

Maine Section ACS (MEACS) e-Newsletter, Nov.-Dec. 2014

Elections

The ACS Maine section E-election polls closed on November 29 and 5.3% of our members (339) participated. This is about .5% higher than last year and we thank those that voted in this election. Congratulations to Brian Frederick, Chair; Jim Ford, Secretary; Francois Amar, Treasurer; Mitchell Bruce, Councilor; and Jim Killarney, Alternate Councilor. Our section is always interested in recruiting people to get involved in local section activities and running for elected position. If you are interested, please contact our section chair, Brian Frederick at Brian_Frederick@umit.maine.edu.

Member news

At the ACS Council meeting in August, MEACS Councilor Mitchell Bruce was elected to the Committee on Nominations and Elections. He was also inducted as an ACS Fellow. Congratulations Mitchell! For more details on actions at the Council Meeting see the Councilor's report on the MEACS website.

Also at the San Francisco ACS meeting, a symposium was held in honor of Jayendran Rasaiah, Professor of Chemistry at UMaine. Congratulations Jay!

Have additional Maine Section member news? Please contact Bob Buntrock, our newsletter editor, at buntrock16@roadrunner.com.

ACS News

ACS has expanded membership opportunities to pre-college chemistry teachers with the AACT program (American Association of Chemistry Teachers). Very few if any Maine high school chemistry teachers are ACS members. We'll be contacting teachers on our list but please forward information on this opportunity to science teachers in any school system you may have contact with (<http://www.acs.org/aact>).

Activities

Plans are afoot for a Science Café, open to the public, on climate change on the UMaine campus in Orono either spring or fall 2015. Students, faculty, and a guest speaker will be featured. Check the MEACS website (<http://maine.sites.acs.org/>) and future newsletters for further details. The Maine Science Festival will be in Bangor on Mar. 20-22, 2015 (<http://mainesciencefestival.org/>).

Have any ideas for future meetings—Section, Science Café, etc.? Volunteer to work on the idea? Suggest or host a venue? Please submit them to the newsletter editors

NCW

Although attendance was affected by the aftermath of the Nov. 2 Nor'easter/blizzard, 40 chemistry students and their teachers from three nearby schools showed up at the annual ChemFest hosted by the UMaine ACS Student Group. They were treated to presentations on candy and sugars by Dr. Jason Bolton, Prof. of Food Science at UMaine and one on

polymerized sugars and other polymers by Dr. Will Gramlich, Prof. of Chemistry. The students also enjoyed mystery polymer buckets, candy samples, and the usual ice cream prepared with liquid nitrogen.

Several other NCW events occurred around the State including Mole Day celebrations at Unity College, middle and high schools but no reports were received.

We're also interested in any other NCW activities at any level, college, pre-college, or public. Contact Bob Buntrock with details (buntrock16@roadrunner.com).

We're recruiting volunteers to be official NCW and Chemists Celebrate Earth Day coordinators (could be the same person). Bob Buntrock is the temporary coordinator but he lacks many of the necessary contacts in education. The coordinators should have academic contacts at the college as well as the pre-college level. If interested contact Bob Buntrock (buntrock16@roadrunner.com).

Chemistry Olympiad

On March 21, 2014, 167 Maine students, from 6 high schools across the state, took the qualifying exam for the United States National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) program. The top ten scores in the state were then invited to the University of Maine to take the national exam. These top ten qualifiers competed nationally to be one of six finalists who represented the USA at the 46th International Chemistry Olympiad in Hanoi, Vietnam, July 20-29, 2014.

The national exam was a daylong endeavor comprising of two written sections and a lab based exercise. Aside from test taking, the students, parents and/or teachers toured the Chemistry Department at the University and had lunch with current undergraduate and graduate chemistry majors at the University.

The top ten qualifiers for the State of Maine were Ian MacFarlane and Matthew Crawford from Berwick Academy, Patrick Lee and Isaac Robinson from Bangor High School, Terrance Shoemaker and Alana Dube from Windham High School, Alexander Audet and Abigail Deschiffart from Maine Central Institute and Katherine Buerger and Elizabeth Morrison from Foxcroft Academy.

A special congratulation goes to Ian MacFarlane for earning honors nationally on the exam.

Many thanks need to go out for making educational events such as the Chemistry Olympiad happen. First, much credit goes to the high school teachers who encourage and support our best and brightest students. Second, this does not happen without the University of Maine Chemistry Department and its dedicated staff and students. Finally, much appreciation goes to Bob Buntrock for his many years of service running and managing the USNCO for the State of Maine. Even though he passed the reigns this year, he was very active behind the scenes making sure the program went smoothly.

James Killarney
Chemistry Olympiad Coordinator

For further details on the program in general, consult the MEACS website. Jim Killarney, now at Unity College (JKillarney@unity.edu), will continue as coordinator for 2015. Jim will be sending invitations to participate to Maine high school chemistry teachers before the end of the year. Encourage high school teachers whom you may be in contact with to participate.