

Calling All Outstanding High School Chemistry Teachers!

first published 20 October 2021

The St. Louis Section of the American Chemical Society is seeking nominations for the 2022 High School Chemistry Teaching Award. This award is given to recognize and encourage outstanding teachers of high school chemistry within the St. Louis Section. The award winner will receive a \$750 check and a plaque, presented at an awards dinner and program in April.

Please consider nominating a teacher in the Greater St. Louis Area who exemplifies excellence in the teaching of high school chemistry.

The nomination must include the following items:

- 1) The **Nominee Information Form** should be completed.
- 2) A curriculum vitae or resume that includes a list of the nominee's honors, professional activities, and additional evidence of service to the profession must be sent to acsawardstl@gmail.com

At least one recommendation must be from the nominee's current principal or supervisor. Additional recommendations may be completed by colleagues, members of the American Chemical Society who are familiar with the nominee's achievements, former students, or parents of former students.

All materials must be submitted by December 31, 2021.

Please address any questions to Rob Lamb at acsawardstl@gmail.com

51st Annual St. Louis Section ACS Symposium

first published 22 October 2021

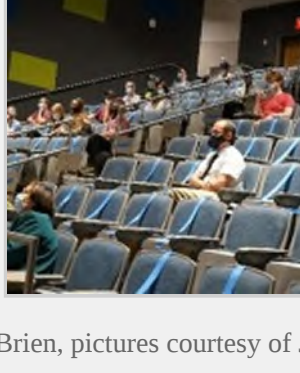
On October 1 of this year, a symposium and banquet were held in honor of Professor. Leah O'Brien, this year's 51st annual St. Louis Section ACS Awardee, for her outstanding contributions to the profession of chemistry and demonstrated potential to further the advancement of the chemical profession. The symposium "Structure and Dynamics Via Spectroscopy: From the Microwave to the UV" organized by Dr. O'Brien was attended by over 42 people in the Science Building East Room 1136 lecture hall at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIUE) and by 48 people by Zoom.

Sophia Hayes, Professor of Chemistry at Washington University and the Past-Chair of the St. Louis Section of the ACS, welcomed the attendees and spoke of the significant contributions of the local section to the community. She then introduced Michael Shaw, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, to serve as the symposium chair. Dr. Shaw spoke both to the great contributions Dr. O'Brien has made to understanding bonding and excited states of complicated molecules and her fostering of a welcoming and supportive environment for women in science. Dr. Shaw then introduced Dr. Michael Morse, Distinguished Professor at the University of Utah who spoke on "Predissociation Measurements of Bond Dissociation Energies". Next, professor Stephen Cooke, Taina Chou Fellow, and MRSC at the State University of New York spoke on "The Surprising Structures and Dynamics of Some Fluorinated Organic Compounds."

After a coffee break, Regents Professor Lucy Ziurys spoke on "The Notorious Transition Metal-Carbon Bond: What Rotational Spectroscopy Can Reveal." The Awardee, Leah O'Brien, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at SIUE, then gave her award address on "Spectroscopy on a Laser Beam – Detangling Perturbations in Complicated Molecules." Each talk generated a lot of questions, and more were to follow, along with congratulations during the reception immediately following the symposium.



From left: Michael Morse (Utah), Leah O'Brien (SIUE), Stephen Cooke (SUNY).



Submitted by John-Stephen Taylor, edited by Leah O'Brien, pictures courtesy of Jim O'Brien

This year's St. Louis Award banquet pulls double duty

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A Banquet immediately followed the symposium and reception at SIUE at the Glen Echo Country Club. As last year's banquet was canceled due to the pandemic, the section decided to honor both this year's awardee and the previous year's. Therefore, in addition to honoring Leah O'Brien, the 2021 St Louis Section ACS Awardee, the banquet also honored Professor Richard Loomis of the Chemistry Department at Washington University, the 2020 Awardee.

The banquet started with a cocktail hour with candied bacon, brie in phyllo, Caprese skewers, and Greek chicken skewers with lemon aioli hors d'oeuvres. Forty-nine local ACS section members and guests attended. Professor Sophia Hayes, past chair-elect of the St. Louis ACS Section, then called the attendees to dinner and introduced Professor Leah O'Brien and her husband, Professor Jim O'Brien, and guests. She then introduced Professor Richard Loomis and his wife, Toni Loomis, an administrative assistant for the Global Studies program at Washington University, and their guests. Prof. Hayes then thanked Prof. O'Brien and the speakers for putting on such a great symposium. Finally, she introduced elected members of the local section (seven in attendance) and former St. Louis Section ACS Award winners (nine in attendance).

Everyone was treated to a great dinner of a mixed green salad, Japanese cut sirloin, and Asian glazed salmon, with tiramisu for dessert. While people were enjoying their dessert, Prof. Hayes introduced Prof. Michael Shaw, who introduced Prof. O'Brien, after which Prof. Hayes presented her with the St. Louis Section Award plaque and a check for \$1,500.

