

Periodic Times

Wittenberg University Department of Chemistry

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ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026

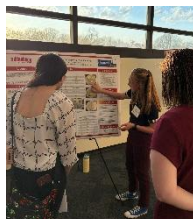
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*Mary Kelly retires
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*Marous group
publishes paper
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*Students present at
meetings (p. 4)*



*BMB major wins
national scholarship
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*Class of 2026
graduates (p.8)*

School of Science, Technology & the Natural World to Include Chemistry, BMB

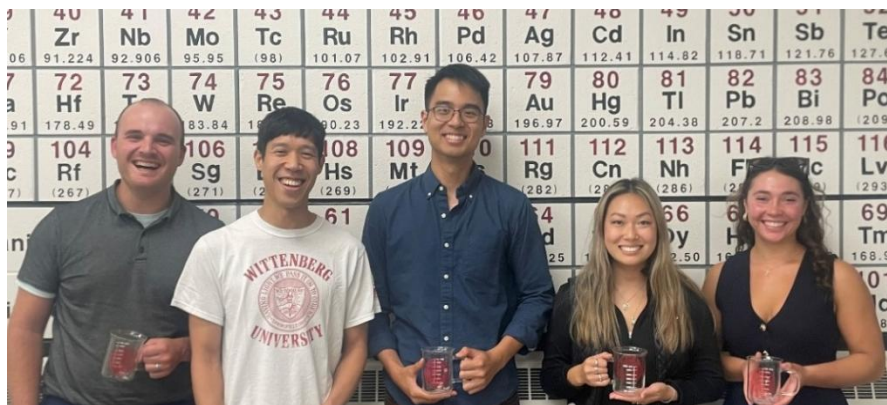
The Wittenberg Board of Directors recently approved the formation of four academic schools as proposed by President Christian Brady and Provost Brian Yontz. This academic restructuring places Chemistry and Biochemistry/Molecular Biology (BMB) into the School of Science, Technology and the Natural World, effective July 1, 2026. Professor Matt Collier (of the Biological and Environmental Sciences department) has been appointed to a three-year position as Dean of this school.

After the 2026-27 academic year, Program Coordinator positions will be introduced, replacing the current department chair/program director positions. Chemistry and BMB will be led by one program coordinator. The creation of schools could lead to some curricular changes, most likely for general education requirements. Our chemistry and BMB major and minor programs will continue to be offered. The new structure may allow for improved interdisciplinary connections and synergy within the new schools. Another potential benefit for our students is better coordination and collaboration opportunities for Chemistry and BMB programs.

Alumni Involvement in Cheminar

For our junior/senior chemistry seminar program ("cheminar") this year, we involved alumni in two career preparation sessions. Students conducted online interviews with Jack Snider ('19), Jessica (Skoglund) Harrah ('18) and Caroline Barth ('21) to learn about career paths and preparation. Students then participated in mock interviews with Kevin To ('13), Tom Mori ('13), and Alaina Engdahl ('13). We greatly appreciate the willingness of our alumni to help prepare the next generation for the work force.

Alumni and Friends Updates



Alumni panelists, left-to-right: Marshal Eippert, Kevin To, Leo Vo, Lucy Bates, and Annie Miloser

The 2025 homecoming alumni panel included Marshal Eippert ('19), Kevin To ('13), Leo Vo ('17), Lucy Bates ('22), and Annie Miloser ('25).

Jack Snider ('19), Jessica (Skoglund) Harrah ('18), Caroline Barth ('21), Kevin To ('13), Tom Mori ('13), and Alaina Engdahl ('13) assisted the department in virtual cheminar sessions. (See story, p.1)

Christina Thompson ('21) graduated with a PhD in Materials Chemistry from the University of Kentucky. Her thesis title is: "Utilizing coal for mesophase pitch-based carbon fiber production: precursors, processes, and progress"

Maggie Cole ('16) is the Voltage Test Manager at Helion Energy in Seattle, WA.

