



Editor's Note

Lest our readership get complacent about the ongoing COVID-19 spread, I just got an email two minutes ago from my children's school stating that a staff member had just tested positive for COVID-19 who had "CDC close contact" with at least 11 other staff members at the school, and thus the entire school (a small K through 8th charter school) is shifting to virtual learning effective immediately until the first full week of October. Rest assured, the stressors and disjointed nature of our pandemic lifestyle will not be going away anytime soon! This makes me grateful for our upcoming virtual SciX meeting to bring some semblance of normalcy and connection to colleagues that I haven't heard from since either Pittcon 2020 (which barely happened as we've remarked before) or SciX 2019 in Palm Springs.

For the next SAS Newsletter, I am planning on assembling sagely wisdom and words of encouragement for those members who are dealing with an unplanned job loss due to COVID-19. If you would like to share your thoughts, tips and tricks in navigating a tricky job market (perhaps lessons learned from the 2008 economic downturn too?), please let me know at luisaprofeta@gmail.com.

SAS Award Announcements

Barbara Stull Graduate Student Award

Recognizing graduate students for outstanding research in spectroscopy.

Ewelina Mistek-Morabito, University at Albany-SUNY for outstanding research on attenuated total reflectance Fourier transform infrared (ATR FT-IR) spectroscopy for identification and characterization of body fluids for forensic analysis.

William J. Poehlman Award

Recognizing an outstanding SAS Regional Section that has met the goals and ideals of the Society over the past year.

University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez

The SAS University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez Section is being recognized as this year's outstanding section for maintaining a consistently high level of activity throughout the year and completing many projects which furthered the mission and goals of SAS. Because of its dedication to educational activities for members as well as the community, the University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez has managed to engage many faculty and student volunteers. The sections unique and diverse set of activities since their Fall 2019 activation are to be commended especially considering the challenges that Puerto Rico's infrastructure has suffered. Moreover, we applaud their outreach to the public with an event they sponsored on spectroscopy in space exploration.

SAS/NASLIBS Award

Presented for the best paper published in Applied Spectroscopy in 2019 on the topic of Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy.

Presented to:

Anupam K. Misra, Tayro E. Acosta-Maeda, John N. Porter, Genesis Berlanga, Dalton Muchow, Shiv K. Sharma, and Brian Chee

For their publication:

"A Two Components Approach for Long Range Remote Raman and Laser-Induced Breakdown (LIBS) Spec



Coblentz Society Announcements

For those who do not know, the Coblentz Society is a Technical Section of SAS, and is also an independent society to foster the awareness of vibrational spectroscopy throughout science. If you would like to learn more about the Society, this short video (<https://youtu.be/ZFpj8mP9BF4>) will give you a quick and humorous look into the Coblentz Society!

Speed Mentoring (<https://scixconference.org/specialsessions>) will be happening at SciX again this year. Speed mentoring is a fast, fun event to help connect mentors and mentees together! To help ensure the success of Speed Mentoring, please keep a look out for sign-ups in early October.

The Coblentz Society is providing financial assistance to those interested in attending virtual SciX during this difficult year, via the Global Welcome Initiative. Simply fill out the registration form and, if you are approved, you will receive a unique code to use during the SciX registration process. This program is limited to 50 registrants, so register early. The initiative is aimed at scientists in remote geographies who might not normally be able to attend SciX due to travel or visa constraints, so please forward the information to friends and colleagues who you believe could benefit from attending a virtual SciX.

Call for Award Nominations

The Lippincott Award (an award co-sponsored by Coblentz, SAS and OSA): Nominations for the 2021 Award are currently open and will be accepted until 1 October 2020.

The Craver Award (honoring those who have innovated in vibrational spectroscopy in industry)- Nominations for the 2021 Award are currently open, and will be accepted until 31 October 2020.

Nominations for both awards should be sent to Mary Carrabba at mary.carrabba@coblentz.org

Awards of Note for SciX 2020

The Craver Award

Dr. Claudia Conti is a senior researcher at the Institute of Heritage Science (ISPC) of the Italian National Research Council (CNR) where she leads the Raman Spectroscopy Laboratory. Through her Ph.D. in Material Engineering (Milan Polytechnic, 2010), under the direction of Professor Giuseppe Zerbi, and her research at ISPC-CNR, she established expertise in the area of advanced applications of vibrational spectroscopy to material analysis, particularly in the area of Cultural Heritage. Dr. Conti's research output includes 64 peer-reviewed publications and 16 oral presentations at conferences (eight invited). Additional details can be found here. Dr. Conti will present her award address "Discovering the Subsurface of Materials by Intact Methods: The Contribution of Micro-SORS" Tuesday morning at virtual SciX (<https://scixconference.org/program>).

