



the chemical bond

Spring 2007
University of Florida
Department of Chemistry

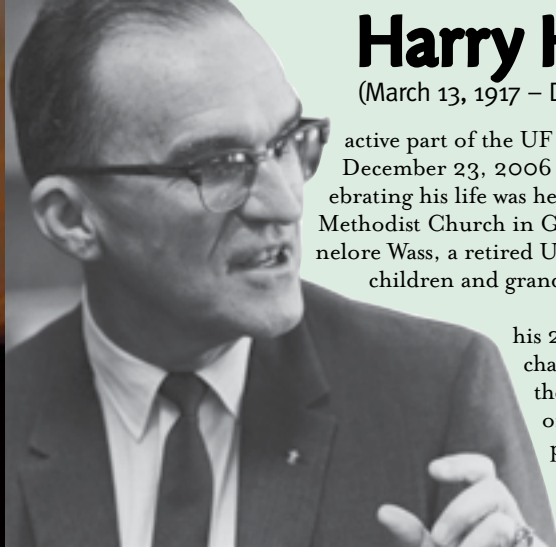
national award



Rodney J. Bartlett, on the “big screen” when being presented his award.



Professor Rodney J. Bartlett was honored with the 2007 ACS Award in Theoretical Chemistry at an award ceremony during the 233rd ACS National Meeting in Chicago in March, 2007. A joint Chemistry Departmental Colloquium and Annual Löwdin Lecture was delivered by Professor Bartlett in April in celebration of his ACS Award. Congratulations, Rod!



Harry H. Sisler

(March 13, 1917 – December 23, 2006)

Emeritus Professor Harry Hall Sisler retired in 1985 but continued to be an

active part of the UF chemistry community until his death on December 23, 2006 at age 89. A public memorial service celebrating his life was held on January 30, 2007, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Gainesville. He is survived by his wife, Hannelore Wass, a retired UF educational psychologist, as well as his children and grandchildren.

Sisler served in many leadership roles during his 29-year career with the university, including chair of the Department of Chemistry, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, dean of the Graduate School and executive vice president of the university under President Stephen C. O’Connell. His presence among us will be missed but the memory of his life will continue to impact each who knew him.

on the cover:

study abroad, hong kong

During the first half of May, ten undergraduate students joined Dr. Jeffrey Keaffaber in a UF study abroad program. The course entitled “Chemical and Environmental Aspects of the Theme Parks in Hong Kong” included three days in Atlanta, GA to participate in the Aquatic Animal Life Support Conference at the Georgia Aquarium. The conference, as well as

the study in Hong Kong, featured an in depth analysis of marine animal life support systems and all chemical processes involved in their design and operation. From Atlanta the group crossed the Pacific Ocean to Hong Kong. The Hong Kong trip included making field and laboratory measurements of several water chemistry parameters at Ocean Park, a marine

oriented theme park. At Hong Kong Disneyland, the students learned about environmental projects related to fireworks chemistry, water utilization and conservation, and integrated pest management, which is a program to limit pesticide use. This was the inaugural course, and it is planned to be offered annually. The group included Amanda Arsenault—Chemistry, Tyler

Outstanding undergraduates

In April, the Department chose four outstanding undergraduates for awards funded by UF alumni and friends. With applications from over 20 outstanding students, the competition was very tight, and the judges had to make some difficult choices.

The Colonel Allen R. and Margaret G. Crow award goes to the outstanding graduating senior. This year's winner is Jessica Pfeilsticker, who came to UF after earning her AA degree at Manatee Community College. Jessica finished her BS with a perfect 4.0 average and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a superb thesis on Resistively Detected NMR with Professor Russ Bowers. Jessica will soon be moving to Pasadena to

work on her Ph.D. at Caltech.

The three additional awards are for juniors with superior records in chemistry coursework. The winner of the 2007 Howard M. Sheridan Award is Shane Parker, a junior in the standard chemistry curriculum with a double major in mathematics. Andrew Cohen, who will complete dual degrees in chemistry and chemical engineering, receives the 2007 Gordon M. and Joyce L. Smith award. The 2007 Joseph P. Lafornera award goes to David McDonald, a major in the biochemistry track.

Thank you to the donors for making these awards possible, and congratulations to the winners.

—Kathryn Williams



Spring chemistry graduates waiting to shake hands with UF President Bernie Machen.

