

May 2020

SMS Connects · May 2020

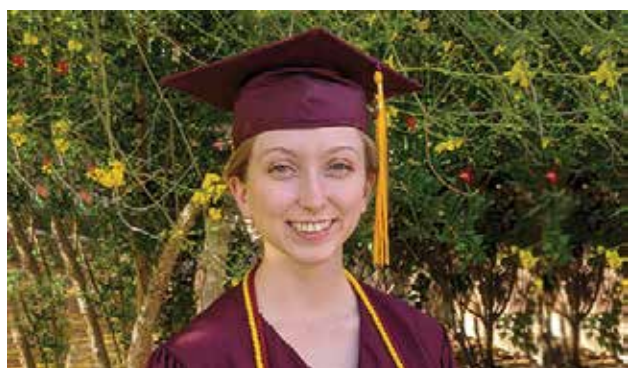
Congratulations SMS Spring 2020 Graduates

The School of Molecular Sciences would like to congratulate its spring 2020 graduates for their hard-earned academic achievements! This spring, the School of Molecular Sciences graduated a total of 189 students. Of these, 8 earned PhD degrees, 2 earned Master's degrees, and 179 undergraduate students were awarded Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in chemistry, biochemistry, medicinal chemistry and environmental chemistry. We are happy to share in the excitement of their graduation day, and so very proud of them, too. We look forward to hearing about their continued successes in the future!

[Click here to go to our spring 2020 graduation celebration page.](#)

Meet Some of Our Graduates

Madeleine Howell



Major: Chemistry
[ASU Dean's Medalist heads to Harvard](#)

Miguel Bahena



Major: Biochemistry
[A change of mindset leads to a bright future](#)

Paul Turack



Major: Biochemistry
Online biochemistry student aims for PhD

Genesis Navarro



Major: Biochemistry
Early graduate and first-generation student on track for medical school



Annmarie Barton and Alison Lane
Majors: Biochemistry

Graduating ASU seniors publish children's science book

In the News

SMS undergrads and alumna win scholarships for excellence in research



Juniors Tal Sneh (biochemistry major) and Alexis Hocken (chemical engineering major and biochemistry minor) are awarded prestigious Goldwater Scholarships.

Since 2009, SMS students have been awarded 10 Goldwater scholarships, which is more than one third of the total awarded to ASU in this time period.

SMS alumna Ntombizodwa Makuyana of Zimbabwe, who earned a degree in 2019 in medicinal biochemistry has won a Gates Cambridge scholarship to study at Cambridge University in England. [read more](#)

SMS Grad Student John Vant earns National Science Foundation GRF



SMS graduate student John Vant (supervised by Abhishek Singharoy) of the Biodesign Institute Center for Applied Structural Discovery has been awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships. [read more](#)

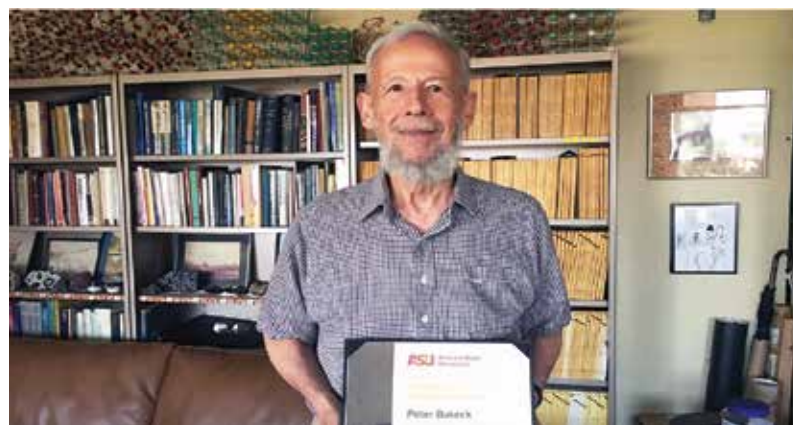
Professor Gary Moore recognized nationally with Teacher-Scholar Award



Gary Moore, assistant professor in Arizona State University's School of Molecular Sciences and the Biodesign Institute's Center for Applied Structural Discovery, has been named one of 14 young faculty nationwide to be honored with a 2020 Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award by the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation. [read more](#)

Featured Story

Pioneering ASU Regents Professor reflects on legacy after 57 years at university



Regents Professor Peter Buseck began teaching at ASU in 1963, and since then, Buseck's groups has produced over 450 papers that have been cited nearly 26,000 times, yielding a Google Scholar h-index of 91. Buseck's ASU career and his scientific legacy are the subject of a recent article by SMS Science writer James Klemaszewski.

[Click here to read the full story](#)

Sun Devil Service Celebration

Each year, ASU recognizes with Service Awards those who have achieved years of service to the School of Molecular Sciences and ASU. Please join us in expressing gratitude to those reaching 5 year milestones.

[Click here to go to our Sun Devil Service Celebration web page, and see a video from the SMS Interim Director](#)

55 Years of Service



George Pettit
Regents Professor

Research Highlights

[ASU scientists rewire photosynthesis to fuel our future](#)

Hydrogen is an essential commodity with over 60 million tons produced globally every year. However, more than 95% of it is made by steam reformation of fossil fuels, a process that is energy intensive and produces carbon dioxide. If we could replace even a part of that with algal biohydrogen that is made via light and water, it would have a substantial impact. This is essentially what has just been achieved in the lab of Kevin Redding.

[ASU scientists lead study of galaxy's 'water worlds'](#)

In seeking to learn more about our galaxy's exoplanets an international team of scientists, including SMS's Andrew Chizmeshya has provided one of the first mineralogy lab studies for water-rich exoplanets. The results of their study were recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

[Exoplanets: How we'll search for signs of life](#)

Whether there is life elsewhere in the universe is a question people have pondered for millennia, and within the last few decades, great strides have been made in our search for signs of life outside of our solar system. A team of researchers led by Arizona State University, has provided a framework called a “detectability index” that may help prioritize exoplanets that require additional study. The details of this index have recently been published in the *Astrophysical Journal* of the American Astronomical Society. SMS participants include first author Donald Glaser, and professors Hilairy Hartnett and Ariel Anbar.

[ASU materials science professor selected for ACerS Distinguished Life Membership Award](#)

It has just been announced that Professor Alexandra Navrotsky is being awarded a 2020 Distinguished Life Membership by the American Ceramic Society. It is the highest honor accorded by the professional organization in recognition of significant contributions to advancing ceramic and glass science.

The End of the Semester...

The Spring 2020 semester has come to an end; it will be remembered as one of the most difficult in recent years. I need to thank everyone in the SMS community for stepping up together to face the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the unprecedented threat to our communities health and well-being. I am still astonished how the SMS staff and faculty worked so quickly to rescue a meaningful learning experience for our students. I thank those who cut short their spring break and gave up their weekend to build so many new remote courses and labs in just four remarkable days.

I have received many message of thanks from students expressing gratitude, for the way the transition to online was handled. There were one or two minor glitches, but the staff and faculty's resilience and dedication in the face of adversity this semester were a credit to the ideals and values of the School and the University. I thank everyone for modeling these ideals so well and maintaining a real sense of community in these difficult times.

The crisis is not over yet, but I hope that as many of you as possible can take at least a short break this summer knowing that this semester was a job well done. Congratulations everyone, and please stay safe!

Ian Gould
SMS Interim Director

Please feel free to send email to ASUSMS@asu.edu at any time with questions, concerns, or suggestions. You can visit our website at sms.asu.edu or connect with us by liking our [Facebook](#) page!