Coblentz Student Award

Cynthia Pyles began her research career in physical and analytical chemistry at Boston University (BU). She used Surface-Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS) to study the metabolomic behavior of samples including E. coli, T-cell leukemia, and cervical carcinoma cells. The data collected served as a spectral library for clinical diagnostics. In 2015, Cynthia received her BA in Chemistry with a minor in Japanese from BU. She began working with Dr. Aaron Massari in the spring of 2016 before starting graduate school at the University of Minnesota and continued in his group for the duration of her graduate career. Additional details can be found here (<http://www.coblentz.org/awards/coblentz-student-awards>).

William G. Fateley Student Award

Ewelina Mistek-Morabito is a PhD student in Chemistry at the University at Albany, State University of New York, and a National Institute of Justice Graduate Research fellow. She obtained an Academy Profession Degree in Chemical and Biotechnical Science from the Business Academy Aarhus, University of Applied Sciences in Denmark. During that program, she pursued a one-year internship in a forensic science laboratory with the Lednev Research Group at the University at Albany. After returning to Europe, Ewelina continued her undergraduate program in Forensic and Analytical Science at the Robert Gordon University, earning her Bachelor of Science with Distinction. In 2016, she returned to the University at Albany to pursue her doctorate degree under the mentorship of Professor Igor Lednev. She obtained her master's degree in chemistry simultaneously while pursuing her PhD degree in May 2019. Additional details can be found here (<http://www.coblentz.org/awards/william-g-fateley-student-award>).

Contributed by Savitha Panikar, Mary Carrabba, and Ellen Miseo of the Coblentz Society

Becoming a Member for the Society of Applied Spectroscopy

I have been an officer and member of the Society for Applied Spectroscopy for over 25 years now. During my time as an officer and member of this organization, I have observed and been part of many changes and events related to this wonderful organization and I have observed the "importance of being a member" that I want to share:

In 2018, SAS celebrated its 60th anniversary. I had an opportunity to share some of the history of SAS in the annual Gold Medal Award session held at the Eastern Analytical Symposium in Princeton NJ. The Society for Applied Spectroscopy national organization was established in November 1958, during a meeting held at the first Eastern Analytical Symposium held in New York City. The organization was born out of the necessity to share information at the national level by bringing together a few local organizations that formed during World War II. These scientists and physicists were using spectroscopy instruments manufactured for military purposes and testing ammunition and other military components for quality assurance purposes. One of the local spectroscopy groups that emerged at this time, was the New York section. They called themselves "The Society for Applied Spectroscopy". At the first annual meeting, they were asked by the parent organization if they would donate their name to the national organization, which they did. One of the important contributions of the New York section was the inception of the Gold Medal Award Program which later became the highlight of the Eastern Analytical Symposium conference and continues to be a main focus of the local section's responsibilities to this day.

As a member and officer of SAS, I have benefitted from being part of this organization in so many ways. As a member, I was welcomed into this organization when I started my career as a spectroscopist. During my early years, one of our senior members invited me to give a talk at a local meeting on my birthday. I was pleasantly surprised when I read a glowing summary of my talk in the SAS Newsletter several months later. As I continued to network, the invitations began to grow, and I began to get invitations to speak at conferences, fireside chats, webinars, etc.

Being with likeminded people at meetings and conferences, provides a sense of belonging and having people to interact with and discuss topics of interest outside of work. Building lasting relationships with people I have met over the years is probably one of the most important outcomes. During the financial downturn in 2008, many companies were dealing with the crisis by downsizing and many of our members found themselves having to look for new employment opportunities. Our local section responded by creating a section on our website to post job opportunities and resumes, and those of us fortunate to still have a job, helped other members find permanent or temporary positions through staffing agents. We pushed their resumes internally for HR review and brainstormed on engage them to keep them connected at conferences and at meetings.

