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Letter from the Department

This past year has been one of the most unique years with COVID-19 and the flood of Bruner Hall. A water sprinkler burst in February during the deep freeze that affected most of the central US. The 4th floor of Bruner Hall had some damage (as well as our labs on the 1st and 2nd floor), but a majority of the damage was to the Biology department on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors. Additionally, Dr. Scott Darveau completed his term as chair in May. We would like to thank him for his contribution to the department. He has already accepted and been working as the new Director of Research Services and will continue teaching in the department. We have a large group of amazing seniors graduating this year. If we had highlighted all of them, this would be a much longer newsletter. On the next page, we have highlighted just four of our graduating seniors. Our next Don Fox seminar will be on October 8, 2021 and Dr. April Montoya Vaverka will be presenting. We are planning to have the Don Fox seminar in-person, as well as the reception on October 7. We will have a zoom component as well, so if you wish to watch the Don Fox seminar online please email unkchemistry@unk.edu to get the link for the zoom meeting. The department and the foundation are working to permanently endow the fund to support the Don Fox Lecture series. Please contact Darla Heggem (darla.heggem@nufoundation.org) if you would like more information about the fund.

Dr. Moser Started as New Department Chair in May



Dr. Annette Moser assumed duties as Chair of the Chemistry department in May. We are confident that she will excel as our new chair. Dr. Moser teaches Instrumental, Analytical, General, and Introductory Chemistry. She has been here since 2006 and is a full Professor. She has been actively involved in the department and on campus.

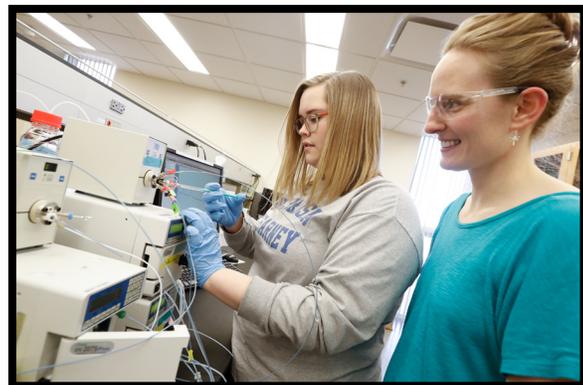
Where are you from? I grew up near Blue Hill, Nebraska.

What is your favorite part about teaching at UNK? Getting to know the students and helping them meet their goals.

What is your favorite part about doing research at UNK? Working with the student

researchers. During research projects you get to know the students even better. We have some of the best students and I am glad that I get to know them and help them meet their goals.

What are your favorite things to do when you are not in the lab or teaching? Spending time with my family and gardening.





Meet four of our Graduating Seniors



Samantha Rau

Where are you from? I am from Lincoln, NE

What are you going to do after UNK? I will be pursuing my PhD in chemistry at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

What is one of your favorite moments at UNK? I have had so many wonderful moments at UNK, and one of my favorites includes the ACS meeting in Wichita, KS my junior year. This meeting was the first time I got to visit with my professors in a nonacademic setting and the moment I learned how supportive, professional, and overall fantastic people they are.

What is your favorite part about doing research? I love doing research because it allows me to further explore the topics and concepts I have learned in class. This allows me to gain a deeper understanding of the material. In addition, I love that research allows me to work on a “real world” problem, in contrast to repeating a common lab for a class. This gives lab work a sense of purpose because I understand that what I am doing could impact the field of chemistry.

Hannah Way

Where are you from? I am from York, NE.

What are you going to do after UNK? After UNK I will be going to graduate school to get a PhD in organic chemistry. I will be attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to study organic chemistry.

What is one of your favorite moments at UNK?

Going out to dinner with the entire chemistry department at the Midwest regional ACS meeting in 2019.

What is your favorite part about doing research?

I like that research is challenging. The reactions don't always work like you expect them to, so you have to problem solve to find a set of conditions that will work.

What is your favorite class? My favorite class is organic chemistry. I love learning about new reactions and understanding the mechanisms of the reactions.





Wuilian Martinez

Where are you from? I'm from Gibbon, NE (home of the Buffaloes)!

What are you going to do after UNK? I'm going to graduate school for a PhD program in Physical Chemistry at University of Texas at Austin.

What is one of your favorite moments at UNK? My favorite moments were getting to go to the ACS meetings with the chemistry department in the fall.

What is your favorite part about doing research? My favorite part of doing research is being able to present our work at conferences and seeing other group's work, too.

What is your favorite class? It's a tie between (8:00 am) Organic chem with Dr. Pattabiraman and Calculus II with Dr. Kime.



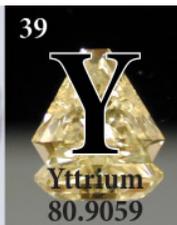
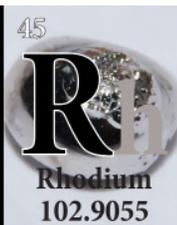
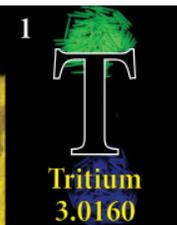
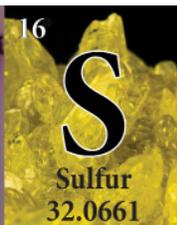
Nathaniel Garringer

Where are you from? I'm from Holdrege, NE.

What are you going to do after UNK? I think I'll be teaching Chemistry for a little bit, while going back for a Masters after I've planted my roots in whatever school I'll be working at. Who knows, maybe I'll go for a doctorate in the future.

What is one of your favorite moments at UNK? I really enjoyed my time in the lab with KS. I had been relatively uninvolved in academics, as well as outside activities, until my second year at UNK when I joined the research team. I met some really great people, learned how to make agarose (over and over), and kind of grew out of my shell. I can't thank KS enough for the opportunity to allow me to partake in such a memorable, enjoyable activity.

What is your favorite part about doing research? I enjoyed working together with friends to tackle a complex, yet fulfilling, challenge – it's really neat to see something you work on come to fruition via a poster hanging on the wall.



Recognition of Our Graduates

Students listed have a Chemistry major or minor. Students that graduate with a Chemistry major have an asterisk (*).

Fall 2020

Keith Everitt*	Chappell, NE
Megan Falconer*	Kearney, NE
Nathaniel Garringer*	Holdrege, NE
Haley Munson	Holdrege, NE
Breanna Rotherham	Dewitt, MI
Ryochi Suzuki	Japan

Spring 2021

Tara Buettner*	Saint Edward, NE
Gabriel Crocker*	Kearney, NE
Joseph Griffith*	Kearney, NE
Brady Holtmeier*	Kearney, NE
Noah Jensen*	Hastings, NE

Spring 2021 continued

Chul Hyun Jeong*	South Korea
Alex Larsen*	Minden, NE
Wuilian Martinez*	Gibbon, NE
Kasey Merklin*	Kearney, NE
Macy Ohlde	Fairbury, NE
Sidney Preister	Omaha, NE
Samantha Rau*	Lincoln, NE
Jesica Spanel	Anselmo, NE
Chelsea Villa	Lexington, NE
Hannah Way*	York, NE
Alyssa Wells*	Grand Island, NE