

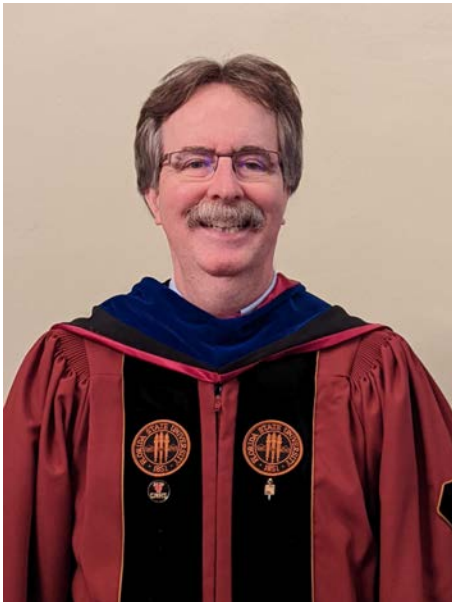


CNHS Newsletter

Spring 2024, Second Edition

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Dean Greenwood's Note



Summer is now in full swing at the University of Tampa. While there are fewer students on campus, there is still a great deal of work being done on new construction and renovations of existing spaces. Commencement was packed with students and their families, so much so that the two commencements we currently offer in the spring will be changed to three commencements next spring. Stay tuned for further details about that!

Spring is also awards season, not only for the faculty, but for the students in each department, and it is a very busy time for student and faculty presentations at conferences throughout the country. This newsletter shares a sampling of those activities as well as some news about some alumni and community outreach activities. I am happy to offer everyone involved the congratulations of the college, and a thank you for all the exceptional work.

I hope the summer is a rejuvenating time for you all!

Cordially,



CNHS HIGHLIGHTS

2023-2024 Academic Award Winners



Louise Loy Hunter Award – Dr. Eric Freundt (Biology)

The Louise Loy Hunter Award annual award is bestowed on a faculty member for cumulative contributions in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship and is the highest honor that can be awarded to a faculty member at The University of Tampa.

Dr. Freundt is a dedicated scholar who has published numerous important papers directly related to the recent history of the world, especially during the pandemic. A skilled researcher, Dr. Freundt has worked collaboratively with exceptional colleagues

here and abroad to better understand the pathogenesis of medically important viral pathogens. Being a skillful speaker, he represented UT with obvious intelligence and capable experience during the pandemic.

Dr. Freundt's commitment to service at the University and has earned him the Joyce Keller Faculty/Staff Volunteer Award, the First Year Experience Faculty Member of the Year Award, and the Linda Devine Outstanding Contribution to Student Life Award.

Most notably, Dr. Freundt has been absolutely dedicated to increasing the opportunities for Undergraduate Research at the University of Tampa. He was a leader of the development of the University's current Quality Enhancement Plan and served as the Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry for five years. Under his leadership, the number of undergraduates conducting research and presenting at conferences increased dramatically across the University, and he established a summer research program open to all disciplines.

Congratulations Dr. Freundt as the 2024 Louise Loy Hunter Award recipient!



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Agent of Change Award - Dean Paul Greenwood



CNHS Innovation in Teaching Award - Dr. Mark McRae (Biology)



CNHS Outstanding Student Research Supervision Award - Dr. Brett Hemric (Chemistry)



CNHS Outstanding Scholar Award - Dr. Michael Middlesbrooks (Biology)



CNHS Outstanding Service Award - Dr. MaryAnn D'Alesandro (Nursing)



CNHS Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Award - Chris Hazzi (Physics)



University of Tampa Grant Awards - Dr. Bridgette Froeschke (ENS) & Dr. Denija Crnojevic (Physics)



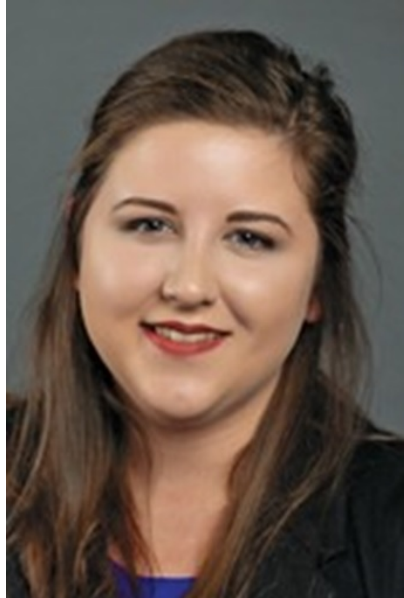
CNHS Oxygen Magnesium Awesomeness Award - John Ambrosio

Solar Eclipse 2024!



