



# Saint Louis Section American Chemical Society Chemical Bond

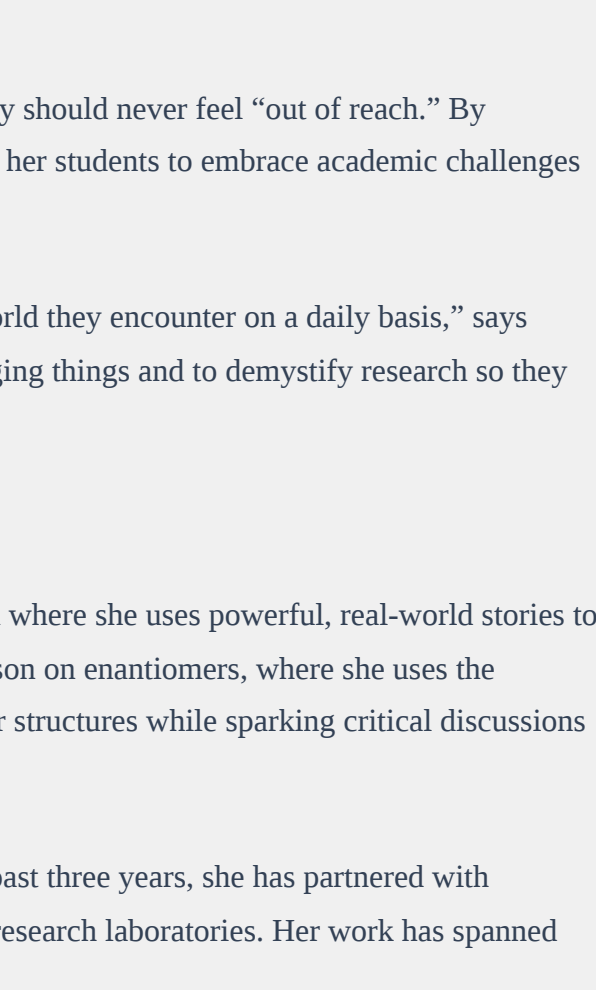
Vol. 77, No. 4, May, 2026

## Kirstin Blase is the High School Chemistry Teacher-of-the-Year

first published 17 April 2026

The American Chemical Society (ACS) St. Louis Section has named Kirstin Blase, a faculty member at Villa Duchesne, as the recipient of the 2026 High School Chemistry Teacher Award. Since joining the Villa Duchesne faculty in 2016, Blase has become a cornerstone of the school's STEM program, recognized for her ability to transform rigorous scientific concepts into meaningful, life-changing learning experiences.

Kirstin Blase, a veteran educator known for her "rigorous yet joyful" classroom environment, was selected for her innovative approach to demystifying complex science and her success in bridging the gap between high school curriculum and cutting-edge university research.



Kirstin Blase, 2026 HSCToY

### Connecting Chemistry to the Real World

At the heart of Blase's teaching philosophy is the belief that chemistry should never feel "out of reach." By removing the stigma that chemistry is inherently hard, she empowers her students to embrace academic challenges with confidence.

"I believe that students should be able to connect chemistry to the world they encounter on a daily basis," says Blase. "The key is to help them believe they can accomplish challenging things and to demystify research so they see science as accessible rather than intimidating."

### The Power of Narrative and Research

Blase's instruction is distinguished by "narrative weaving," a method where she uses powerful, real-world stories to make abstract concepts stick. A hallmark of her curriculum is her lesson on enantiomers, where she uses the historical case study of thalidomide to teach students about molecular structures while sparking critical discussions on ethics and the real-world consequences of chemical applications.

Beyond the classroom, Blase is a dedicated lifelong learner. For the past three years, she has partnered with Washington University in St. Louis (WashU) to participate in active research laboratories. Her work has spanned diverse topics, including:

- Microfluidics of infectious diseases
- Nanomaterials for solar energy conversion
- Crystal defects and surface structure effects on semiconductor nanocrystals

Blase translates this high-level research into grade-appropriate lessons, giving her students an authentic look at how chemistry is practiced in modern laboratories.

### A Culture of Trust and Excellence

Blase's impact is perhaps most visible in the culture of her classroom. Known for fostering deep intellectual and emotional connections, she has created a space where students feel safe taking intellectual risks. Her reputation preceded her during a recent observation, where one student simply noted, "We all love her. She is famous here."

"Kirstin Blase does more than just teach formulas; she inspires curiosity and ethical awareness," said Chris Mohr. "Her ability to maintain high academic expectations while ensuring every student feels supported is the hallmark of an exceptional educator."

## Karen Regina is the 2026 ACS St. Louis Section Chemical Science and Technology Award Winner!

first published 21 April 2026

Karen Regina has been named the winner of the 2026 ACS St. Louis Chemical Science and Technology Award.