When I attend conferences, it is comforting to be with people I know. While walking down the long corridors either setting up a poster or our local section booth, I often see a dozen or more people whom I have interacted with through the years. It is often referred to as "Homecoming" week by many of us. The networking activities at conferences, have become theme oriented and give us an opportunity to kick back and enjoy ourselves with our friends, associates, and family members. Sometimes dressed up in our black-tie optional attire, or masquerading in a Halloween costume, these events are always fun and entertaining. Spectroscopists never cease to amaze how funny they can be after having a few drinks! Being involved in some capacity at a conference is even more rewarding. I often volunteer to chair a session, speak, or work at a booth. Whether the conference is in-person or on-line, it is a good opportunity to be a voice at the table, contribute to format and content, and participate in knowledge sharing, as our organization's founding scientists did over 60 years ago.

The opportunity to contribute is endless. Becoming an officer at the local section level is very useful for your career. You have the ability to expand your leadership skills and stretch your style while shaping the future of your local organization. During executive officer meetings, you can provide input and direction on news offerings that can help scientists in your local area, academic professors and their students as well as provide opportunities to connect consultants and retired spectroscopists to organizations needing their expertise and assistance. Many of the events that are conducted at the local level include scientific workshops, academic poster sessions, student research award program, and on-line webinars.

My closest friendships have emerged within my local section. Being heavily involved with this organization as an officer, I have developed strong friendships with individuals working for a variety of different companies. Over the years, we have shared information about our families, our hobbies and have come together with our families at picnics and other celebrations. These acquaintances have turned into long lasting friendships that have become so important to many of us facing the harsh challenges of daily life. When my husband had cancer, my friends and colleagues at SAS contacted me weekly to find out how I/we were doing and to offer moral support and prayers for recovery. Within our own organization, several of our cherished members have passed-away and our officers and members were there to comfort their families. When the past chair of our local section passed away, I wrote a tribute to her career, highlighting her contributions as a scientist and friend of SAS and posted it on our local website. We sent a copy to the family and at the funeral home, the write up was enlarged and prominently displayed for friends and family to see. The family acknowledge us during the eulogy by saying that SAS, and in particular, engaging in science with students was such an important part her life's purpose and amongst her most cherished achievements.

There are many other benefits of being a member of the parent SAS organization. One of the most important benefits is gaining access to the technical articles published in *Applied Spectroscopy* journal. Each membership provides access to the papers published and provides a way to keep informed of the newest algorithms, instrumentation, and applications of spectroscopy being developed in our field. I found it absolutely fascinating reading up on some of the first articles published in the *Applied Spectroscopy* Bulletin, in 1948 as I was investigating the history of our organization.

This brings me to the Certification Program. In addition to providing members access to the Journal of Applied Spectroscopy, SAS provides members with a number of other benefits including SAS sponsored short courses, conferences, speaker programs, mentor program, and a robust website. The technical expertise and management of these offerings comes from the membership pool and relationships that are established between the members and management team. One of the recent offerings by SAS is the introduction of a professional certification program designed to provide scientists with professional certification status once they reach a minimum level of expertise in applied spectroscopy. In addition, SAS is working with several National conference venues (Pittcon and SciX) to sponsor a number of supplemental courses intended to provide scientists with the working knowledge needed to apply spectroscopy (both atomic and molecular) in the workplace after formal training at the University level is completed.

The *new* SAS Certification Program (thanks to *Bonnie Saylor!*) serves as a means to identify well-trained and experienced professional spectroscopists who meet a standard level of competence. Formal certification is obtained in the form of a certificate and letter, stating the individual meets the criteria for the certification level. Certification by SAS is a prestigious status that can be added to your resume, LinkedIn page regardless of whether you are employed by private companies or working as a consultant, or in academia. The Certification standards were created and extensively vetted by senior Spectroscopists and academic professors and defines four levels of certification. The program enables spectroscopists to promote themselves with professional status credentials as they continue to gain experience throughout their career.

In closing, I want to thank the members of the SAS for welcoming me over 25 years ago when my career was just starting and my mentors for pushing me along to share my knowledge and to lead in new ways. This early beginning has shaped my career path, both then and even now as I have begun a new role as consultant and trainer in this field.

Contributed by Deborah A. Peru, Officer of NY/NJ SAS

Do you have something spectroscopy-related you want to discuss in the newsletter? Or something that will help our membership such as career tips or application tips? Please let us know by emailing luisaprofeta@gmail.com.

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