Alumni Spotlight

Dr. Katherine R. Johnson, BS Chemistry - ACS Certified, 2015



Katherine (Katie) Johnson graduated from UT upon completing a B.S. Chemistry degree with certification from the American Chemical Society (ACS) in the Spring of 2015. In addition to a variety of extracurricular activities at UT, Katie was especially engaged in undergraduate research in Dr. Eric Werner's lab where her main focus was developing luminescent lanthanide-containing molecules for biomedical sensor applications. After earning her degree here, Katie went on to graduate studies at the University of Nevada, Reno where she received her Ph.D. in Chemistry in 2020 for her research in leveraging luminescent lanthanide complexes for cellular imaging and photodynamic therapy of cancer cells.

In 2020, Dr. Johnson began a post-doctoral appointment at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the Chemical Sciences Division studying the isolation and recovery of critical materials (adjacent lanthanide and alkali metal ions). Some of this work was recently highlighted by DOE Basic Energy Sciences (<https://www.energy.gov/science/bes/articles/tug-war-tactic-enhances-chemical-separations-critical-materials>). In 2022, Dr. Johnson joined the Fuel Cycle Chemical Technology Group in the Nuclear Energy and Fuel Cycle Division at Oak Ridge as an R&D Associate Radiochemist/Radiochemical Engineer. Her research interests now include exploring fundamental and applied *f*-element chemistry with application to a variety of DOE mission spaces including fuel cycle chemical processing, separations, and nuclear nonproliferation science.

Throughout her time as a graduate student and to this day, Dr. Johnson has also been a strong advocate for early-career scientists and women in STEM fields. For the past couple of years, she has been the national Chair of the Younger Chemists Committee of the ACS and recently had a brief write-up in Chemical & Engineering News highlighting some of these efforts (<https://cen.acs.org/acs-news/comment/Comment-Celebrating-younger-chemists-50/102/i5>). Finally, Dr. Johnson has remained connected to her mentors here at UT, and as recently as this past spring, met with some of our current undergraduate chemistry majors at the Spring 2024 National ACS Meeting to offer career advice and mentoring as they consider their future career paths.

AP Science Day at UT!

Through the collective coordination by **Drs. Sarah Wilson, Jeanette Gore, Haydn Rubelmann, Matt Wilson, Heajin Lee, and Mirvat Abdel Hadi**, advanced

placement students from Sickles High School spent a day at UT this spring, participating in AP Science Day. Faculty and student mentors from Biology and Chemistry engaged the students and their teachers in a variety of activities and experiments throughout the day, as seen in the photos. Thank you to all the faculty who participated in this day of learning and community engagement, and to the Dean for supporting the event!





In honor of Black History Month, the Physician Assistant Medicine Program hosted a panel discussion around the topics of the challenges met, and impact of black healthcare professionals in communities across the Tampa Bay Area. Guests included Dr. Ashley McPhie, Chief Medical Officer for Tampa Family Health Centers, Lavarous Johnson, PA-C and UTPAM alum, and Joyce Joseph, PA-C. **Johnna Yealy, PhD**, the UTPAM Chair and program director moderated the discussion as panel shared their collective insight and experiences with the audience. The event was well attended and due to the magnitude of enthusiastic feedback from attendees, the PA program plans to make this an annual event.



The Health Sciences and Human Performance Department's Health Education Honorary Eta Sigma Gamma Chapter received National recognition as a chapter of excellence. The chapter focus is on research, service, and education. The award was presented at the National meeting in St. Louis! Congratulations to these hard-working students!