Nicole Perry-Hauser ('14) is a Lecturer (Research & Teaching Track) at the University of Glasgow, School of Molecular Biosciences.

Rachel Saylor ('10) and Lydia Kisley ('10) co-authored a paper "A Unified Analytical Method Greenness Score (uAMGS) Quantifies How Microscopic Imaging Is Greener Than Conventional Liquid Chromatography" in *ACS Sustainable Chemistry & Engineering*, 2026.

Mya Wolfe ('23) has matriculated into the MD/PhD program at the Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine

Jillian Poska ('21) successfully defended her Biochemistry PhD dissertation "Reprogramming of the mammary gland stroma by in utero exposure to estrogenic endocrine disrupting chemicals" at The Ohio State University.



Homecoming tailgate.

Left: Jenny (Swingle) Fogt ('95) and Kristin Cline; Right: 2026 graduates, Annie Miloser, Ethan Libby and Victoria (Pip) Pipinich

Chemistry Staff News



Mary Kelly, Academic Administrative Assistant & Coordinator for the departments of Biological & Environmental Sciences, Chemistry, Math & Computer Science and Physics, retired this summer after 11 years at Wittenberg University. She served as the administrative assistant for Chemistry and BMB programs beginning in 2020.

Dan Marous recently published an article in *Access Microbiology* with four former student co-authors. The article was recognized by the journal's Chief Executive Peter Cotgreave as one of the most viewed papers: Hagander, M., DeWeese, C., Boyette, R., Rudolf, P., Marous, D.R. Developing Bacterial Resistance to Antibiotics: A Laboratory Activity. *Access Microbiol.* **2026**, 8 (1), 001118.v3. <https://doi.org/10.1099/acmi.0.001118.v3>



Rachel Kaiser completed courses from the Laboratory Safety Institute ("How be a More Effective CHO", "Two-Day Laboratory Safety Virtual Short Course") and The ACS Foundations for Storing, Organizing, and Disposing of Chemicals in Educational Settings. In December she passed the Chemical Hygiene Officer Certification Exam.

Ray Dudek serves as Wittenberg's Grand Marshall, coordinating and leading Commencement and other ceremonies. He taught Chem 111 (Chemistry for Health Sciences) in fall 2025 and a FIRE Week course on the Business of Craft Brewing. He served as Faculty Personnel Board chair this year and was appointed to the Institutional Research Board.



Kristin Cline concluded her term on the ACS 2025 Instrumental Analysis exam committee. She is the Director of General Education at Wittenberg and served on the Academic Restructuring Task force last fall.

Justin Houseknecht is co-author of a recent *Journal of Chemical Education* article: Leontyev, A.; Houseknecht, J.B.; Muzyka, J.L.; and Welder, C.O. OrganicERs: Fostering a Community of Practice for Organic Chemistry Instructors through Workshops and Online Faculty Learning Communities. *J. Chem. Educ.*, **2026**, 103, 1968-1976. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jchemed.5c01229>. Justin took a sabbatical leave in 2025-26. He serves as Steering Committee Chair for the NSF-funded OrganicERs.



Breanna Williams joined Wittenberg in June 2026 as the new Academic Assistant & Coordinator for the School of Science, Technology, and the Natural World.



FIRE week class on craft beer, led by Ray Dudek.



Chemistry Faculty and Student Presentations

*Tasia Nall, Kristin Cline, Kunal Chatterjee, Collin Laveck, "LC-UV Method Development for Characterization of tRNA Nucleosides from Modified Yeast Cells", Pittcon, San Antonio, TX, March 11, 2026, poster.

*Caitlyn Shelton and Kristin Cline, "Quantification and Identification of Microplastics in Beverages with Nile Red Staining and SPME-GC-MS", Pittcon, San Antonio, TX, March 11, 2026, poster.

*Owen Gulvas and Kristin Cline, "Electrochemical Impedance Spectroscopy of Diazonium-Grafted Glassy Carbon Electrodes", Pittcon, San Antonio, TX, March 11, 2026, poster.

