

# THE CAPITAL CHEMIST

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

## CSW Dinner Meeting - September 17, 2026 - featuring Dr. Rigoberto Hernandez, 2026 ACS President

### Meeting Logistics

**Date:** Thursday, September 17, 2026  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m. Check-in / Social Hour  
6:30 p.m. Dinner  
7:00 p.m. Speaker Presentation

**Location:** ACS Headquarters - Marvel Hall  
1155 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036

### Menu:

Meal will be catered by Saint Germain and will feature grilled steak with au Poivre sauce and pan seared tilapia with champagne beurre blanc sauce, grilled balsamic marinated vegetable medley, Caesar salad. Dessert and beverages are included.

Vegetarian option **available by request only:** orecchiette pasta with baby spinach, squash, and roasted red peppers in a rose pasta sauce.

**Cost:** \$24 (1/2 price for students and high school teachers)

**An RSVP is required for dinner so we can plan appropriate seating and meals.** Deadline to register is 3pm Monday, September 14.

Registration is required if you wish to participate virtually via Zoom:  
<https://tinyurl.com/zz23sh9f>

**RSVP by 3:00 p.m. (ET) Monday, September 14, to [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org).**  
Please provide the names in your party as well as your contact information when you RSVP. The public is invited to attend. You may attend the talk only at no charge, but reservations are appreciated. If you need any further information or would like to make a reservation, please contact the CSW office by email at [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org).

## Volume 76, Number 6 September 2026

### Inside this issue:

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- Register for the September dinner meeting
- Attend an upcoming CMA meeting

#### Section News

- The CMA Spring Social was a success!
- Learn more about Bree Taylor in our CSW Volunteer Spotlight
- Keep an eye out for info on the Chemistry Olympiad
- Learn about Project SEED 2026

#### Awards / Opportunities

- Help plan MARM 2028
- Nominate a CSW member for the Hillebrand Prize, Gordon Award, or Schubert Award
- Apply for the CSW Student Travel Award
- Apply for the Division of Analytical Chemistry YCC Travel Award

## Speaker Bio

Dr. Rigoberto Hernandez has been the Gompf Family Professor in the Department of Chemistry at the Johns Hopkins University since 2016, and is the Director of the Open Chemistry Collaborative in Diversity Equity (OXIDE). He is also a Professor, by courtesy, in the Departments of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University. He is the 2026 President of the American Chemical Society. He was born in Güines, La Habana, Cuba and is a U.S. Citizen by birthright. He holds a B.S.E. in Chemical Engineering and Mathematics from Princeton University (1989), and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of California, Berkeley (1993). He has published over 190 articles in theoretical and computational chemistry and discipline-based diversity research in chemistry.



## Abstract: “150 Years of the ACS, Together”

As we celebrate the 150th year anniversary of the American Chemical Society, we are focusing not just where we have been, but also where we will go over the next 150 years. Our aim is to advance chemistry, its practitioners, and everyone who is touched by chemistry. During my Presidential year I have been promoting ACS First, ACS for Life, ACS for All and their alignment with our sesquicentennial celebration of the ACS. Through ACS First, I am aiming to ensure that the ACS is the first place that everyone comes to for advocacy and advisory for advancing chemistry globally. Through ACS for Life, I have advocated for the notion that once a chemist, always a chemist, and aim to make it easier for members to remain members for life. Through ACS for ALL, I have supported and advocated for policies open to all scientists who self-identify as chemists (broadly defined!), and those who wish to engage with chemists. As a membership society, we should meet chemists where they are because together we are truly better.

**Parking:** Parking is available in nearby commercial parking garages. Please be aware that garage closing times vary. Parking is also available on the street after 6:30 pm, but be aware that most parking meters are in effect until 10:00 pm and may be limited to 2 hours. You should check the individual meters for details and payment methods as some are no longer coin-operated.

**Metro:** Blue/Orange/Silver Line: McPherson Square or Farragut West. Red Line: Farragut North

## CMA Spring Networking Social - May 30, 2026

The Committee on Minority Affairs hosted an excellent Spring Networking Social on May 30th that was well-attended and highly successful. Out of 24 RSVPs, 20 attendees were present, and with two prior confirmations of inability to attend, turnout was strong and consistent with expectations.

The event created a welcoming and engaging environment where participants were able to connect over food and drinks, enjoy meaningful conversations, and build new professional relationships. The beautiful sunny weather further enhanced the atmosphere and overall experience.



Overall, the Spring Networking Social was a great success in fostering community, collaboration, and connection among colleagues.

