Dear ACS members and friends,

It is the harvest season again. The leaves started to turn red. The scene is the best of the year while driving to work.

It is also the month of the Nobel prize. This year, the Nobel prize in chemistry went to Dr. Benjamin List and Dr. David MacMillan, for their work in asymmetric organocatalysis.

According to Wikipedia, about 90% of commercially produced chemical products involve catalysts at some stage in the process of their manufacture. Asymmetric or enantioselective catalysis is especially important within the field of catalysis. Enantioselective reactions play a crucial role in the pharmaceutical and food industries since certain molecules with biological functions can only occur as certain handedness.

Before the development of organocatalysis, which was about twenty years ago, the enantioselective catalysts were normally enzymes or metals. However, enzymes don’t work well outside of the body. And transition metals can be toxic to the environment, so they usually need to be removed from the products.

This year’s chemistry laureates ingeniously discovered novel solutions in catalysis. List and his team noticed that only a few of the amino acids contained within the enzymes are involved in the chemical reactions. List started to wonder whether the entire enzyme is necessary to serve as the catalyst. In the year 2000, List found that proline, an amino acid, could simply catalyse a chemical reaction. In the meanwhile, MacMillan was pondering on replacing the metal catalysts for Diels-Alder reaction (the discovery of this reaction won the Nobel prize in chemistry in 1950). The metal catalysts are heavily air- and moisture-sensitive. MacMillan and his team discovered a modified small organic molecule that could serve the same role but be more durable. The simple yet effective methods developed by these two laureates are influential to this field.

Every year, the awarding of the Nobel prizes gives us the opportunity to get access to the most brilliant minds. It also reminds us of the importance of science.

Hope you enjoy this article and the chemistry within it.

Best regards,
Chemical Consultants Network ZOOM MEETING

NOVEMBER 10, 2021
CONSULTING AND THE LAW
Wendy F. Bleczinski, Esquire – Princeton University

DATE & TIME: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 6:30 pm

Click here to register

Location: Online via Zoom! (Registration required, see below)

Abstract: Are you striking out on our own as a consultant for the first time and wondering “where do I start?” or have been working as a consultant for years questioning whether you are doing everything you can to minimize liability and taxes? Most people I meet in this position have vast expertise in very specialized areas and are sought out as consultants by companies, both large and small, but haven’t had to run a business before. I will walk you through some of the basics needed to get started as a consultant, including which entity structure may work best for you and, especially if there are other collaborators or employees involved, what considerations and protections need to be put in place to make sure everything runs smoothly and efficiently. I will also take time to review the current tax laws, how to take advantage of the tax deductions available to you, as well as review some common pitfalls to avoid.

Biography: Wendy F. Bleczinski, Esquire, is a tax, estate and business attorney in Pennsylvania. Wendy has worked with individuals and businesses to find innovative tax and business planning solutions for more than 25 years. She earned her B.S. in Biology at Bucknell University and worked as an environmental scientist at SmithKline Beecham and at the University of Pennsylvania. While working at Penn, Wendy attended law school at Widener University School of Law where she headed the Health Law Society and served as the Internal Managing Editor of the Delaware Journal of Corporate Law. Wendy has been named a top tax attorney in the region for several years in Main Line Today and SuburbanLife Magazines.

Click here to register to attend the event. This session is FREE.

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Update from the Awards Committee and Call for Nominations!

By Andrea Martin, Chair, Awards Committee

Long-time section members will notice that this call for nominations does not come from Norm Henry for the first time in many years. Norm has stepped down from his position to give someone else a chance to get involved in section governance. I am filling the position for the short term with the hopes that someone will volunteer to take the position in the near future. Many thanks to Norm for all he did to keep our award program going! Now that we appear to be putting COVID into the rear-view mirror, it’s time to get back to business.

Here’s a short summary of the awards and their criteria. Nominations are now being accepted for all of these awards. Please email me at aemartin1@widener.edu for more information or to nominate someone. Please submit nominations no later than Oct. 31, 2021.

Delaware Section Award
Original called the “Best Paper” award, this honor was given annually to a Section member who had published a noteworthy paper. Over the years, the award has evolved into one that recognizes a Section member for outstanding achievements in research, not necessarily confined to the previous year. Our most recent awardees include Paul Fagan (DuPont) in 2017, Xinquiao Jia (UD) in 2018, and Mary Watson (UD) in 2019. We did not present an award in 2020 due to COVID. I would be extremely happy to receive nominations for both 2020 and 2021! To nominate a Section member for this award, please provide a short nomination letter explaining the candidate’s qualifications and a CV. Candidates automatically remain in the nomination pool for 3 years and nominators can update the nomination annually.

