

THE CAPITAL CHEMIST

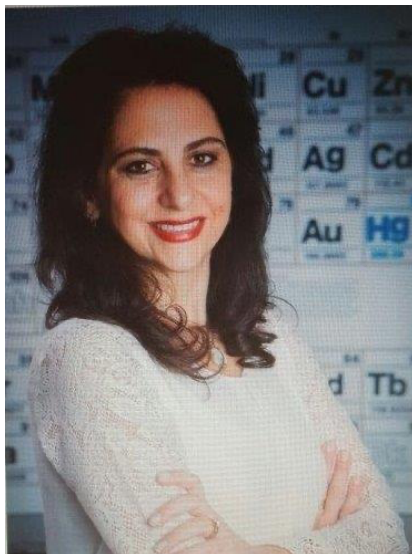
A Publication of the Chemical Society of Washington Section of the American Chemical Society

President's Welcome 2026

Welcome to the Chemical Society of Washington!

On behalf of the Board, I warmly welcome you to the Chemical Society of Washington (CSW). May 2026 be both a successful and memorable year for all.

I am honored to serve as President of the Chemical Society of Washington in 2026. This year marks a significant milestone in the history of the American Chemical Society as we celebrate its 150th anniversary. CSW is proud to recognize this landmark year and encourages all members to actively participate in the celebration. I invite you to join us for our CSW dinner meeting on Thursday evening, February 12, 2026, to learn more about the ACS 150th Anniversary initiatives.



As a vital local section in the DMV region, CSW embraces the professionalism, dedication, and volunteer spirit of its members. We value their contributions and are committed to recognizing their efforts. CSW will continue to support its longstanding and impactful programs, including Project SEED, the Chemistry Olympiad, the prestigious Hillebrand Award, the Schubert Award, Gordon Award, and our student awards programs. In addition, CSW is pleased to offer the BCCE High School Teacher Travel Grant this year to support attendance at the Biennial Conference on Chemical Education, to be held July 26–30, 2026, in Wisconsin. We look forward to receiving many applications and celebrating the achievements of our award recipients.

As professor of chemistry, my career and passion have been centered on chemical education—a dynamic and innovative process in which energy flows in both directions between students and instructors. This same spirit of collaboration and enthusiasm is reflected in the dedication of our CSW Board members and volunteers. I have had the privilege of serving on the CSW Board, alongside very dedicated board members in the Education and Outreach Committees. Public outreach remains a powerful educational and networking tool through CSW celebrates National Chemistry Week (NCW) and Chemists Celebrate Earth Week (CCEW) each year. We encourage you to contact us at csw@acs.org if you are interested in volunteering, planning an outreach event, serving as a speaker, or serving on one of our many committees of the board. We welcome your feedback.

One of my goals for 2026 is to encourage greater involvement from high school teachers and to expand participation across all career paths and levels, including academia, industry, government Labs considering our unique location, and beyond. I look forward to increasing both membership and engagement within CSW throughout the year.

Volume 76, Number 1
January 2026

Inside this issue:

Section News

- Read the President's Welcome for 2026
- Learn about the CSW election results
- Watch the recording from December's dinner meeting
- Learn more about the strategic planning session held in December
- See photos from the recent pottery event

Awards / Opportunities

- Help plan MARM 2028
- Become a Project SEED mentor
- Register students to participate in the National Chemistry Olympiad
- Help us with our tactile braille periodic table project
- Apply for the CSW Student Travel Award
- Apply for the Teacher Travel Grant
- Apply for the Division of Analytical Chemistry YCC Travel Award

For the latest information on CSW events and activities, please visit www.capitalchemist.org and follow us on LinkedIn and other social media platforms.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our in-person dinner speaker events, public outreach programs, and virtual or hybrid offerings throughout the year.

Wishing you all the very best in 2026!