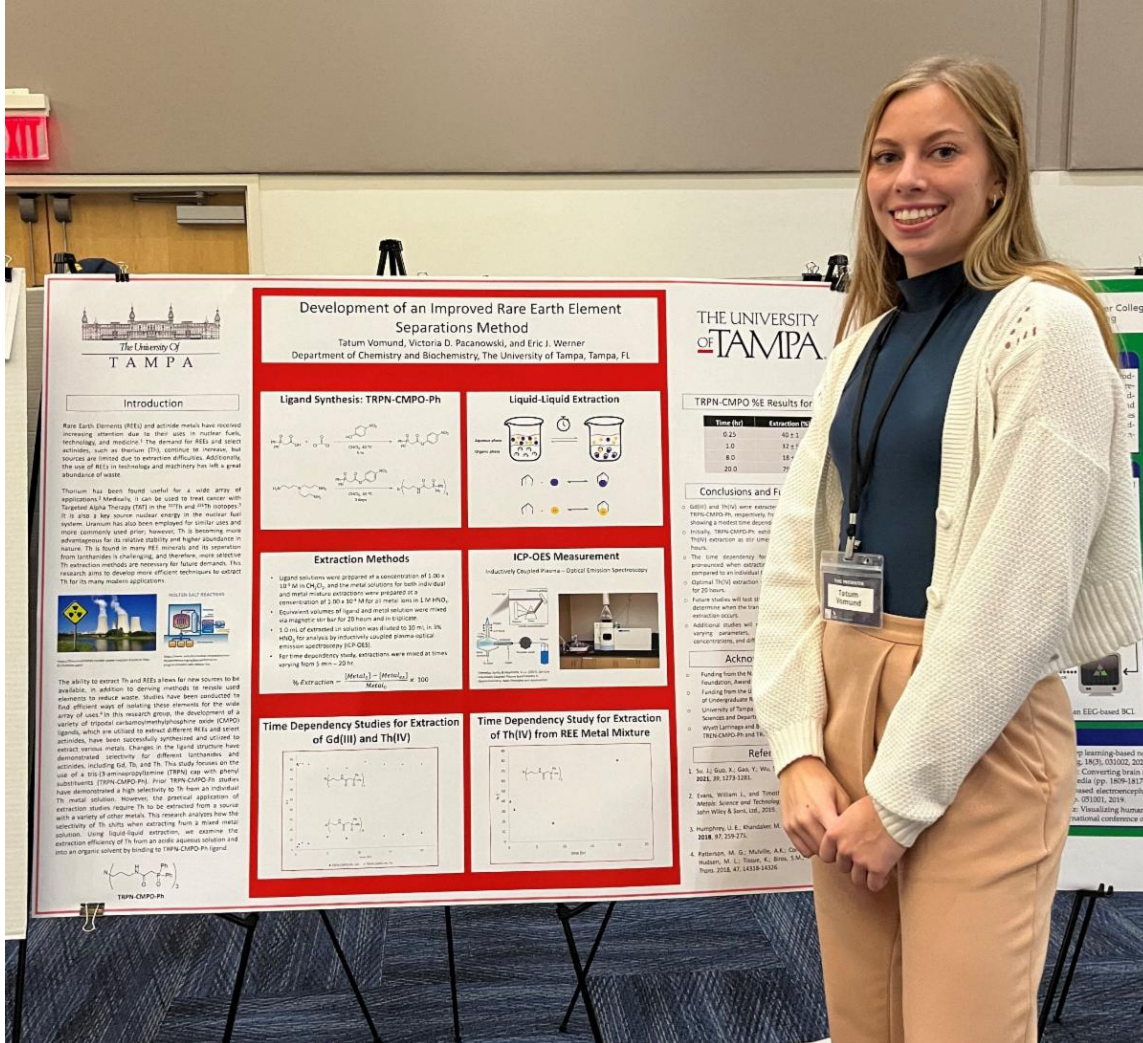


Pre-health advising and the Department of Health Sciences and Human Performance co-sponsored the Health Professions Graduate School Fair on February 9th. This event was part of the Mid-Florida Region Heat Wave Tour and included a stop at Rollins College. The UT fair attracted 56 graduate schools representing different health profession graduate programs and 234 students from a variety of majors including allied health, biology, human performance, and others.