*Ezekiel Forster and Kristin Cline, "Identification of polymers using thermal degradation coupled with SPME-GC-MS," American Chemical Society National Meeting, Atlanta, GA, March 2026, poster.

Kristin K. Cline, "Teaching about Buffers in the Quantitative Analytical Course", Midwestern Universities Analytical Chemistry Conference, Chapel Hill, NC, October 17, 2025, oral.

Shannon Morrissey and Ray Dudek, "Analysis of Heavy Metals in Protein Powder with FAAS", American Chemical Society Dayton Section Local Meeting, Dayton, OH, April 2026, poster.

Cam Gladden and Daniel Marous. "Antibiotic Resistance and Cross-Resistance in *E. coli*" Poster, American Chemical Society Dayton Section Meeting, Dayton, OH, (April 2026)

*Josh Putka and Daniel Marous. "Developing a Laboratory Activity to Explore Energy Between Traditional Antibiotics and Essential Oils" Poster, American Chemical Society National Meeting, Atlanta, GA, (March 2026)

*Svet Daniels and Daniel Marous. "Screening for Antibiotic-Activity in Soil Bacteria" Poster, American Chemical Society National Meeting, Atlanta, GA, (March 2026)

*poster also presented at the American Chemical Society Dayton Section Meeting, Dayton, OH, (April 2026)

Students Present at Local and National Meetings

In spring 2026, Wittenberg students and their research mentors traveled to two national conferences to present summer research findings. Owen Gulvas ('27), Caitlyn Shelton ('26) and Tasia Nall ('26) spent their Spring break in San Antonio at Pittcon, accompanied by Kristin Cline. Svetlana Daniels ('28), Zeke Forster ('27) and Josh Putka ('26) traveled with Dan Marous to the Spring meeting of the American Chemical Society in Atlanta in late March. Eight Wittenberg students presented their posters at the Dayton Section ACS meeting in April. Student travel was made possible by the Franta Fund for Chemistry. See p.10 for photos.



Scholarship Funding Supports Chemistry & BMB Majors

In 2025-26, the Chemistry Department awarded a total of \$100K in Chemistry Interest Award scholarships for 15 Chemistry and BMB students. The department uses these scholarships for recruitment and recently made four offers for the incoming class of 2030. Additionally, two students received Franta Gap Awards (need-based scholarships) this year. We continue to be thankful for the Franta endowment for supplying scholarship and research money for our students.

2026 Student Award Winners

Sartoris Award for Outstanding Senior Chemistry Major:

Caitlyn Shelton

Outstanding Senior BMB Major: Andy Dozal, Alexander Nemunaitis, Joshua Putka

ACS Division of Biochemistry & Chemical Biology

Undergraduate Award: Shannon Morrissey

Patterson Award for Outstanding Junior Chemistry Major: Owen Gulvas

James T. Gregory Award: Zeke Forster

Organic Chemistry Award: Svetlana Daniels

BMB departmental honors: Andy Dozal, Shannon Morrissey, Joshua Putka

Chemistry departmental honors: Caitlyn Shelton

General Chemistry Award: Rowan Goodpasture and Ellan Ortiz

Franta Chemistry Interest Scholarship: Ellan Ortiz, Brittyn Snedaker, Elizabeth Stallard, Ian Sergeant.



Chemistry awards: Owen Gulvas, Caitlyn Shelton, Tasia Nall

University Awards to Chemistry and BMB majors

Alma Lux: Hailey Mulvihill

Alpha Delta Pi Scholarship Award: Alex Couch

Seniors with 4.0 GPA: Joshua Putka and Caitlyn Shelton

Presidential Scholar: Hailey Mulvihill and Alex Couch

National Awards to Chemistry and BMB majors

Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship: Hailey Mulvihill

2026 Division III First Team Academic All-America: Alex Nemunaitis

Goldwater Scholarship Awarded to Wittenberg BMB Major

Hailey Mulvihill, a BMB major and rising senior from Florence, Kentucky, received the prestigious Barry M. Goldwater scholarship for 2025-26, a national award established in 1986 to support undergraduates planning research careers in science, mathematics and engineering. Students are nominated by their institutions and write a research essay as part of the application. Hailey is one of 454 scholarship winners nationwide this year. She is the second BMB major at Wittenberg to win this scholarship; Adam Jara won in 2007.