Regina is senior chemistry manager at the Nestlé Purina Analytical Laboratory, where she provides strategic leadership aimed at enhancing analytical capabilities for the company's global pet care business. Her career in the St. Louis scientific community has included roles at Monsanto, Pfizer and Washington University, spanning work in environmental, pharmaceutical and agricultural chemistry.



Karen Regina, St. Louis Section Chemical Science and Technology Award Winner

Since joining Nestlé Purina in 2015, Regina has led technical innovation and laboratory modernization efforts. She secured a \$5.1 million capital investment to upgrade chemistry and microbiology facilities. Her technical work has included implementing programmable temperature vaporizer (PTV) inlets for GC-MS and developing sustainable QuEChERS protocols for pet food analysis, efforts that reduced organic-solvent waste and improved laboratory safety.

In her management role, Regina oversaw growth in her department, which increased by 56%, while service times improved and the on-time analysis rate remained above 95%. She has advocated for staffing and resources for her team and has mentored junior scientists on technical development and career progression.

Regina also participates in community and workplace initiatives. She is a member of Purina's Green Paws group, which focuses on recycling and waste-reduction activities. She has participated in Pedal the Cause and the Cancer Support Community in St. Louis and has supported the St. Joseph Housing Initiative, which assists low- to moderate-income families pursuing homeownership. Her service has included tutoring for the Immigrant Home English Learning Program and serving as a scientific mentor for students at Cor Jesu Academy.

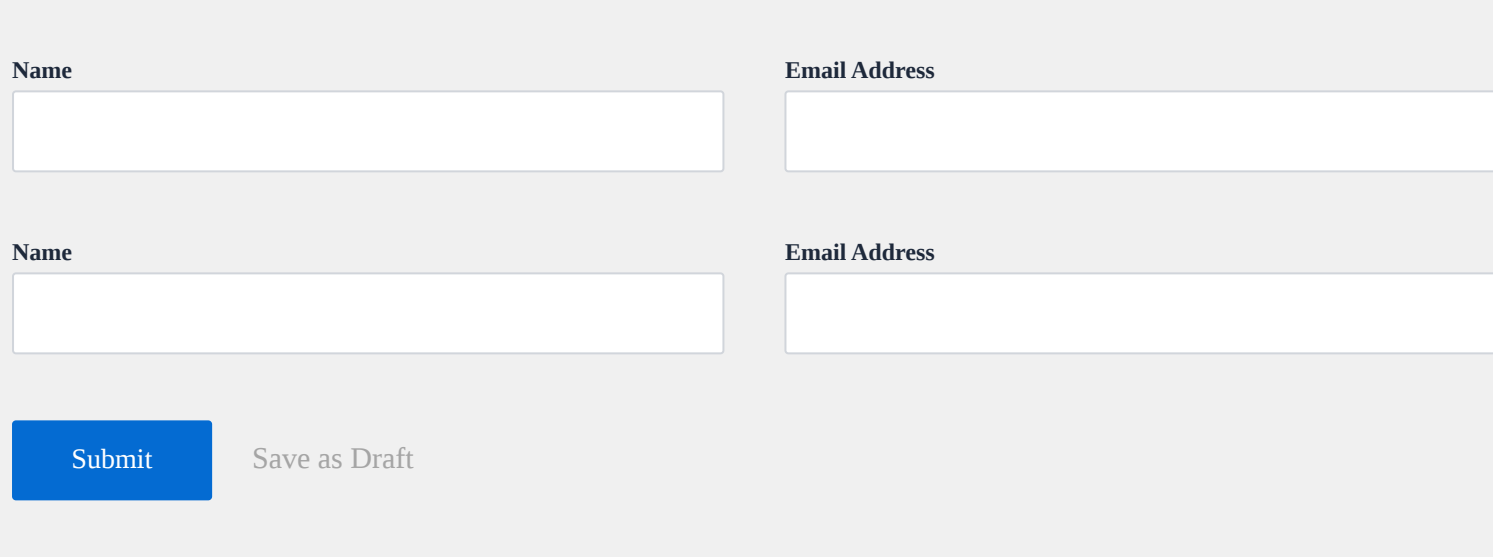
Regina holds a Master of Science in analytical chemistry from Tufts University and a Bachelor of Arts in chemistry from the University of Missouri–St. Louis. She has published peer-reviewed research in pharmacology and medicinal chemistry.