Warm regards,

Nevart N. Tahmazian
President, Chemical Society of Washington, 2026

CSW Election Results: 2026 Officers, Councilors, and Managers

We are pleased to share the results of the recent CSW election:

President-Elect: Lee M. Nagao

Secretary: Nia Pollard

Councilors, 2026-2028

Monika I. Konaklieva

Wesley Farrell

Adriana Bankston

Alternate Councilors, 2026-2028

Nevart Tahmazian

Bree M. Taylor

Sripriya Seetharaman

Alternate Councilor, 2026-2027 (Partial Term)**

Ravinder Paul Lall

Managers-At-Large, 2026-2027:

Matthew Diasio

Carissa Hunter

Jude Onojah-Chukwuemeka

LaKesha N. Perry

Kamryn Walker

Philipp Werner

Congratulations to all the newly-elected members, and thank you to all who participated in this year's election.

RECORDING AVAILABLE - CSW Dinner Meeting – December 4, 2025

Thank you to everyone who came out and participated in the December 4th dinner meeting. The students are to be commended on their efforts! The recording is now available to view two of the oral presentations. We then continued the meeting with the in-person discussions of the posters.

View a collage of photos, including students with their posters: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6nnf8t>

View the recording: <https://tinyurl.com/42smcyfc>

2025 Strategic Planning

On December 13–14, 2025, in the midst of some early-season snow, a few members of the CSW Board gathered at ACS Headquarters in Washington, DC, to participate in a Strategic Planning Retreat (SPR) focused on refining the section's mission, vision, and goals. Building on the thoughtful engagement of the retreat team, CSW adopted a new mission, a forward-looking vision, and a focused set of strategic goals to guide its work over the next several years, aligned with broader ACS strategic planning practices.

Vision Statement

Our community enriched by passion for science.

Mission Statement

Cultivate an appreciation for chemistry; support and engage our community.

The plan will be communicated to the membership after CSW Board approval.

Participants:

- Allison Aldridge
- Matthew Diasio
- Carissa Hunter
- Stephanie Moffitt
- Lee Nagao
- Lauren Ragle
- Jason Schaff
- Nevart Tahmazian
- Bree Taylor
- Kamryn Walker
- Alessandra Zimmermann

In the coming months, CSW leadership will translate these ideas into concrete action plans, programs, and volunteer opportunities. Members are encouraged to get involved as this new strategic plan is implemented and as CSW works to advance chemistry in the greater Washington, DC region. If you'd like to volunteer to be part of the strategic plan implementation team, please email csw@acs.org.



Pictured, from left to right: Bill Carroll (facilitator), Allison Aldridge, Nevart Tahmazian, Kamryn Walker, Jason Schaff, Stephanie Moffitt, Bree Taylor, Lauren Ragle, Carissa Hunter, Alessandra Zimmermann, Matt Diasio and Larry Krannich (facilitator). Lee Nagao not pictured.

Volunteer Opportunity: Help Plan MARM 2028

The Chemical Society of Washington has been selected as the host of the 2028 Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting (MARM) of the ACS. An organizing committee has been established, and preparations are already underway. The meeting will be held right in the heart of Washington, DC, at historic Howard University June 8 – 10, 2028. Howard was selected for its prime location, favorable accommodations,

and historic nature as one of the first HBCUs established in the United States after the Civil War by General Oliver Otis Howard. While we plan to include many of the symposia you are used to from other regional and national ACS meetings, we will also work to include symposia geared towards government labs and policy making given our unique location. We hope you can make this meeting to share and hear about great chemistry happening in the Mid-Atlantic area, but even more so we hope you can assist in our preparations!

So far, the organizing committee is composed of the following volunteers: Prof. Wes Farrell of the US Naval Academy is the General Chair, Prof. Lauren Ragle of George Washington University and Prof. Jacqueline Smith of Howard University are the Co-Program Chairs, Dr. Alessandra Zimmerman of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences is the Communications Chair, former CSW President Dr. Jason Schaff is the Treasurer, Prof. Alex Zestos of American University is the Outreach and Volunteering Chair, and our outgoing CSW President Dr. Allison Aldridge is the Fundraising Chair. Additionally, Prof. Steven Cummings of Howard University is hard at work serving as a liaison between the committee and Howard University officials.