Congratulations to Visiting Assistant Professor **Bill Irwin** (Biology) on his recent hiring as an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Biology Department.



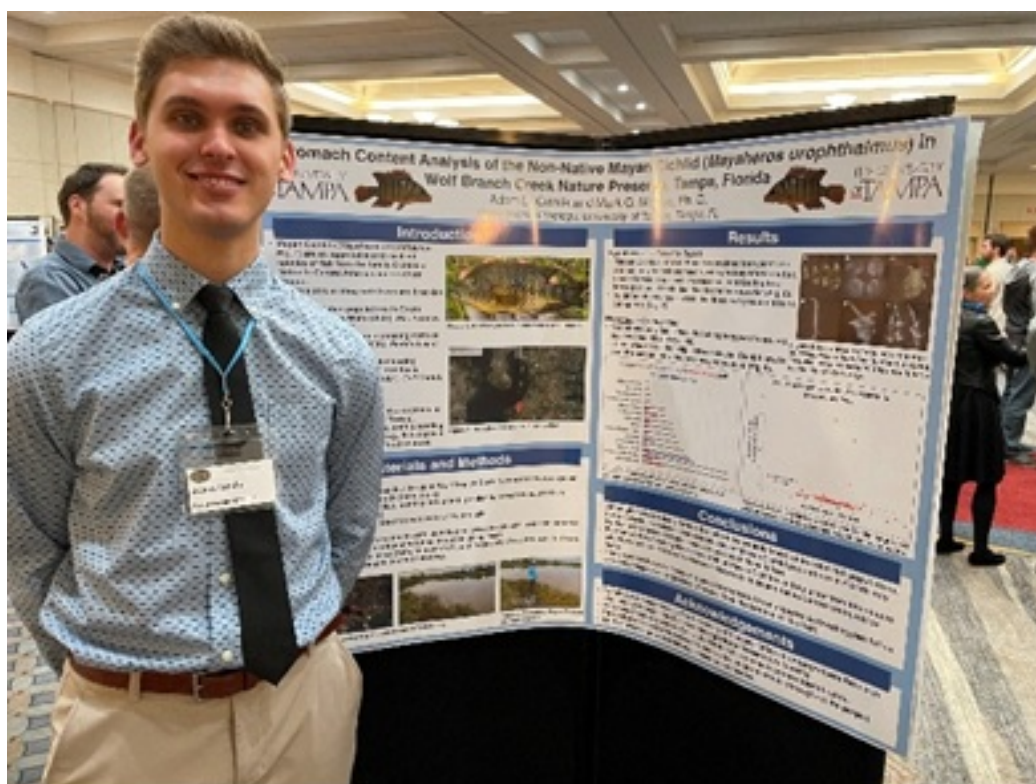
Student Success



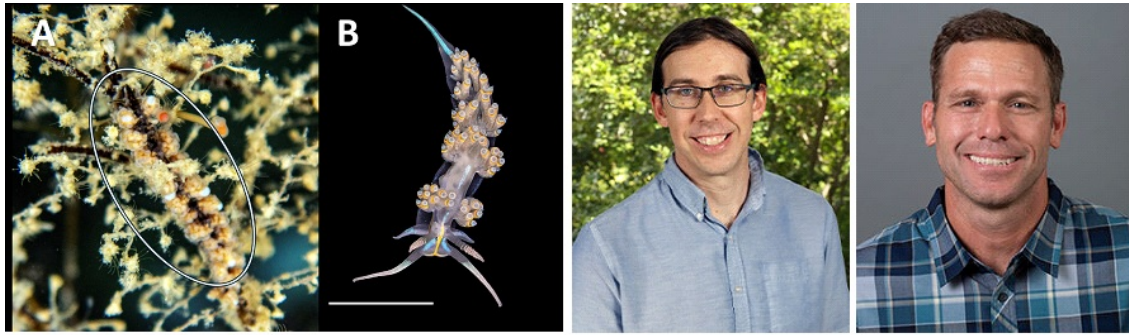
Tatum Vomund (Chemistry B.A., Psychology B.A.) presented a poster over her inorganic chemistry research in Dr. Eric Werner’s lab at the 2024 Florida Undergraduate Research Conference held over February 16 – 17 at the University of North Florida. Tatum’s poster, co-authored by Victoria Pacanowski (Chemistry B.S.) and **Dr. Eric Werner** (Chemistry) was entitled “Development of an Improved Rare Earth Element Separations Method” and described the development of improved metal separation and extraction methods for processing minerals containing lanthanide and actinide metals. We are grateful for support from CNHS and the UT Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry to attend the conference.

