

All things Saint Louis Award for 2024: Winner, Symposium, Banquet

first published 10 October 2024

Tabbatha Bohac, past chair of the St Louis Section–ACS and chair of the award jury, has announced the winner of the 2024 St Louis Section ACS Award: Timothy Wenciewicz, Professor of Chemistry at Washington University.

The Winner

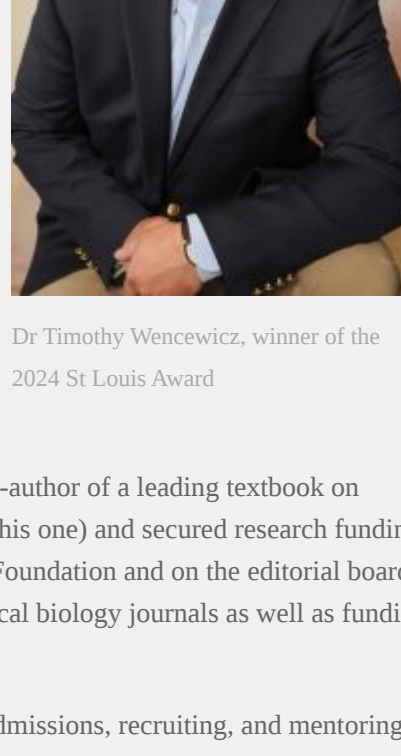
Dr Timothy Wenciewicz obtained a BS in Chemistry and Applied Mathematics from Southeast Missouri State University in 1996 and earned his PhD from the University of Notre Dame in 2011 working for Professor Marvin J Miller on siderophore-antibiotic conjugates for targeted drug delivery. He then went to Harvard Medical School to pursue postdoctoral training with Professor Christopher T Walsh on elucidating enzymatic mechanisms for natural product biosynthesis and antibiotic resistance.

Dr Wenciewicz started his independent career as an Assistant Professor at Washington University in 2013 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2019. He has focused on addressing the antibiotic resistance crisis by studying the biosynthesis of natural products and elucidating new antibiotic strategies. He discovered the first β -lactone synthase using a genome-mining and enzyme-reconstitution approach, leading to the chemoenzymatic production of new analogs as potential drugs. He also discovered that certain β -lactam antibiotics function as mechanism-based transition-state inhibitors that can be adapted as warheads for the design of new drugs. In an elegant set of experiments, he mapped the enzymatic pathway to one of the most important drugs for treating iron overload diseases, commonly known as Desferal. This led him to elucidate a new paradigm for how bacteria can acquire iron from human blood, which he used to develop inhibitors that starve them of essential iron. Among other important advances, he discovered how certain bacteria destroy tetracycline, and developed inhibitors that block this process and restore its effectiveness against resistant strains.

Wenciewicz has published more than 50 scholarly works and presented over 55 invited seminars. He has organized numerous conference symposia and was recently elected co-chair of the 2026 Enzyme Mechanisms Conference. He is co-author of a leading textbook on antibiotics published by Wiley and volume editor for *Methods in Enzymology*. He has won numerous awards (including this one) and secured research funding from the NIH, NSF, and private foundations. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Southeast Missouri University Foundation and on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* and the *Journal of Antibiotics*. He is a reviewer for many interdisciplinary chemical biology journals as well as funding agencies.

Timothy Wenciewicz has demonstrated his deep commitment to graduate education through his activities with graduate admissions, recruiting, and mentoring in the College of Arts & Sciences and the School of Medicine. He was appointed Washington University Director of Graduate Studies in 2022, and serves as a standing member of the Interview Committee for the MD-PhD Medical Scientists Training Program and the Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Structural Biology PhD programs and is Chair of the Admissions Committee in Chemistry. He has organized workshops on grant writing, fellowship applications, and graduate mentoring. His community outreach includes organizing on-site career panels at Bayer and Sigma, providing continuing education for high school science teachers, and promoting science to K-12 through interactive science demonstrations and career fairs. Dr Wenciewicz has mentored 3 postdocs, 20 PhD students and 26 undergraduates.

The Saint Louis Section ACS Award, originally sponsored by the Monsanto Company (now Bayer) and administered by the Saint Louis Section–ACS, is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the profession of chemistry and demonstrated potential to further the advancement of the chemical profession. The award, consisting of a \$1,500 honorarium and a plaque, will be presented at the Saint Louis Award Banquet, immediately following the Award Symposium on Friday, November 1, 2024. Details For both the symposium and the banquet are below.