## 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 CSW Past 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.

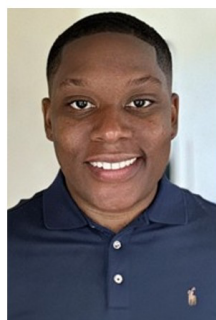
The local organizing committee is currently seeking to fill additional roles which require different levels of commitment. Furthermore, we hope to have volunteers to organize and preside over symposia, and make suggestions for plenary speakers. We encourage you to share your thoughts or volunteer using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

## CSW Volunteer Spotlight - Bree M. Taylor

**Professional Experience:** Founder & Principal Analyst at ATRICA

**Education:** M.S. in Chemistry, George Mason University

**Volunteer Activities:** I have volunteered with the Committee on Minority Affairs (CMA) and currently serve as Treasurer for the Chemical Society of Washington. As Treasurer, I support CSW's financial operations by helping strengthen internal processes and providing financial updates that keep the Board informed.



One of my favorite volunteer activities has been working with CMA to plan Black History Month trivia, an engaging way to celebrate the contributions of Black scientists and chemists. I also enjoyed supporting CMA's collaboration with a local high school on a Women in Chemistry trivia activity in honor of Women's History Month.

**Why did you become a member of CSW?** I first joined ACS as an undergraduate student because I wanted to build community with other chemists. I remained involved through CSW because I value the local section's commitment to networking, mentorship, diversity, professional development, and community engagement.

Volunteering with CSW allows me to support a scientific community that has shaped my own professional journey. I hope to contribute to CSW's continued growth by helping strengthen its operations, supporting inclusive programming, and creating meaningful opportunities for members, students, and the broader STEM community.

ACS CHEMICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON  
COMMITTEE OF MINORITY AFFAIRS



Come serve.  
Come connect.  
Come make an impact.

## FROM CHEMISTRY TO COMMUNITY: CMA GIVES BACK

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CSW CMA IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH RONALD  
MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES FOR AN  
OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK, SERVE FAMILIES,  
AND STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY.

JOIN US AS WE PUT THE SPIRIT OF CHEMISTRY  
INTO ACTION, CONNECTING PEOPLE, CREATING  
MEANINGFUL IMPACT, AND MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE BEYOND THE LABORATORY.

Register here:



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## SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup>

Time: 10am-1pm

3312 Gallows Rd. Falls Church, VA 22042

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Instagram: @csw.cma

## Chemistry Olympiad: Coming Soon

If you have students interested in the US National Chemistry Olympiad next spring, the registration should open around November. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to Lauren Ragle ([lragle@gwu.edu](mailto:lragle@gwu.edu)). For more information about the US National Chemistry Olympiad, please [click this link](#) to take you to the USNCO website.

On the USNCO website, you will note that there are several useful tabs across the top of the page. If you would like to encourage students as a mentor, please [click this link](#) to learn more information about being a mentor. The role and responsibilities will start in December. Lauren is happy to connect with new potential mentors to discuss the role and responsibilities to our wonderful high school students.

We also have coaches for our students. Current and past coaches have recorded useful videos for our students who need to study for the exam. Please [click this link](#) to learn more about the tutorials by our coaches.

If you are interested in participating as a student or encouraging a student to participate, your school does not need to have a Chemistry Club. At Chemical Society of Washington, we host the local exam for any students who are home schooled or do not have a host teacher at the national ACS headquarters building in DC. Please [click this link](#) to learn more about how to apply when the application opens.

The exam is very rigorous. I know many students enjoy learning new information. Please click this link to find resources for your student's studying. Even if you do not participate, the resources are free from ACS and you can share with any high school (and college) students you mentor or happen to otherwise be connected with.

The local exam will take place across our local section with any interested students able to participate. The national exam will take place at Montgomery College in April. We can only send 17 students (maximum 2 per school) to the national exam. More information will follow for the students who qualify.

## Another Successful Project SEED Summer - 2026

What have you done on your summer vacation? I can tell you, some brilliant high school students in our local section were able to do some incredible research. If you did not attend our celebratory Project SEED poster session, let me summarize some of the impressive work **high school students** were able to achieve.

Posters Presented (in alphabetical order):

Effects of pKa Difference on Salt Crystal Formation by **Moyo Taiwo**, Samuel Dunning, Mohammad Javed at University of the District of Columbia

Effect of Solvent on Gold Nanobipyramid and Quantum Dot Covalent Assembly via Steglich Esterification by **Heath Cho**, Lekan Ajiboye, Marie-Christine Daniel at University of Maryland Baltimore County

Electroanalytical Characterization of the Multipurpose Drug Emetine: Sensitivity, Precision, and pH-dependent Redox Behavior by **Akilesia Ergete**, Uche Udeochu, Carin Smith at University of the District of Columbia