Hailey received a First Year Research Award (FYRA) as an incoming student and continued this research under the direction of Biology professor Kunal Chatterjee through the summer. In summer 2025 and 2026, she conducted research at the RNA Institute, University of Albany. Hailey has presented at multiple conferences, receiving awards on her presentations. Click [here](#) for more on Hailey's award.

Summer 2026 Research



Summer researchers, *top, L-to-R*: Abby Holman, Zeke Forster, Brendon Raggiunti, Celeste Hartings.
bottom: Lee Dallas, Teagan O'Connor, Kate Sessler, Kylie Paumi, Abbey Brunelle.



Hailey Mulvihill and Svetlana Daniels at the RNA Institute,
University of Albany



Cam Gladden at the University of South Florida

Summer Researchers and their Projects

Name (class year)	Hometown	Major(s)	Summer Project
Brendon Raggiunti ('28)	Toronto, Ontario	Biology & Exercise Science	tRNA quality control under metabolic stress and the effects of caffeine and nutrient limitation
Abigail Brunelle ('27)	Pickerington, OH	BMB	Comparison of C18 and HILIC liquid chromatography columns for nucleoside analysis
Lee Dallas ('28)	Loveland, OH	Biology & English	Antibiotic behavior in soil
Ezekiel Forster ('27)	Clarksville, OH	BMB	Thermal Degradation and SPME-GC/MS of Polymers
Teagan O'Connor ('28)	Fort Wayne, IN	BMB	Antibiotic resistance and cross-resistance in <i>escherichia coli</i>
Kylie Paumi ('28)	Lexington, KY	Chemistry	Cyclic voltammetry and electrochemical impedance spectroscopy of modified carbon and gold electrodes
Celeste Hartings ('27)	Tipp City, OH	BMB & Mathematics	Specs grading vs. traditional and its impact on exam performance
Abby Holman ('27)	Maineville, OH	Environmental Science & BMB	Prairie ash leachate nutrient analysis using ion chromatography
Kate Sesler ('28)	West Jefferson, OH	BMB	Comparative antibiotic activity of six essential oils against antibiotic-resistant <i>escherichia coli</i>

Additionally, three BMB majors received offers from other universities to conduct summer research. Cam Gladden ('27) worked at the University of South Florida, investigating pyridoxal kinase from *Drosophila melanogaster*. Svetlana Daniels ('28) and Hailey Mulvihill ('27) worked at the University of Albany's RNA Institute.

BMB Class of 2026



L-R: Joshua Putka, Mahlon Spangler, William Westermeyer, Andy Dozal, Olivia Kuhner, Shannon Morrissey, Aubrey Tama

Chemistry Class of 2026



L-R: Caitlyn Shelton, Tasia Nall



President Brady with Alex Nemunaitis who graduated in a special ceremony for the baseball team



Post-Graduation Plans for our Majors

Andy Dozal (BA, BMB) is applying to medical school.

Olivia Kuhner (BS, BMB) is working as a quality control technician at Kao Corporation and applying to graduate school.

Shannon Morrissey (BS, BMB) is pursuing higher education in health science.

Tasia Nall (BS, Chemistry) was accepted to a M.S. program in Forensic Toxicology at Thomas Jefferson University.

Alex Nemunaitis (BA, BMB) is applying to medical school.

Joshua Putka (BA, BMB and Mathematics) is interning with Cru in the UK and applying to medical school.

Caitlyn Shelton (BS, Chemistry) is working towards medical assistant certification and applying to medical school.