Dr. Timothy Wenciewicz, winner of the 2024 St. Louis Award

The Symposium

The Banquet

And Continuity ... continues

first published 27 December 2024

We had a delightful Continuity Dinner at Spiro's Restaurant in Chesterfield on December 12. There were at least 37 people in attendance, including several past chairs and other notable guests such as, but not limited to, Sue Dudek, Sophia Hayes, John-Stephen Taylor, Joe and Brenda Ackerman, Cynthia Chapple, Leah and Jim O'Brien, Jeff and Donna Cornelius, Brian Kamusinga, Mikhail and Tatiana Berezin, and Sue Wiediger. Incoming Chair-elect Eden Tesfu was there with three Bayer colleagues, and incoming Treasurer Paula Miller joined us, too.

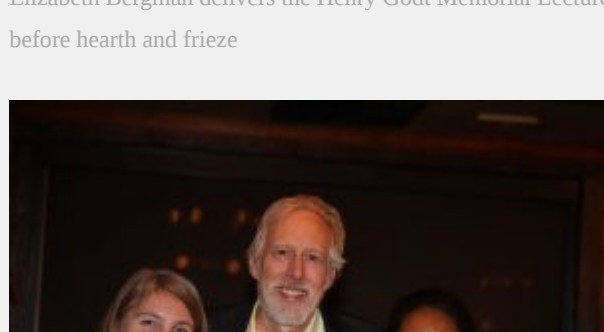
We paid tribute to outgoing Treasurer Jeff Cornelius for his eight years of service, and to outgoing immediate past chair, Tabbatha Bohac for her wonderful work. Also, we congratulated Jim O'Brien for being the Distinguished Service Awardee of 2024. Jim took all of the photos again, except of himself, when Eden and Jim Bashkin did the honors.

Our new Chair for 2025, Elizabeth Bergman, gave the Henry Godt Memorial Lecture. In it, she encapsulated the many successes and accomplishments of the year, taking a humorous and poetic approach.

The food was delicious, and the companionship was warm and charming. Several people brought their children, Sue Wiediger brought a student, and we had a wide range of ages represented. The section is alive and well, and in good hands!

Submitted by Jim Bashkin, outgoing Chair

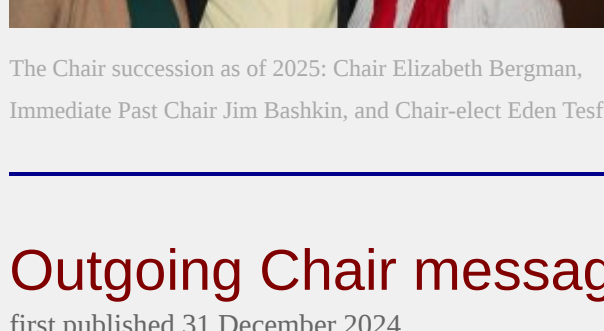
A selection of the many photos taken at the event. To see the whole album, visit our [Flickr album](#).



Elizabeth Bergman delivers the Henry Godt Memorial Lecture before bearth and frieze



Outgoing chair Jim Bashkin with Distinguished Service Awardee Jim O'Brien



The Chair succession as of 2025: Chair Elizabeth Bergman, Immediate Past Chair Jim Bashkin, and Chair-elect Eden Tesfu

Outgoing Chair message for 2024

first published 31 December 2024

I am grateful for the faith placed in me by the local section for the past year, which went by with some notable accomplishments. First, I want to thank the outgoing Treasurer, Jeff Cornelius, for his many years of service and welcome Paula Miller as the new Treasurer. It was a pleasure working with Elizabeth Bergman, who now becomes the Chair for 2025, and with Brian Kamusinga, who remains our Secretary. We welcome JB Carroll as the new Editor of the Chemical Bond and thank Bill Doub for his service as a Director and Board Member; Bill remains Chair of our Investment Committee, which now includes Sean Dingman. Jim O'Brien was elected Director starting this year, and he won the 2024 Distinguished Service Award.

In 2024, the local section received a ChemLuminary Award from the National ACS as a result of no effort of mine, so Tabbatha Bohac, Donna Freidman, and the officers and members of the section deserve a great round of applause.