Fully Organic Co-Crystals of Zeolitic Character: Engineering R228 Synthons between 2-Cycloheptimidazolamine and Carboxylic Acids by **Caffery Ozimina**, K. Travis Holman, Nicholas Ltuz at Georgetown University

Mechanistic Electrochemistry of the Multipurpose Drug Emetine: Voltammetric Kinetics and Electron Transfer Stoichiometry by **Michael Isowitz-Simson**, Udeochu Uche, Carin Smith at University of the District of Columbia

Miniaturized Tests for Analyzing Cultural Heritage Materials by **Tiana Wang**, Chris Bolser, Andrew Davis, Franky Moore at Library of Congress

After the students shared their research with their friends and family, CSW members, and other guests, the group broke for a catered lunch and chatting with one another. Harmonious conversations bubbled throughout Marvel Hall. Eventually, the poster judges had made their decisions. As always, it is a tight competition. Each of

the three winners get Amazon gift cards and presented with a certificate. A hearty congratulations goes to the following winners:



**First Place Winner**

Tiana Wang (center)

Chris Bolser (left)  
*Project Mentor*

Lauren Ragle (right)  
*Co-Chair Project SEED Program*



**Second Place Winner**

Heath Cho (right)

Lauren Ragle (left)  
*Co-Chair Project SEED Program*



**Third Place Winner**

Akilesia Ergete (right)

Lauren Ragle (left)  
*Co-Chair Project SEED Program*

If you are as amazed as I am by these incredible students and are interested in having a student in your research lab, please reach out to Allison Aldridge ([allison.a.aldridge@gmail.com](mailto:allison.a.aldridge@gmail.com)) or Lauren Ragle ([lragle@gwu.edu](mailto:lragle@gwu.edu)), co-coordinators of Project SEED with the Chemical Society of Washington.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, you can [click this link](#). There is information on how to qualify for the program, apply for a paid summer research internship with our local section, and even see some previously recorded webinars about the success of the program.

Students selected as SEED participants can qualify for special scholarships through the American Chemical Society. Please [click this link to learn more](#).

## Accepting Nominations for the 2026 Hillebrand Prize: Recognizing original contributions to the science of chemistry by a member or members of the Chemical Society of Washington (CSW)



William Francis Hillebrand  
December 12, 1853 – February 7, 1925

American Chemist  
ACS President 1906

Nominations are being accepted for the 2026 Hillebrand Prize Award.

Nominations are invited for the 2026 Hillebrand Prize, awarded annually for original contributions to the science of chemistry by a member or members of the Chemical Society of Washington (CSW), the local section of the American Chemical Society. The Hillebrand Prize is the most prestigious honor given each year by CSW and is recognized nationally as a mark of significant accomplishment in chemistry. The Hillebrand Prize originated in 1924 and is named for Dr. William F. Hillebrand (1853- 1925), an internationally-recognized pioneer in analytical chemistry and one of Washington's most distinguished early chemists.

The prize carries an honorarium of \$2000. Many previous Hillebrand Prize recipients have won numerous other national and international awards, including three who have received the Nobel Prize.

View the list of past award winners: <https://capitalchemist.org/2018/06/hillebrand-prize-recipients-by-year/>

The nominating package should contain the following:

### **Nominating Letter – limited to 1000 words**

The letter should focus broadly on the chemical accomplishments of the nominee, rather than their bio, leaving the finer points to those submitting seconding letters. Biographic details (degrees, positions held, major activities, etc.) will be given in the nominee's CV. The letter should begin with the major theme(s) in the nominee's research career with perhaps a summary of how these evolved over the years to create breakthroughs or push the field in a new or very productive direction.

Describing the nominee's major contribution(s) is extremely important and should be the bulk of the letter.

There is no preference or restriction for the specific area of contribution so long as it represents a significant accomplishment in chemistry. Anything is fair game: synthetic or analytical, experimental or theoretical, bio- or inorganic, etc. This section might detail such things as: the major techniques used in their research and how these were applied to a specific area to bring about significant results not previously achievable; if their research resulted in the development of a new experimental/instrumental technique or use of an existing technique in an innovative new way; how techniques the nominee developed became standard in that area;

the impact the nominee's work had on influencing other areas of research; development of new reagents, catalysts or reaction conditions; development of a new computational method or theoretical approach; etc. The nominator should provide evidence in support of these statements. This could include information about the number of citations, impact factors of certain articles (or aggregate numbers), especially influential articles/book chapters, important invited talks, previous awards by other societies, patents, funding, important leadership positions, etc. Mentioning an extremely productive collaboration is possible so long as the role/contributions of the nominee are clear. The award is not given for mentoring students (as a specific criteria) but nominators often mention if this has occurred, especially if these students have gone on to significant positions of their own.

