyzed "deacylative allylation" reaction. He then studied "diversity-oriented synthesis" and "function-oriented synthesis" with Professor John Porco Jr. at Boston University. At BU, he developed a hydroxy-

directed oxidative coupling strategy for the remodeling of the natural product fumagillol as well a rapid approach to nemorosone analogs. At the University of Florida, his research program will focus on the discovery of complexity generating reactions highly complex bioactive molecules. By targeting reactions that rapidly prepare complex bioactive chemical motifs, the Grenning lab will also be able to discover novel, therapeutically relevant small molecules through collaborations.

A note from The Chair

It is great to be able to greet all of our friends and alumni this fall semester when so many wonderful things are happening at UF that will help move the Department of Chemistry forward towards the position of prominence that we all are working so hard to achieve.

Earlier this fall, the University broke ground for the much needed and long awaited new Chemistry/Chemical Biology building. Construction is now seriously underway on Buckman Drive, north of the Chemistry Laboratory Building, which was completed in 1990. You can follow the construction process on a day-to-day basis by going to the new building link at the Department website. We should be ready to move into the building during the summer term of 2016. The first two floors of this beautiful building will house new general chemistry and organic chemistry laboratories, which will allow us to offer a 21st century curriculum to the diverse multitude of undergraduates who pass through our freshman and sophomore chemistry courses. The upper two floors will provide state-of-the-art facilities that will enhance the Department's ability to conduct research in the broad area of drug development. There are many people at UF to thank for the fact that this building has finally become a reality. Foremost we must thank outgoing UF President Bernie Machen, who never wavered from his commitment to obtain funding for this building during his tenure as President. The new building provides the Department with a great opportunity to enhance its faculty and its graduate program by attracting the very best and brightest in both areas. We are fortunate to have already begun reaping such benefits in the hiring of new faculty. This fall, two enthusiastic new faculty, synthetic organic chemist, Assistant Professor Alex Grenning and new Director of Mass Spec Services, Kari Busso, have joined us, and in January physical polymer chemist,

Associate Professor Daniel Savin, will be arriving as the first part of our quest to hire faculty to fulfill the goals of the Smart Polymer Nanomedicine initiative that was authorized within the Provost's strategy to reach preeminence. Just recently, an acceptance from the second faculty that we sought to fill the needs of this initiative has been received from a computational materials scientist. I will introduce that new faculty member to you in the next Chemical Bond.

Recruiting new faculty costs money, and every dollar that you donate to the Department enhances our ability to recruit top notch faculty and to support current faculty and students. We are sincerely grateful for everything that our alumni and friends do to support the Department. In order for the Department to take the next step towards prominence, we need to increase the number of endowed Chairs within the Department. Virtually all top-ten chemistry departments have sufficient endowed or named Professorships so that virtually every active full professor in the department is able to be provided such a title and the benefits that accrue from it. Currently our Department has six endowed chairs, which certainly is a lot better than the one we had when I was last chair in the 1980's. However, this is the next step that the Department must take in order to achieve preeminence. I might note that three of the six current chairs were made possible by donations from former chemistry faculty.

As always, we welcome visits from you at almost any time during the year. If you are in the vicinity, please let us know and plan to stop by. We will be very happy to bring you personally up to date on all the great things that we anticipate to be happening in the future that will continue to make you proud to be a Chemistry Gator.

-William Dolbier

Construction has begun

As mentioned in the Notes from the Chair section, the Department celebrated the start of construction of the new Chemistry/Chemical Biology building at a groundbreaking ceremony at the site on Friday, October 10. It was short and sweet, as numerous university luminaries, including President Bernie Machen, Provost Joe Glover, Interim Dean Dave Richardson and Chairman of the University Board of Trustees, Steve Scott, all said appropriately nice things about the bright future that they foresaw for Chemistry at the University of Florida. Of course, we could not agree more. This new building will allow us not only to lift our first two years undergraduate curriculum up to a 21st century level, but, combined with other initiatives that the University is taking, should also allow us to compete with the very best Departments in the nation regarding recruitment of top faculty and graduate students. Following the ceremony, there was a short meeting of those members of our Leadership Board who were able to be in town for the event. At this meeting we welcomed new Leadership Board members, Herman Gleicher and Jose Arnao. All members of our Leadership Board have been tremendously supportive and, in the end, instrumental to the successful culmination of our efforts to get this building underway. Thus far, five members of the Board have taken advantage of the multitude of naming opportunities that have become available, and indeed remain available, with the advent of the new building. For example the new 2nd floor auditorium has been sponsored by a \$1M donation from Dr. Howard Sheridan, and substantial contributions for the naming of conference rooms and study lounges have been made by Robert Kincart, Eugene Inman, and Herman Gleicher. Smaller, but nevertheless essential donations have been made by 64 other Board members, alumni and friends of the Department, and we sincerely thank all of you who have contributed to making this building become a reality.

Award Winning Faculty

2014 was an outstanding year for our faculty with respect to National and International awards. Professor Rod Bartlett received a Humboldt Research Award that is allowing him to enhance his research collaborations at the Max Planck Institutes in Mülheim and at the University of Heidelberg in Germany. Professor Weihong Tan has been named an Associate Editor for the ACS journal Analytical Chemistry. Professor Adrian Roitberg has been named an ACS Fellow, as well as a Fellow of the American Physical Society, and Prof. Ken Wagener a Fellow of the Polymer Division, ACS. Associate Professor Brent Sumerlin was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and he received the Journal of Polymer Science Innovation Award, which recognizes the top polymer chemist in the world under the age of 40. Assistant Professor Rebecca Butcher has received two of the most prestigious awards for junior faculty, being named an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow and winning a Cottrell Scholar Award, while Assistant Professor David Wei received an NSF CAREER Award.

Our faculty have also been very successful in being recognized by awards within the University of Florida this past year, with Dr. Tan receiving the 2014 UF Outstanding Postdoc Mentoring Award and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Distinguished Mentor Award, and Dr. Wei receiving the 2014 University Faculty Advisor/Mentor of the Year award. In addition, Prof. Jon Stewart was named the Col. Allen R. and Margaret G. Crow College Term Professor for 2014-2015. Lastly, just recently, Dr. Maria Korolev, a Lecturer who only joined our faculty last year, has been chosen to receive one of the three inaugural CLASSC Teaching Awards for Fall 2014, which were created to recognize the importance of outstanding teaching for the student experience in CLAS.

Also definitely worth mentioning is the promotion of Prof. Kirk Schanze to the rank of Distinguished Professor! He is the fourth Chemistry faculty member to be honored by promotion to that esteemed rank, others being Professors Christou, Martin and Tan. Prof. Bartlett is of comparable rank, being a Graduate Research Professor.