Eden Tesfu is the new Chair Elect, and I enjoyed getting to know her better through the Steering Committee and several dinners during the past year. We are always happy to have more officers from industry!

Lisa Balbes presided over a marathon day of chemistry merit badges for Scouting at Jost Chemical and Fright Night fun with chemistry for Girl Scouts, with help from Elizabeth Bergman and many volunteers. More volunteers are always welcome!

Tabbatha Bohac staged a great summer picnic at Creve Coeur Lake for the section, and a great time was had by all. Another fun social gathering occurred at the Continuity Dinner, held at Spiro's in Chesterfield, where Elizabeth Bergman gave the Henry Godt Memorial Lecture. Jim O'Brien was on hand to take photos, as usual.

I had a great time, and the organization survived the experience. I pass the baton to Elizabeth!

James Bashkin



James Bashkin

Incoming Chair Message for 2025

first published 31 December 2024

Incoming Chair's Statement

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our local section of the ACS to promote the joy and understanding of chemistry among the St. Louis community and to celebrate those who contribute to the field as the Chair of our local Board of Directors. Thank you for the trust you have placed in me.

I am grateful to Jim Bashkin and Tabbatha Bohac for their team work and partnership this last year. It has been a pleasure to learn from them both. Jim and Tabbatha brought leadership and know-how to the tasks at hand and I'm appreciative to have had them as mentors for my new role. I look forward to continuing to work with Jim on the Board and I hope Tabbatha won't be too much more than a call or text away as she completed her 3 year commitment to her role as chair.

I would also like to thank Brent Zonosko who has served and continues to serve on the section's steering committee, and Eden Tesfu who has done the same and will continue as chair elect in the coming year.

Thank you to Jeff Cornelius, for his years of service as our treasurer and welcome to Paula Miller, his successor.

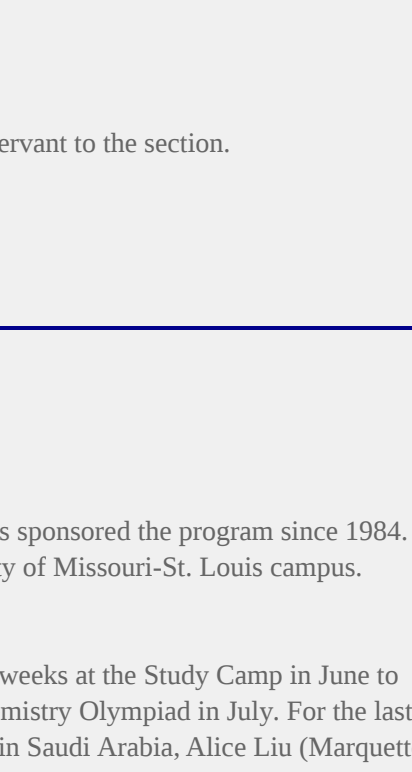
I look forward to continuing to work with Brian Kamusinga, our Secretary, for another term.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the board for their ongoing guidance and energy.

The year was eventful and Jim has done a wonderful job recalling in his reflection. The recent ChemLuminary Award to the section is evidence of the multitude of efforts by many within the section – all important and vital.

I am excited to work with so many wonderful folks from the section in the upcoming year and hope to be a great support and servant to the section.

With gratitude,
Elizabeth Bergman
ACS Section Chair, St. Louis



Elizabeth Bergman

Chemistry Olympiad – Local Exam – March 8th 2025

first published 28 January 2025

The U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) program is a tiered chemistry competition for high school students. ACS has sponsored the program since 1984. Our St. Louis ACS section has been active each year with the administration of the Local Exam in March held on the University of Missouri–St. Louis campus. Students that achieve highest scores on the local exam are invited to participate in the National Exam held at UMSL in April.

