



2008–2009 Graduate Student Awards

The department recognized graduate students with several awards in the past year. The Ruegamer Charitable Trust, established by William and Arlene Ruegamer, provides scholarships for students of high scholastic standing in biochemistry. The recipients for 2008–2009 were **Mandy Blackburn, Jordan Mathias** and **George Okeyo**. The Colonel Allen R. and Margaret G. Crow Endowment and the Dr. Ann R. Stasch Memorial Scholarships were again used to recognize excellence in graduate student peer-reviewed publications. This year, Crow-Stasch Publication Awards were given to **Erik Berda, Aubrey Dyer, Jürgen Koller** (First Place) and **Rashmi Bagai, Dodge Baluya, Chi-Yuan Cheng, Elena Dolghih, Luis Galiano, Matt Jeletic, Youngmi Kim, Brian Kupchak, Kai Li, Yan Liu, Prabodhika Mallikaratchy** and **Lindsay Sexton**. The 2007 Procter & Gamble Awards for Research Excellence were given to **Rashmi Bagai, Mandy Blackburn, Bob Brookins, Cristina Crecca, Luis Galiano, Julia Keller, Yongmi Kim, Jurgen Koller, Kai Li, Nancy Liu, Prabodhika Mallikaratchy, Neil Stowe, Cory Toyota** and **Huimeng Wu**. The 2008 M.A. Battiste Award for Creative Work in Synthetic Organic Chemistry, sponsored by Petra Research, was presented to **Ampofo Darko**.

keep in touch with Chemistry

We want to hear from you! Send your update to: Maribel Lisk, PO Box 117200, Gainesville, FL 32611-7200. Please include your degree (BS, MS, PhD, etc.), graduation date, and e-mail address if you have one. Photos are welcome, too! You can also e-mail your update to chairadmin@chem.ufl.edu. To make online contributions to the department, go to <https://www.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/CLAS.asp>. Select "Chemistry 001401" and continue through the prompts.

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New ACS Journal

The Department of Chemistry is home to a new American Chemical Society journal. *Applied Materials & Interfaces* is the 36th ACS journal, and Professor **Kirk S. Schanze** is its founding editor.

Applied Materials & Interfaces will start publishing in early 2009 and cover a range of subjects, including advanced active and passive electronic and optical materials; coatings; colloids; biomaterials and biointerfaces; polymer materials; hybrid and composite materials; and friction and wear.

Kirk joined our chemistry faculty in 1986 and currently serves as the Organic Division Head.



Sisler Hall!

The Chemistry Research Building has been renamed Harry H. Sisler Hall. The October 22, 2008 renaming ceremony included remarks from Dr. Steven Scott from the Board of Trustees, Dr. Joseph Glover, Provost of the University, CLAS Dean Dr. Paul D'Anieri and Dr. Daniel Talham, Chair of Chemistry. Members of Harry's family unveiled the new Sisler Hall sign. Many of you will remember Prof. Sisler from his long tenure in our department. He came to Florida in 1956 from Ohio State University and took a strong leadership role in building our department into a first-rank unit. Harry also served as Dean of the College, Executive Vice President, Dean of the Graduate School and Director of Sponsored Programs. He was a dedicated teacher, an admirable administrator, and is widely remembered as father of the modern UF Department of Chemistry.

50 Years Since Graduation!

We would like to recognize our masters and doctoral graduates of fifty years ago. In 1958, our department awarded M.S. degrees to **Ann McKay** (Prof. Black), **Janette Pilipovich** (Prof. Black), **Ru-Jen Han** (Prof. Butler), **Harold Spencer** (Prof. Reid) and **Virginia Barker** (Prof. Sterns). That year we also graduated eight Ph.D. students: **Robert Fitzwater** (Prof. Gropp), **David Fisher** (Prof. Gropp), **James Harris** (Prof. Sisler), **Mildred Bradley** (Prof. Sisler), **Donald Butler** (Prof. Pollard), **Warner Christie** (Prof. Wethington), **Marjorie Newell** (Prof. Argus) and **Gordon Smith** (Prof. Muschlitz).

on the cover

Department of Chemistry Faculty

There are only two other faculty group pictures in chemistry and they happen to have been taken 20 years apart (1968 and 1988). It seemed appropriate that in 2008 we take a group photo during the Sisler Hall Naming Ceremony. Our 2008 faculty group includes several emeritus faculty.

a note from the chair

We are very proud to recognize one of our own for his academic contributions to the Department of Chemistry, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University of Florida by renaming CRB to Harry H. Sisler Hall. This recognition is due to the efforts of many people.

I recall first hearing the suggestion to rename CRB in 1991 at a faculty meeting. I have a vivid memory of then-chair Mike Zerner declaring, "We should name CRB after Harry Sisler". I was only mildly disillusioned when it didn't happen the way Mike said it should. In preparation for this event, I had a chance to look back at some old files that revealed the effort that started back in 1991.

A letter from Mike Zerner to Harry Sisler:

Dear Harry,
Could I please have a one page narrative style resume of the life and times of Harry Sisler. This should be double spaced so that I can ad-lib. So what is it for? None of your business!
Sincerely,
Michael C. Zerner
Professor and Chairman of Chemistry

In a letter dated October 1992, from Mike to then Provost Andrew Sorensen outlining the case, Harry's biosketch was included. Shortly afterwards, a memo from Provost Sorensen responding to Mike outlined details of the uphill battle such a proposal would face, and thanked Mike for his enthusiasm.

The paper trail stops there, but I can still see Mike coming to the faculty to announce that the administration wouldn't go for the renaming. "They are only naming buildings after big donors," he stated.

Mike was not to be deterred, "But we are going to do it anyway. We are just going to start calling it Sisler Hall.



Let them try and stop us," he declared. From then on, all departmental correspondence referred to Sisler Hall. I think Mike even went so far as to put up some signs.

My faith was restored, but of course it didn't stick. Nevertheless, the idea was planted, waiting for its time.

That time is now here. Our colleague, Dean Emeritus Will Harrison, got us started again, by drafting a resolution last year that was approved by the faculty and signed by EVERY faculty member in the department. Rick Yost, then-President of the Faculty Senate, guided the resolution through the Honorary Degrees, Distinguished Alumnus Awards and Memorials Committee. Finally, President Machen and the Board of Trustees bucked

the trend of naming only after big donors and made a very loud statement about the high regard the University of Florida holds for achievements in scholarship and education.

We honor Harry Sisler for leading the way during the late 1950's, 1960's and even into the 1970's, transforming Chemistry into a modern, nationally recognized Department. Harry was always quick to point out, "I didn't do anything by myself." He would want to include all of his colleagues in this recognition. So along with Harry, this renaming pays tribute to that era in our Department's history, and all of the students, staff, and faculty who contributed during this remarkable period.

—Daniel R. Talham