Prof. O'Brien then gave a provocative presentation titled "Warming the Department Climate to Retain Women Faculty." In her talk, she made many suggestions about creating a more gender-friendly department environment to retain women faculty in Chemistry and other scientific disciplines. Specifically, the very successful Advocates and Allies program developed by Roger Green at North Dakota State University.

Following her talk, which generated many questions and discussions, Dr. Hayes introduced Prof. Bill Buhro, Chair of the Chemistry Department at Washington University, and Prof. Richard Loomis. After the presentation of the Award Plaque, Prof. Loomis gave a talk entitled "It is Easier to Fill Big Shoes when You are Surrounded with Good People." The talk related his experiences in becoming interested in science and pursuing an academic career when surrounded by leaders in his field. His speech prompted a question from a woman graduate student about the imposter syndrome, which is a common problem for young scientists, especially women.

Dr. Hayes closed the proceedings thanking everyone for attending and the staff and chef of the Glen Echo Country for the fine service and food and wished everyone a safe trip home. A good time was enjoyed by all!



Leah O'Brien receiving the St. Louis Section ACS Award at the Banquet from Sophia Hayes, immediate past chair of the section

Submitted by John-Stephen Taylor, edited by Leah O'Brien, pictures courtesy of Jim O'Brien



Richard Loomis receiving the St. Louis Section ACS Award at the Banquet from Sophia Hayes, immediate past chair of the section

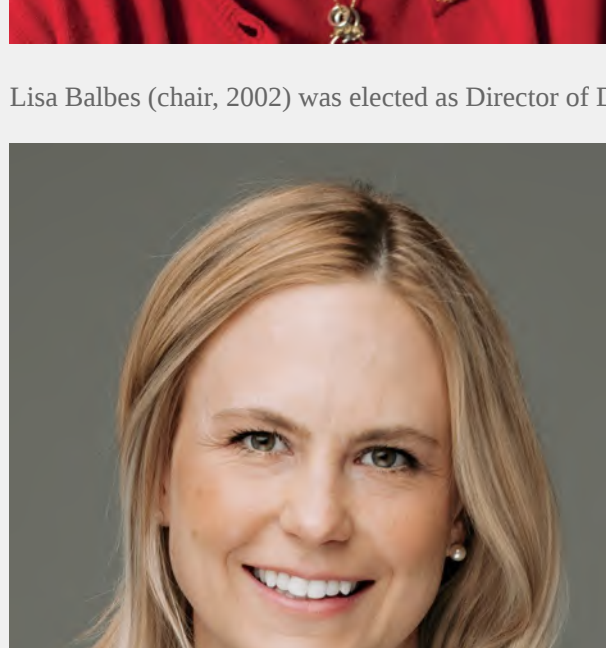
Local section members find their direction in the 2022 ACS elections

first published 30 October 2021

The leaves are turning, the air is getting chill, which can mean only one thing: [national election results!](#) All accolades and congratulations to next year's president-elect, Judith C. Giordan. Also please allow us to brag on our current and past members who were elected to national director positions.



Lisa Balbes (chair, 2002) was elected as Director of District V, of which the St. Louis section is a member.



While she no longer resides in St. Louis, Natalie LaFranzo (chair, 2017) will always be an honorary member. She was elected as a director-at-large.

Meeting & Seminars

Board of Directors

St Louis Section–ACS Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of each month over Zoom for the foreseeable future

Date: Nov 11 ([via Zoom](#))

Join internet meeting at 6:00 pm for social/chit-chat

Business meeting begins at 6:30 pm

Future meetings: The next meetings are December 9th and January 13th

Maryville University

Seminars are approximately once a month on Thursdays, 4-5 pm. Details are available on the university's [seminar page](#). All seminars are free and open to the public. Contact [Jason Telford](#) for more information.

Saint Louis University

Seminars are held on Fridays at 12 noon in Carlo Auditorium, Tegeler Hall, saint louis otherwise. Refreshments follow. For the most up-to-date information, refer to the department's [home page](#) and follow the link to the Seminar Schedule.

University of Health Sciences & Pharmacy in St. Louis

The Center for Clinical Pharmacology hosts a monthly seminar series in ARB 212 unless otherwise noted. For the most up to date information refer to the center's [seminar page](#) or contact [Jodi Maslin](#).

University of Missouri–St Louis

Mondays at 4 pm in 451 Souri Hall, unless otherwise specified. Refreshments 15 minutes prior to seminar time. For timely information on visiting seminar speakers, contact the Chemistry Department, 314.516.5311, or visit the [seminar schedule](#). The department has additional seminar series which are also accessible from this page.

Washington University

Seminars are in McMillen 311 at 4 pm unless otherwise noted. For information, consult the departmental [events page](#). Related seminars, including endowed seminar series and the WU med school biochemistry series, are linked here as well.

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