Florida Undergraduate Research Conference 2024

On February 16-17, 44 UT students traveled to Jacksonville to attend the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference, hosted by the University of North Florida. The College of Natural and Health Sciences was particularly well represented, with 22 students presenting posters on topics ranging from invasive toads to the contents of our drinking water to the organisms living in kombucha. Those in attendance were able to discuss undergraduate research with more than 800 registered attendees from across the state of Florida.

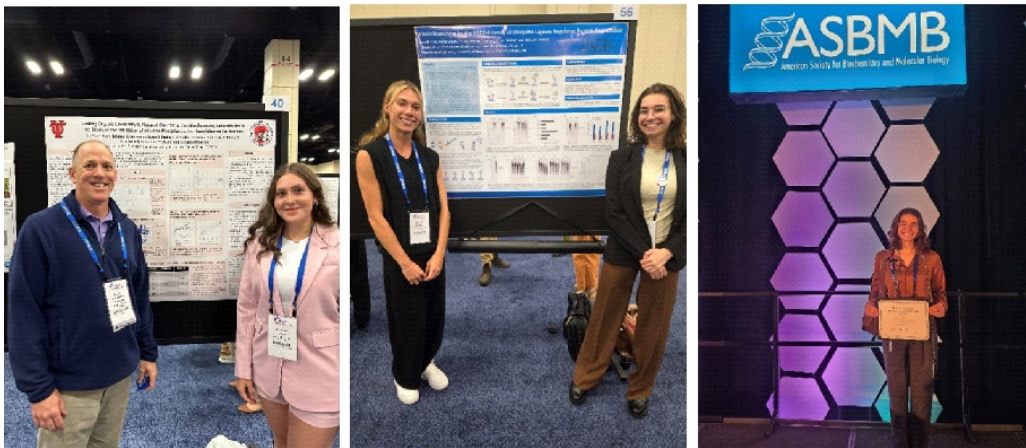


Adam Cieslik (Marine Science-Biology; Honors), research student of Dr. Mark McRae, traveled to Chattanooga, TN for the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society annual meeting in February. Adam's research has focused on the trophic ecology of an invasive tropical fish species, Mayan Cichlids (*Mayaheros urophthalmus*). Adam collected specimens from a nature preserve along the eastern shore of Tampa Bay and analyzed their stomach contents. His work is an important contribution to understanding the potential impacts of this aggressive invasive species that is currently spreading throughout the Tampa Bay watershed. Adam was the



Dr. Michael Middlebrooks (Biology) and **John Ambrosio** (Biology) along with research students Erika Molina (2023), Daniela Gutierrez-Andrade (2020), Samantha Schlegel (2024), and Julia Piper (2024) recently published a paper entitled, “Seasonal Abundance of the Nudibranch *Dondice Jupiteriensis* on the Colonial Hydroid *Eudendrium Carneum*”, in the journal *Gulf and Caribbean Research*.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378909394_Seasonal_abundance_of_the_nudibranch_Dondice_jupiteriensis_on_the_colonial_hydroid_Eudendrium_carneum



Six Biochemistry undergraduates (Isabella Holt, Kayla Brennan, Shelby Lash, Catherine Boino, Marcela Garcia-Pena, and Sebastian Reisch) along with **Drs. Michael Carastro** and **Scott Witherow** attended the annual meeting of the American Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology (ASBMB) at the DiscoverBMB 2024 conference in San Antonio from March 22-26. Isabella and Kayla (research advisor, **Dr. Michael French**) and Shelby (research advisor, Dr. Scott Witherow) presented posters of their undergraduate research. Isabella Holt was inducted into the ASBMB Undergraduate Honor Society (Chi Omega Lambda) at this meeting. Dr. Carastro also presented a research poster based on prostate cancer work conducted with his colleagues at Moffitt Cancer Center.