**Congratulations to Karen Regina on this well-deserved honor!**

## College Awards at the Awards Banquet

first published 27 April 2026

The College Awards Subcommittee recognizes college students who have shown outstanding achievement in their chemistry curricula. Outstanding Junior Chemistry Awards were presented to students attending institutions in the St. Louis area on April 21, 2026, at Favazzas on the Hill during the Awards Night Banquet. Participating schools include the University of Missouri at St. Louis, Washington University, St. Louis University, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Lindenwood University, Maryville University, McKendree University, Principia College, Greenville University, and Webster University.



## ACS 2026 WINNERS

### OUTSTANDING JUNIOR CHEMISTRY STUDENT AWARDS

- Greenville University – **Abby Grohmann**
- Maryville University – **John Le**
- Lindenwood University – **Morgan Romanski**
- McKendree University – **Kyle Peck**
- Principia College – **Testimony Beaton**
- Saint Louis University – **Rahul Jasthi**
- Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville – **Isabel Baldwin**
- University of Missouri – St. Louis – **Naomi Collis**
- Washington University – **Ina Jaegy**
- Webster University – **Milo Kim**

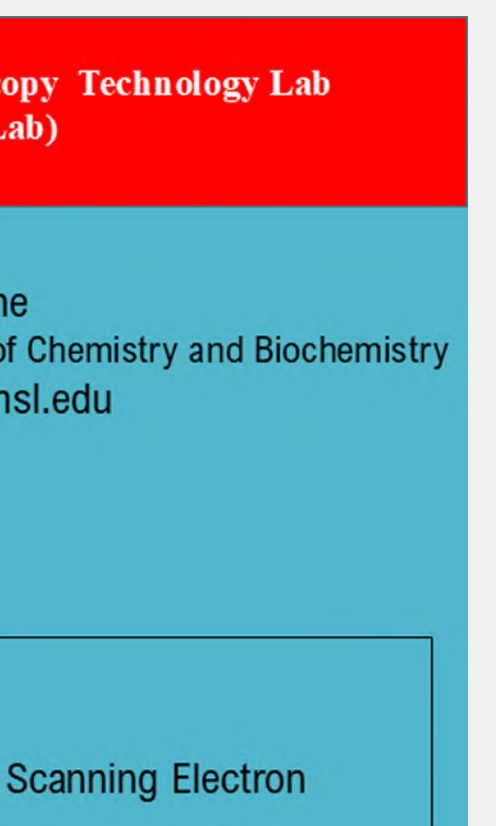
For 2026 the award consisted of a \$100 cash award, a framed certificate, and an engraved brass plate, which is mounted on a perpetual plaque at each institution. Dinner was also provided for each student and for one mentor per student.

## Nominate Our New Officers!

first published 30 April 2026

Nomination season is upon us once more!

If you know someone, or you *are* someone, who would be a good fit for our elective offices, this is your chance to propose their name(s). Yes, you can even nominate yourself. If you are not self-nominating, it would be prudent to check with your nominee(s) to be sure they are willing to stand for election. There is no requirement of previous non-elective service to the Section, and a desire to get involved. Nominees must be members of national ACS and of the Saint Louis Section, but nominators do not have to be. You can get an idea of the responsibilities for each office from the [Job Manual](#).



Please submit your suggestions by June 15th. The election will be in October for terms of office that begin on January 1, 2027.

You may nominate officers below:

## Chair-Elect

If elected, the Chair-Elect agrees to serve out the complete cycle (Chair-Elect in 2027, Chair in 2028, and Immediate Past Chair in 2029)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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## Secretary

One year term

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## Treasurer

One year term

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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## Councilor

2027-2029 term, one position open

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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## Alternate Councilor

2027-2029 term, one position open

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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## Director

2027-2028 term, three positions open

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# Meeting & Seminars

### Board of Directors

St Louis Section–ACS Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of each month, usually over Zoom. E-mail [chair@stlacs.org](mailto:chair@stlacs.org) for the Zoom link to the next meeting.

Date: May 14th

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

Business meeting begins at 6:30 pm

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Future meetings: June 11th, July 9th

### 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](mailto:Jason.Telford) for more information.

### Saint Louis University

Seminars are generally on Fridays at 12 noon in Carlo Auditorium, Tegeler Hall, unless noted 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