### **Two Seconding Letters – limited to 500 words each**

It is helpful if these be from established experts in the nominee's field, and best if they are from experts at institutions other than the nominee's unless a notable expert in the nominee's area is also from the nominee's institution.

### **Curriculum Vitae – the candidate must be a member of CSW**

The CV should strongly emphasize individual academic backgrounds, appointments, publications, presentations, and patents.

### **List of Publications**

This is critical in determining the specific scientific contribution of the nominee or team.

### **Proposed Citation – limited to 25 words**

This is a brief statement that should be understood by chemists in almost any area. It should avoid highly specialized language but still give the reader the area of accomplishment and why this is a significant accomplishment in chemistry. In some ways it is a one or two sentence abstract of the first paragraph of the nominating letter. Since this is only 25 words, you may simply want to provide 1 or 2 examples of previous awardees.

We strongly recommend that the nominator collect all materials and forward in one email, preferably as PDF files(s), to [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org). Nominations will be active for three years.

If you would like to verify the eligibility of an individual as a nominee or nominator, please contact the CSW Administrator at [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org). All materials must be received by November 15, 2026. The Prize will be presented at a CSW dinner meeting in Spring 2027, or on a date mutually agreeable.

If you have any questions about the award or the procedure for nominating someone for the award, please contact our office at [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org).

## **Accepting Nominations for the 2026 Charles L. Gordon Award: Recognizing Excellence in Service**

Named after Charles Gordon for his years of service as managing editor of the *Capital Chemist*, the Charles L. Gordon Memorial Award is given in recognition of exemplary service by a CSW member to the profession of chemistry, to the science of chemistry, and/or to the Chemical Society of Washington. Nominations are invited for this award, consisting of a plaque that will be presented at a CSW dinner meeting to be announced in 2027. A written nomination should include a description of the accomplishments on which the nomination is based. Additional documentation that includes seconding letters and the nominee's CV are welcome.

The nomination should be submitted electronically to [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org). Please contact CSW ([csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org)), if you have any questions.

# Accepting Nominations for the 2026 Leo Schubert Award: Recognizing Excellence in Chemistry Teachers

The Chemical Society of Washington (CSW) is pleased to announce the call for nominations for the Leo Schubert Memorial Award to recognize an outstanding high school chemistry teacher in the Washington, D.C. area. The award was established in 1979 to honor Dr. Leo Schubert (1916-1978), a chemistry professor at American University who devoted much of his career to developing programs for high school teachers and students. The Schubert award consists of a \$500 honorarium and a certificate, which will be presented at a CSW dinner meeting to be announced in 2027.

Nominations for the award must be comprehensive in describing the nominee's accomplishments in areas such as innovation in teaching, writing curricula, outside teaching, papers published, involvement in science fairs, and postgraduate study. The application may also include supporting letters, as well as any supporting documents that concisely illuminate the nominee's accomplishments.

To be eligible for the CSW Schubert award, the nominee must currently teach chemistry at a secondary school in the geographic region of the Chemical Society of Washington, which includes metropolitan Washington, D.C. and the neighboring counties in Maryland (Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties) and Virginia (Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties). The region of CSW also includes six counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland: Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset.

The CSW Schubert Award nomination form is available via our website: <https://tinyurl.com/29k2vvh4>

Alternatively, a pdf version of the nomination form can be obtained by an email request to [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org). Completed nomination forms can be sent directly to [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org). Please contact [csw@acs.org](mailto:csw@acs.org) if you have any questions.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> for winter and spring meetings and May 1<sup>st</sup> for summer and fall meetings. More information is available on the Division website at <https://acsanalytical.org/award/younger-chemists-conference-travel-grants/>. The application forms will be available when the application period is open.

## Committee on Minority Affairs Meeting Schedule

The Committee on Minority Affairs (CMA) had a great start with our first meeting in February! We're excited to announce that we'll now be hosting monthly meetings via Zoom and would love for you to join us.

### Upcoming Dates

- September 3, 2026
- October 1, 2026
- November 5, 2026
- December 3, 2026

### Meeting Details

Topic: CSW CMA Committee Meeting  
Time: 7:00 PM

### Join via Zoom

Meeting ID: 958 2100 7951  
Passcode: cswcma

## The Capital Chemist

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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.

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#### **Treasurer**

Bree Taylor

## CSW Calendar of Events

- September 3: CMA Meeting
- September 17: CSW Meeting
- September 21: CSW Board Meeting
- September 27: CMA Community Event
- October 1: CMA Meeting
- November 5: CMA Meeting
- December 3: CMA Meeting

*The following CSW members contributed content to this month's newsletter: Wesley Farrell, Carissa Hunter, Lauren Ragle, Jason Schaff, and Nevart Tahmazian.*