MS-Nursing student Renan Wolf recently completed his practicum rotation at the Judeo-Christian clinic. UT has a long-standing relationship with Judeo Christian and Renan attended their spring gala event where UT President Dr. Ronald Vaughn and his wife were honored.

Faculty and Student Scholarship

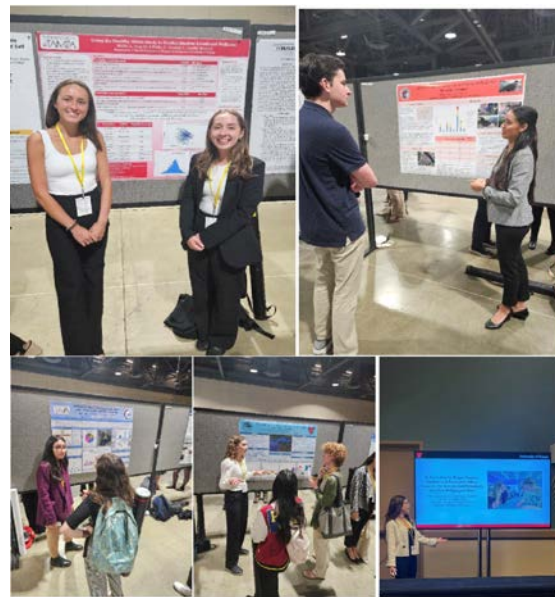
Professor Emeritus Wayne Price recently published a research paper entitled, "*Mysidopsis jenseni* n. sp. from the Pacific coast of Washington, with first description of female *M. intii* Holmquist, 1957 (Crustacea: Mysida: Mysidae)" in the journal, *Zootaxa*. The complete article can be found

here:

<https://mapress.com/zt/article/view/zootaxa.5399.4.6>



Dr. David Reamer (Director, Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Associate Professor, English and Writing) recently traveled to Long Beach for the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Presenting at this meeting were undergraduate research students and graduating seniors Jill Arzoumanian (Marine Science-Biology), Katherine Gutierrez (Marine Science-Biology), Samantha Schlegel (Marine Science-Biology), Evelyn Martinez (Biology), Jessica Hubbs (Public Health), and Maggie Ryan (Public Health).

