

APRIL - JUNE 2016



FREE ENERGY & CATALYST

A QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER FEATURING
SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
CHEMISTRY ALUMNI

Navy Taps First African-American Woman from ROTC for Sub Service

Nsombi Roberts is special. She is a chemistry major at Southern-Baton Rouge but is best known at this time as an African American trailblazer whose achievement is recognized in the middle of Black History Month. You see Nsombi is the first African American woman from Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps anywhere to be selected to serve aboard a U. S. Naval Nuclear submarine. She is one of 4000 students enrolled in 166 colleges and universities. I am proud to call her a fellow chemistry alumnus and equally pleased to have taught her in three upper level chemistry classes. I hope that you will open the link, read it, and appreciate the impact of this monumental piece of distinction.



From the Editor

Over the past few years, the chemistry department has had the opportunity to assess the department's productivity and recognize three of its outstanding faculty responsible for the department's growth and development. During this time, several members of the chemistry alumni concluded that key individuals have provided the foundation for making the baccalaureate chemistry program one of the more productive courses of study in the nation. This newsletter is one of several avenues we have chosen to give visibility to this incomparable level of programmatic achievement. We began this process four years ago by honoring the late Dr. Jack H. Jefferson for his outstanding commitment to analytical chemistry and to chemistry teaching in general. His work contributed to the intellectual development of

graduates with sharp analytical and problem-solving skills.

In 2014 the chemistry faculty initiated the Vandon E. White Award which recognizes the highest ranking graduating senior in chemistry. This award was so named because Dr. White was the primary architect in developing the chemistry department we have enjoyed in the past 50 years. In one year in the 1960's there were sixteen PhD's on Southern University's chemistry faculty. Dr. White is presently a major financial contributor to the award named in his honor.

In the fall of 2015 the chemistry alumni steering committee was appointed by department Chair Dr. Edwin Walker and given the charge of continuing to honor program builders by authorizing the establishment of the annual Wilbur B. Clarke Symposium in Chemistry.

The inaugural activity was quite successful and served as a catalyst for beginning several other initiatives that would bring visibility to chemistry and to our capability for planning and attracting funds for program growth and development. We ask for your support as we continue to make chemistry a great academic choice at Southern University.

This issue of the newsletter provides a very brief overview of activities of some of our graduates. Other alumni will be featured in greater detail at the website that is now under construction.

The Alumni Team is grateful to the Southern University Foundation for its partial support of this pilot activity.

William E. Moore, PhD
Project director and
Steering Committee Chair



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

at Southern

Historical and
Philosophical
Overview of
Chemistry at
Southern
University and
A&M College

For more than five decades, the chemistry department has successfully implemented a diverse, student-centered academic program. During the course of the department's evolution, methods, personnel, as well as resources have changed, but the theme of academic excellence has persisted.

In 1963, three of four SUBR chemistry graduates went on to earn Ph. D. degrees. Since then, countless chemistry majors have left the department to become physicians, dentists, industrial leaders, and research scientists. In addition, the department has produced nationally acclaimed academic scientists who are currently recognized as being at the top of their field by the larger chemistry community.

The use of the student-centered approach places Southern University at Baton Rouge (SUBR) in a small group of institutions that believe personal mentoring and undergraduate research are indispensable components of a science major's academic experience. Southern University was doing this long before the terms became popular in higher education lexicon.

Over the past five decades, the philosophical centerpiece of the chemistry department has been student focused. The faculty has demonstrated that research productivity, scholarship, and teaching excellence can coexist in an environment that gives priority to student development. Today's department is at the cutting edge of providing physical resources that will make our majors competitive and instructional technology that will produce the very best learning opportunities for students. The chemistry department in 2016 continues to be an inspirational unit at the University. Some of its recent graduates have earned doctorates at California Institute of Technology, Purdue University, University of California - Davis, Louisiana State University, Illinois-Chicago, University of Missouri, Georgetown, Tulane Medical School, and Baylor School of Medicine. Some of the emerging scholars are now studying at Ohio State, Wisconsin-Madison, and several other medical schools.

If one were to look at the SUBR chemistry department one month before the Martin Luther King "Dream" speech and one month after the end of President Obama's second term, one would have witnessed a time span of approximately 53 years of unprecedented change. During this change, the chemistry department has maintained a consistent theme of quality, productivity and positive student development. Come join us in our continuing quest for excellence.

First Order Kinetics

Recent
Chemistry
Graduates on
The Move

Ashley Wallace is a 2012 Chemistry graduate of Southern University. She is a PhD candidate in chemistry at Ohio State University.

Brienne Johnson is an SU chemistry graduate of 2012. She now holds a PhD degree in Material Science from North Carolina State University.

Lorene Brooke is a 2008 chemistry graduate. She received an MD degree from Ross University School of Medicine in 2016. Her Residency assignment is at Baton Rouge General Hospital.

Jessica Miller was notified in mid-March of her residency assignment in Family Medicine at LSU Ochsner. Dr. Miller is a 2008 Chemistry graduate who received the MD degree from Meharry Medical School.

Russell Ledet is a PhD candidate in Molecular Oncology in the New York University. Russell was recently awarded a prestigious competitive fellowship for his outstanding work in peer mentoring

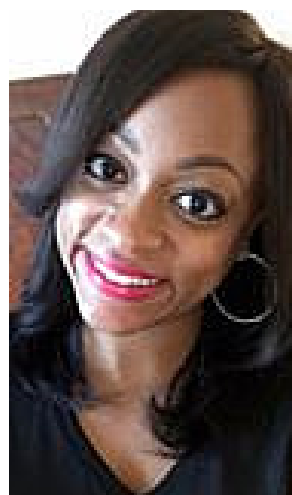
Rashaniqua Quarels is a PhD candidate in Organic Chemistry at Louisiana State University. She is a 2012 Southern University Chemistry graduate.



Ashley Wallace



Brienne Johnson



Lorene Brooke



Jessica Miller



Rashaniqua Quarels



Russell Ledet