—Jeffrey Keaffaber

a note from the chair

Let me start by thanking everyone for helping smooth my transition to Department Chair. With two semesters under my belt, I am finding my "I'm new at this" excuse less and less effective.

Among our highlights this year, we were successful hiring two new faculty members to begin in August. Assistant Professor Nick Polfer's scholarship is in the area of mass spectrometry and he is expected to teach both analytical and physical chemistry courses. Associate Professor Steve Miller will join us as part of the Butler Polymer Laboratories and teach in our polymer and organic chemistry programs. We look forward to providing more detailed profiles in our next newsletter.

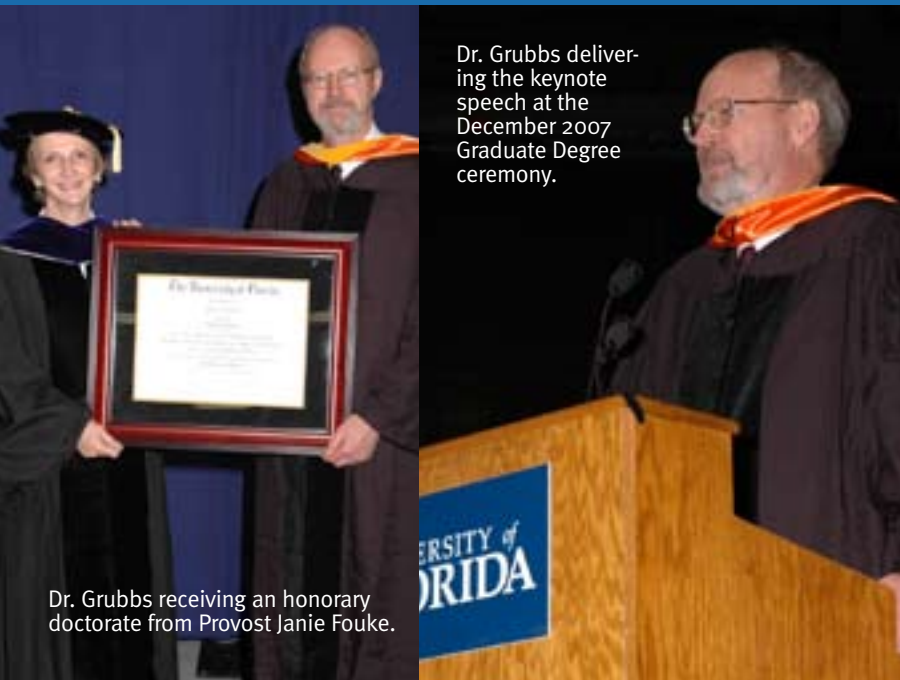
One of my favorite experiences this year was sitting with the Spring graduates and greeting each one as they received their degrees. I was fortunate to have taught many of the graduates in classes in recent years, and speaking with them at the ceremony confirmed for me the incredibly high level of talent we have the privilege to teach. It was exciting to hear of graduates' plans for jobs, travel, graduate school, and an assortment of professional schools. The 66 Chemistry graduates at the Spring ceremony bring the total number of undergraduate degrees this year to more than 90. We also awarded 40 New Ph.Ds this year. Congratulations to each of our new alumni!

The University is beginning its new capital campaign this year, Florida Tomorrow. I am sure you will hear more about it! Chemistry plans several initiatives associated with the campaign, one of which is enhancing our teaching lab equipment and instrumentation. We are committed to providing all our students access to the most modern techniques and instruments but increased enrollment is straining our ability to do so. Please contact us if you want to know how you can help.

—Daniel Talham



honorary degree



Dr. Grubbs delivering the keynote speech at the December 2007 Graduate Degree ceremony.

Dr. Grubbs receiving an honorary doctorate from Provost Janie Fouke.

On December 15, 2006, Nobel laureate and chemistry alumnus, Dr. Robert H. Grubbs, received the honorary degree, Doctor of Science, from the University of Florida. The ceremony recognized Grubb's accomplishments as a scholar, research scientist, mentor, and Nobel laureate that have benefited this university, his profession, this nation and the world beyond.

Grubbs earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry from UF in 1963 and 1965, respectively. Professor Emeritus Merle Battiste was his advisor. Grubbs completed his PhD in chemistry at Columbia University and is currently the Victor and Elizabeth Atkins Professor of Chemistry at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

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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