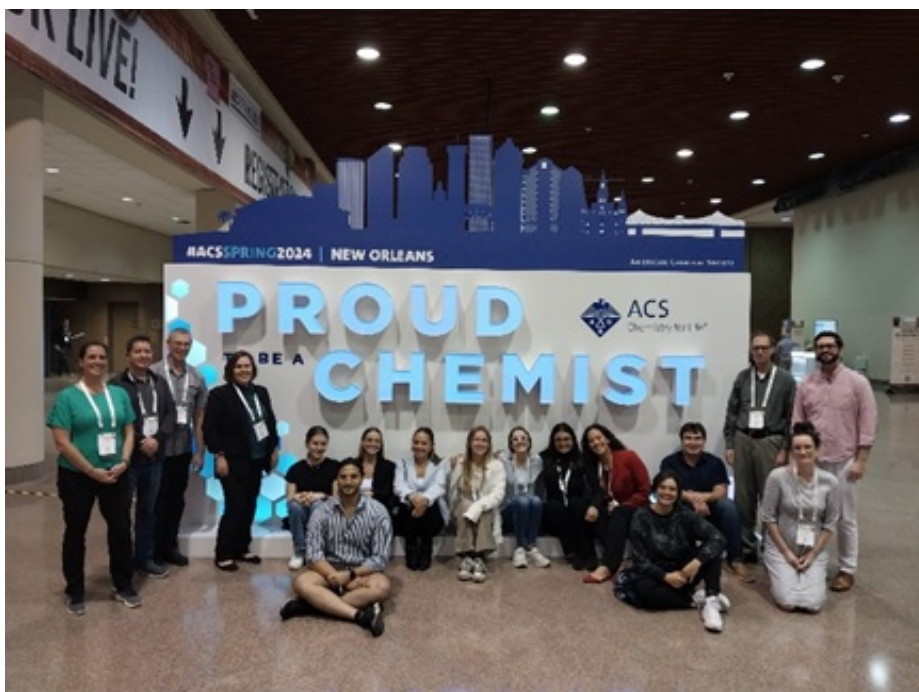


Dr. Allison Kaczmarek (PA Medicine) and Dr. Mary Martinasek (HSHP) recently published a paper in the journal *Health Behavior and Policy Review*, "A Pilot Study of Physician Assistant Student and Alumni Attitudes, Awareness, and Perceptions of Medical and Recreational Marijuana".

Two undergraduate students were co-authors on the publication: Kathryn Lawler (Public Health, '24) and Abigail Strauss (Public Health '23).

A link to the full article can be found here:

<https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/psp/hbpr/2024/00000011/00000001/art00003>



Chemistry faculty and students recently attended the ACS conference in New Orleans, LA. Highlighted below are their posters along with their faculty mentors as well as Dr. Werner's talk. Of note, former UT research student Katherine Johnson (B.S. Chemistry, Spring 2015) was also in attendance (see *Alumni Spotlight* above) and had a chance to visit with our current Chemistry majors.

Posters:

"Refining Th(IV) and Lanthanide Extraction Methods Using a Tripodal CMPO-Based Ligand" - **Victoria D. Pacanowski**, Tatum Vomund, Eric J. Werner

"Liquid-Liquid Lithium Extraction with Tripodal CMPO-Based Ligands" - **Caroline C. Graham**, Eric J. Werner

"Carbazole's as Photoreductants in the Arylation of N-Methylpyrrole in the Presence of Air"- **Acadia Cooke**, Ashley Longstreet

"Molecular Dynamics Simulation for the Inhibition of Alkaline Phosphatase" - **Catherine Boino**, Benjamin P. Wilson

"Investigation Into the Mechanisms of Disproportionation of TEMPO by Carboxylic Acids" - **Heidi Sato**, Benjamin P. Wilson

“Exploring the link between hurricane-induced rainfall and nutrient pulses on Florida's West Coast” - **Abhijeet Deshpande**, R. T. Masserini Jr., Cynthia Heil, Sarah Klass.

“Preparation of 2-Substituted Indoles by Reduction of (2-Nitrophenyl)acetylenes Followed by Cyclization of the Intermediate”- **Brandon T. Bielfelt, Marcela Garcia Pena**, Abby D. Gurevitch, Christopher D. Ciesla, Charles K. Harvey. Gillian A. Tiralla, C. Eric Ballard

“Handheld Van de Graaff generator for surface analyze capture and sample ionization”- **Paige Hunt**, Kenyon Evans-Nguyen, Mackenzie Sampson, La'Nyah Nance, Kimberly Edmunds, Julia Morelli

"Pharmaceutical Pollutants in the Rivers of Tampa Bay, Florida" - **Kaitlyn Redman**, Kelly Deister

Talk:

“Optimization of f-Element Separation Methods with CMPO-Based Ligands” – **Eric J. Werner**, Shannon M. Biros, Victoria D. Pacanowski



Professor Jacob LaFond and his research students, Alana Acevedo, Ethan Burka, Michael Garvey, Abigail Kirkpatrick, Conor Milligan, Rachel Ryweck, and Maia Santiago attended the annual meeting of the Southeast Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (SEPARC) conference in Nauvoo, AL in March. Students presented posters on the ecology and population genetics of invasive cane toads (*Rhinella* sp.), and the ecology of amphiuma salamanders in Plant Park.



[UT Master Calendar](#)

[UT Academic Calendar](#)

May 20 - Classes begin for Summer 1st 6 Weeks and Summer Term

July 1 - Classes begin for Summer 2nd 6 Weeks

July 4 - No classes - Holiday for 4th of July

August 23 - College Meeting 9:30 am in Fletcher Lounge

August 24 - CNHS Convocation 9 am in Falk Theater

August 26 - Classes begin for Fall Semester

Please send future news items to jdavila@ut.edu or jfasick@ut.edu

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