The local organizing committee is currently seeking to fill additional roles which require different levels of commitment. Furthermore, we hope to have volunteers to organize and preside over symposia, and make suggestions for plenary speakers. We encourage you to share your thoughts or volunteer using our Google survey: <https://tinyurl.com/yjtcvaxr>

Project SEED Mentors Needed

In the coming months, we will be seeking students for Project SEED, which encourages underprivileged high school students to pursue chemistry via a paid summer research experience. During the program, CSW hosts sessions covering chemistry careers, and how to present research. The program culminates with the students presenting their work at the ACS National Headquarters building in Washington, DC.

For this program to be successful, we need energetic mentors who are willing to work with our amazing students. Mentors come from research spaces across the region, from academia to national labs. We would also love to have mentors from industry, too! If your research lab could use an eager high schooler for 8-10 weeks this summer, please reach out to Lauren Ragle (lragle@gwu.edu). Students are provided a stipend by CSW, in addition to receiving travel support for public transit usage via our Travel Green Program.

The application deadline for interested mentors is February 3, 2026. Please contact Lauren Ragle (lragle@gwu.edu) with "Project SEED" in your subject line for more information and the application packet.

Learn more about Project SEED: <https://www.acs.org/education/students/highschool/seed.html>

Chemistry Olympiad is Approaching

Can you believe it?

The US National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) is right around the corner!

Many excited high school students have already registered for our upcoming local exam. If your high school student is interested, please visit the ACS website to learn more (<https://www.acs.org/education/olympiad.html>) and register at <https://www.usncoreg.acs.org/>.



The local section exam will take place between February 27 and March 16. This will be administered at schools across the DMV region. For students at non-participating schools, a special administration will be held at the ACS Headquarters—more information to come. The national exam will take place in April, with more information to come on date, time, and location.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to Lauren Ragle (lragle@gwu.edu) with “Olympiad” or “USNCO” in the title.

CWD Needs You: Placing Tactile Braille Periodic Tables in the DMV Region

As you may have read in C&EN, the Chemists with Disabilities Committee just celebrated our 45th anniversary as a committee. We have also set a rather lofty goal, to get a tactile braille periodic table in every state by our 50th anniversary. I would like to see one in DC and our territories as well, but that is a sort of “stretch” goal for the minds behind this project, Mike Fricke and Mona Minkara.

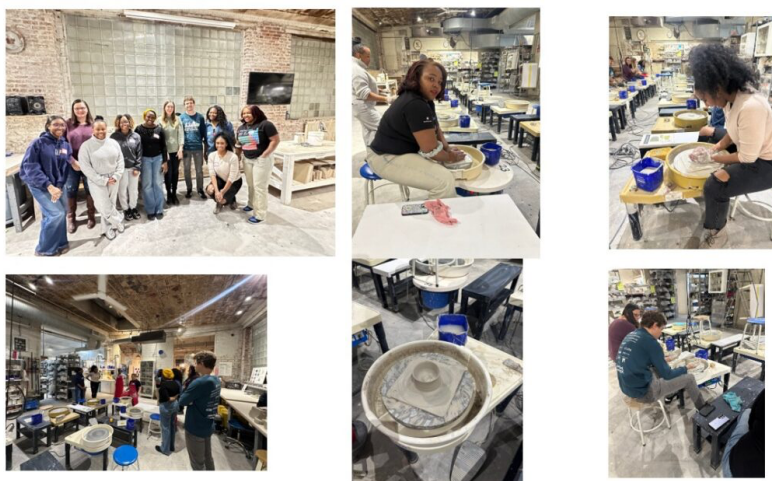


Therefore, I am bringing Mike and Mona’s project to MARM 2028 at Howard. We will need volunteers to help them apply the tactile braille dots (as you may have done during the recent national meeting in DC). But we will also need suggestions on where to place the final table. Ideally, we will have ideas where to place tables in Maryland, Virginia, and DC. If you have connections to a place you think would be good for the periodic table(s), please reach out to me, Lauren Ragle (lragle@gwu.edu). Be sure to include “Braille Periodic Table” in the title of your email. I’m open to ideas, questions, and suggestions.