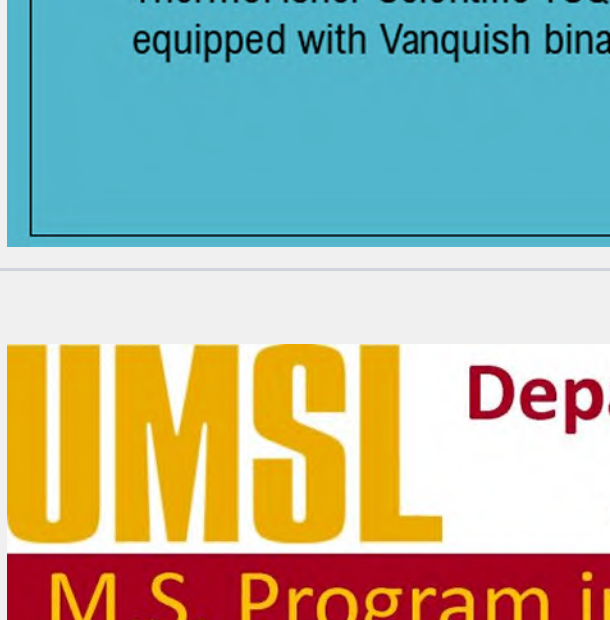
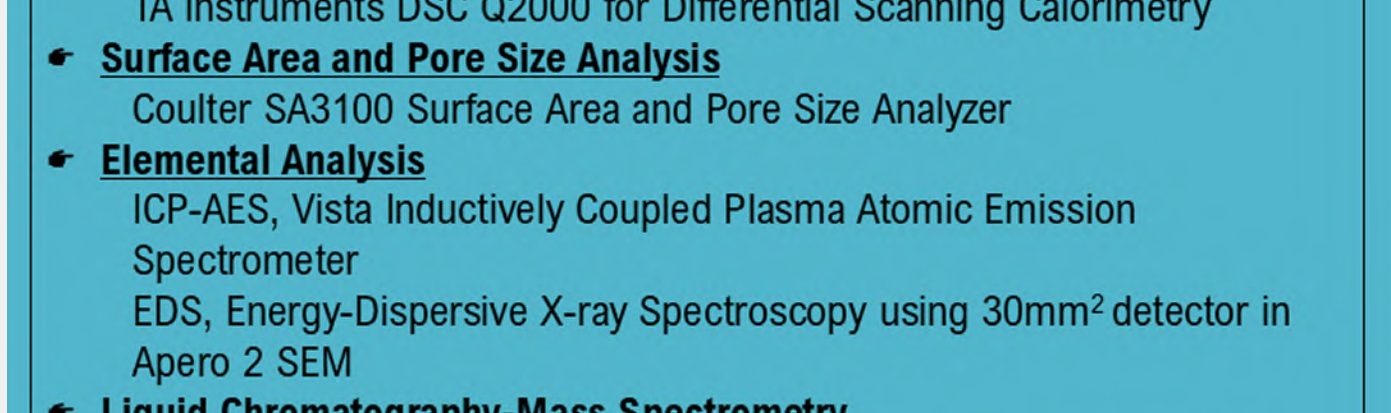
The Center for Clinical Pharmacology hosts a monthly seminar series in ARB 212 unless otherwise noted. For the most up to date information refer to the center's [seminar page](#) or contact [Jodi Maslin](mailto:Jodi.Maslin).

### University of Missouri–St Louis

Mondays at 4 pm in 451 Benton 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.



Contact  
Prof. Keith J. Stine  
Chair Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Email: [kstine@umsl.edu](mailto:kstine@umsl.edu)

### Facilities Available

- **Electron Microscopy**  
ThermoFisher Scientific Apreo 2 Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope (FE-SEM)
- **Atomic Force Microscopy**  
Bruker Bioscope Resolve Bio AFM with Nanoscope V controller  
Digital Instruments Multimode AFM with Nanoscope III controller
- **Confocal Microscopy**  
Zeiss LSM 900 Laser Scanning Confocal Microscope on Axio Observer 7 inverted frame
- **Thermal Analysis**  
TA Instruments TGA Q500 for Thermogravimetry Analysis  
TA instruments DSC Q2000 for Differential Scanning Calorimetry
- **Surface Area and Pore Size Analysis**  
Coulter SA3100 Surface Area and Pore Size Analyzer
- **Elemental Analysis**  
ICP-AES, Vista Inductively Coupled Plasma Atomic Emission Spectrometer  
EDS, Energy-Dispersive X-ray Spectroscopy using 30mm<sup>2</sup> detector in Apreo 2 SEM
- **Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry**  
ThermoFisher Scientific TSQ Altis Triple Quad Mass Spectrometer equipped with Vanquish binary pump and Triplus autosampler

# UMSL Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

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[www.umsl.edu/chemistry](http://www.umsl.edu/chemistry)

## About the Chemical Bond

The *Chemical Bond* is published at [www.stlacs.org](http://www.stlacs.org) January through May and September through December by the St Louis Section–American Chemical Society. If you would like to receive email notification when each issue is posted, you can subscribe to our email list and join the "Chemical Bond reminders" group.

Correspondence, letters to the editor, etc., should be emailed to [editor@stlacs.org](mailto:editor@stlacs.org) or mailed % St Louis Section–ACS, PO Box 410192, Saint Louis, MO 63141-0192.

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