Emma-June Tillmans-Skolnik Award
This award is granted for outstanding contribution to the content of Section programs, to the administrative function of the Section, or to the improvement of the public perception of the Section. The award was established in 1984 in memory of Emma-June Tillmans-Skolnik in recognition of her long and selfless service to the Section. The last recorded presentation of this award was to Al Denio in 2013. To nominate a section member, please send a short letter summarizing the nominee’s qualifications.
Lillian Webster Award
This award is given to recognize unusual service or extraordinary dedication to the Delaware Section through long-term activity or other meritorious work. The award was established in 1996 by the Delaware Section as the Chair’s Award and given posthumously to Lillian Webster, a local high school teacher, and friend to the Section. The award was subsequently named for her. The award is given at the discretion of the Chair to a non-ACS member who has served the Delaware Section by giving freely of their time for the betterment of the Section. This award has not been presented in many years, but we are always happy to consider worthy candidates! Please send a short letter with a summary of the nominee’s qualifications.

High School Teacher of the Year
This award is given to recognize excellence in high school teaching in the state of Delaware. High school teachers in Delaware are invited to self-nominate or to nominate a colleague. The Education Committee of the Delaware Section selects the awardee on the basis of the application and supporting letters. The application form is available from the Chair of the Education Committee, Rita Vasta (rmvasta@aol.com). The awardee receives a cash award of $250 and is nominated for consideration for the regional teaching award. In addition, the school also receives an award of $250 to support the awardee’s classroom activities.

The Carothers Award
The Carothers Award is presented annually by the Delaware Section of the ACS to recognize scientific innovators who have made outstanding contributions and advances in industrial applications of chemistry. The award consists of a commissioned sculpture and a cash award of $2,000. The Carothers Award is not restricted on the basis of geography. Nominations should include the nominee’s name, present position, and address; a concise resume of the nominee’s professional career; a narrative summary of the scientific achievements that form the basis for the nomination, including explanations of the importance of the work and, if possible, financial impact; a list of honors and awards received including dates and organizations conferring these; and a list of the nominee’s more important publications. Additional supporting letters are encouraged. Please contact Nora Radu (nora.s.radu@dupont.com) for additional information. The deadline for 2021 nominations was June 1.
Our Climate — Change is here already.
July was the warmest in history, not a good sign. I could not cope without air-conditioning.

Large areas out west are on fire, the result of long-term droughts. The water shortage is serious and getting worse. People may have to give up showers! Grapes in California may become raisins. Breweries may run out of water, creating a national crisis.

Floods have caused great damage in Germany, Belgium, and Tennessee due to very intense rainfalls. How can you help? Plant trees that consume carbon dioxide. Drive less and walk more. I’ll not propose cold showers, but try short and warm rather than long and hot. Cancel your vacation around the globe. Delaware is cheaper.

New ACS Fellow
The August 9 issue of C&E News includes the class of 2021. The new Delaware Fellow is Prof. Thomas H. Epps III of the Chemical Engineering Department of UD.

Sujata Bhatia, MD, PhD
I recently had lunch with this UD grad who was Chair of our Section several years ago. After finishing her MD and PhD degrees, she joined the faculty at Harvard. After a few years there, she married and they returned to Delaware. She has been on the UD faculty in Chemical Engineering. She and her husband have 2 daughters. Recently Sujata has joined the faculty at Drexel University Medical School. She is a Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, plus Director of Biomedicine Programs. This impressive scholar has a bright future!

The Olympics
Congratulations to Japan for doing a great job hosting “The Games.” They had to deal with a one-year delay, with Covid-19 and the lack of spectators. I hate to think of the economics involved!

Chemistry was very much a part of the Olympics. Think about water, necessary for all the swimming and diving events. And the athletes are all aqueous creatures! Then there was polymer chemistry involved in all the running tracks. A company in Italy developed a rubber formulation that helped runners set new records. Today’s running shoes use polymer chemistry to provide better endurance and speed.

Finally, gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded. Bronze is an alloy of mostly copper and tin. Molly Seidel of Wisconsin was happy to settle for the bronze medal in the Women’s Marathon — it was only her third one!
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