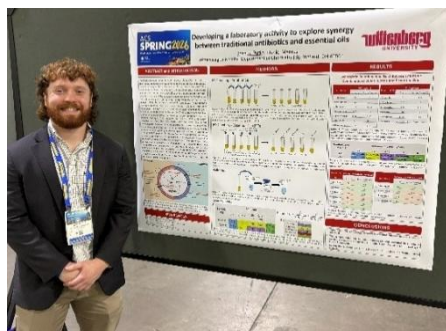
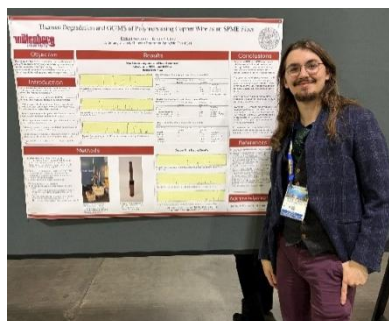
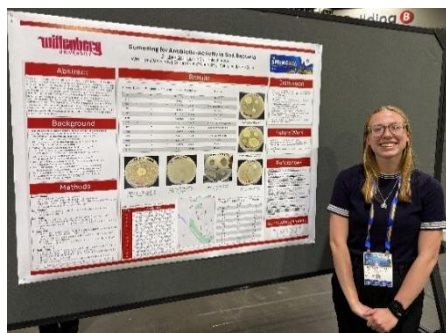
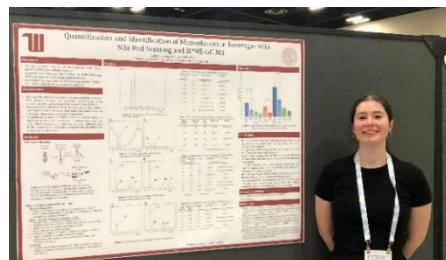
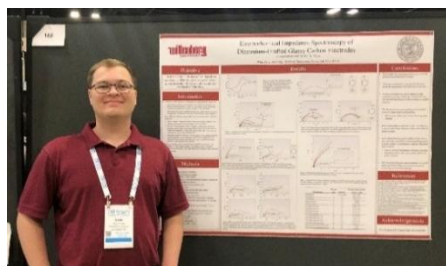
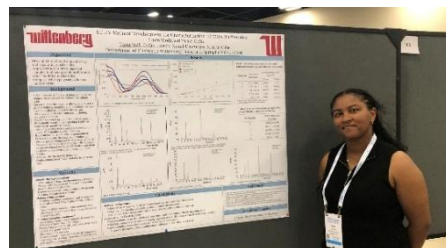
Mahlon Spangler (BA, BMB) is searching for employment.

Aubrey Tama (BS, BMB) is a Quality Assurance Technician at Sandridge Crafted Foods.

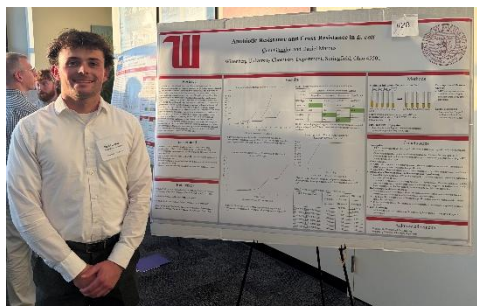
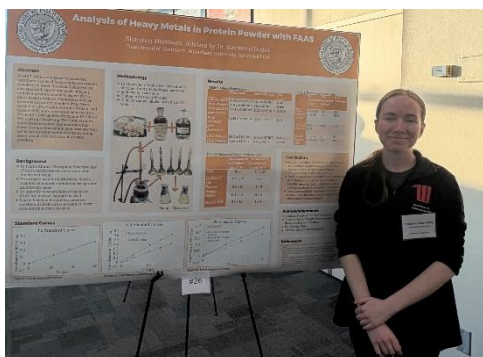
William Westermeyer (BA, BMB and Finance) was hired as a Healthcare Investment Banking Analyst at William Blair in Chicago.



Pittcon & ACS Spring Meeting



Dayton Section ACS Poster Session



Hope to see you at Homecoming! **October 1-4, 2026**

Click [here](#) for information
and contact us if you can serve on the alumni panel



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