Read the article in C&EN: <https://tinyurl.com/2tvmwakz>

Pottery Event Huge Success!

The Committee on Minority Affairs and Younger Chemist Committee had a fantastic time at District Clay Center on November 29, 2025! New and returning members came together to learn, create, and challenge ourselves on the wheel. Huge thanks to Kel and Inas for guiding us through such a fun and rewarding experience. Highly recommend stopping by District Clay Center if you ever get the chance!





Applications are now being accepted: CSW Student Travel Award - ACS Fall 2026 Meeting

The ACS National Meeting for Fall 2026 will be held in Chicago, Illinois, on August 23-27, 2026. This will be a hybrid event.

The Chemical Society of Washington is pleased to announce a student travel award to defray travel and/or registration costs to the ACS Fall 2026 meeting. Eligible expenses include meeting registration, travel expenses, airfare and lodging. Applicants should submit the following by midnight on June 1, 2026 to csw@acs.org:

- A cover letter stating how and why attending this ACS meeting will promote their career;
- The applicant's CV;
- A letter of recommendation from the student's mentor explaining why the student deserves the award and how this will help their professional development;
- An accepted abstract with proof of acceptance.

Within three weeks of returning from the ACS meeting, the awardees should submit receipts for any or all of the eligible expenses described above, after which the Treasurer of the Chemical Society of Washington will issue a check to each of the awardees.

The award is open to students who are graduate or undergraduate students in the jurisdiction of the Chemical Society of Washington. The award is not intended for post-doctoral fellows. There will be a maximum of four awards available. Each award will be for up to \$1,000 of eligible expenses based on the review of the above materials.

After returning from the conference, awardees will be asked to draft a short (1-page) summary of their experiences for posting to the *Capital Chemist* website and to present their posters, if applicable, at one of the upcoming CSW dinner meetings.

Teacher Travel Grant Available for 29th Biennial Conference on Chemical Education



The 29th Biennial Conference on Chemical Education (BCCE), will be held at the University of Wisconsin – Madison from July 26-30, 2026. DMV-area high school teachers are strongly encouraged to apply for the CSW BCCE Teacher Travel grant by March 15, 2026. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by mid-April. Additional details can be found in the application form.

The conference, like all of its predecessors, provides the chemistry education community with opportunities to interact and engage. The conference will be a mixture of symposia, workshops, poster sessions, exhibits, and spaces for both formal and informal conversations. Learn more about the conference on their website at <https://conferences.union.wisc.edu/bcce2026/>.

Application form: <https://tinyurl.com/3mh9m5ua>

ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry YCC Travel Award

The ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry is offering travel awards for Younger Chemists (under age 40) to travel to a meeting to present the results of their research. Individuals who may not have previously been able to participate in professional meetings are particularly encouraged to apply. Applications are due Nov 1st for winter and spring meetings and May 1st for summer and fall meetings. More information is available on the Division website at <https://acsanalytical.org/ycctravel/>. The application forms will be available when the application period is open.

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The **Chemical Society of Washington (CSW)** is the local ACS Chapter for the Washington, DC area and serves approximately 3,500 members.

2026 Officers

President

Nevart Tahmazian

President-elect

Lee M. Nagao

Immediate Past President

Allison Aldridge

Secretary

Nia Pollard

Treasurer

Bree Taylor

CSW Calendar of Events

- February 3: Mentor application deadline for Project SEED
- February 12: CSW Dinner Meeting
- February 27 – March 16th: National Chemistry Olympiad local section exams
- March 15: Teacher Travel Grant deadline
- June 1: CSW Student Travel Award deadline

The following CSW members contributed content to this month's newsletter: Allison Aldridge, Carissa Hunter, Lee Nagao, Lauren Ragle, and Nevart Tahmazian.