More than 1000 students across the country will participate in the National Exam. The top 20 scoring students will spend two weeks at the Study Camp in June to undergo additional training. Based on their performance, four students are chosen to represent the U.S. at the International Chemistry Olympiad in July. For the last two years, we have been fortunate to send students to the Study Camp and International Competition. In the 2024 competition in Saudi Arabia, Alice Liu (Marquette HS) was one of the four US contestants and **brought home a Gold Medal!**

The 2025 Chemistry Olympiad St. Louis Local Exam will be held on the University of Missouri–St. Louis campus on **Saturday, March 8th, 2025 at 9 a.m.**

University of Missouri–St. Louis
43 Benton Court
St. Louis, MO 63121
([Google Maps Link](#))

Students need to register prior to exam date. Please contact Dr. Bruce Hamper (UMSL) for more information:

Dr. Bruce C. Hamper
Emeritus Associate Teaching Professor
University of Missouri–St. Louis
Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Benton 421
43 Benton Court
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314-516-6486
hamperb@umsl.edu
<http://www.umsl.edu/chemistry/Faculty/Hamper.html>

Call for Nominations for the 2025 ACS Midwest Award

first published 31 January 2025

Your assistance in identifying candidates for the 2025 American Chemical Society (ACS) Midwest Award is solicited. In 1944, the St. Louis Section of the ACS established, and since then sponsors and funds the ACS Midwest Award to recognize "those who have made meritorious contributions to the advancement of pure or applied chemistry, or chemical education" in the Midwest Region. The award is conferred annually on a scientist who has made such meritorious contributions in the profession of chemistry. The contributions must have been made during a period of residence in the geographic area defined by the territories of the Local Sections of the ACS that participate in the Midwest Regional Meeting (MWRM) of the ACS. These 17 Local Sections have been listed in programs for Midwest Regional Meetings and they are: Ames, Iowa, Kansas City, Kansas State University, Mark Twain, Mo-Kan-Ok (The Tri-State), Nebraska, Omaha, Ozark, St. Louis, Sioux Valley, South Central Missouri, Southern Illinois, University of Arkansas, University of Missouri, Wakarusa Valley and Wichita. Nominees need not be members of the ACS and can work in industry, academia, government, or in private practice. Those ineligible for the Midwest Award include prior recipients of either the Midwest Award or any National Award administered by the ACS; see a [listing of ACS National Awards](#). Ineligible also are members of the Midwest Award Jury. The St. Louis Section of the ACS, also ineligible are the Past Chair, the Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Secretary and members of the Awards Committee. More details concerning the main features of the Midwest Award can be found [here](#).

The 2025 ACS Midwest Award will be presented at the 2025 Midwest Regional Meeting of the ACS to be held in Columbia, Missouri from Tuesday October 14 to Thursday October 16, 2025, hosted by the University of Missouri. Ceremonies associated with the award feature a Midwest Award Symposium, a Midwest Award Lecture and the Midwest Awards Banquet scheduled on the Awards Night of the meeting. The Award consists of a medallion and a cash honorarium; it is presented by the St. Louis Section Chair at the Midwest Awards Banquet. A condition of acceptance of this Award is that the recipient gives the Midwest Award Lecture at the time of presentation of the Award.

Nominations should consist of a nominating letter for the nominee and two or more seconding letters; a CV for the nominee; a brief biography for the nominee; and documented and objective information regarding the outstanding achievements of the nominee. Other recent practices include the following. If the nominee is an academic, a list of people who received advanced degrees under her or his direction should be provided. Activities by the nominee that support the ACS in the Midwest Region constitute additional criteria of merit. Please submit nominations electronically via a single pdf file to the e-mail address given below. They must be received on or before the deadline of Monday, March 31, 2025 (by 11:59 pm CST). Nominations are retained and re-considered (if unsuccessful) over a period of 3 consecutive years.

If you have questions, please contact Jim O'Brien at obrienja@umsl.edu or call (314) 757-5717 (cell).

Nominations should be directed to:

Dr. Jim O'Brien
E-Mail address: obrienja@umsl.edu

2025 ACS Midwest Award Coordinator,
Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry
University of Missouri–St. Louis
One University Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63121

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 for the Zoom link to the next meeting.

Date: February 13th

Join internet meeting at 6:00 pm for social/chit-chat
Business meeting begins at 6:30 pm

Future meetings: March 13th, April 10th

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](#) for more information.

Saints 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 Health Sciences & Pharmacy 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](#).

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.

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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 30mm² detector in Aperio 2 SEM
- **Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry**
ThermoFisher Scientific TSQ Altis Triple Quad Mass Spectrometer equipped with Vanquish binary pump and Triplus autosampler

About the Chemical Bond

The *Chemical Bond* is published at 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 or mailed % St-Louis Section–ACS, PO Box 410192, Saint Louis, MO 63141-0192.

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