

Susquehanna Valley Section American Chemical Society

Annual Education Awards Banquet



**Pine Barn Inn Danville,
Pennsylvania**

May 7, 2025

5:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

- I. Welcome and Introductions.....***Dr. Allison Saunders*
- II. 50 Year ACS Members***Dr. Allison Saunders*
DR. FREDERICK SAULS
DR. BRUCE WILCOX
- III. Joseph Priestley Service Award***Dr. Allison Saunders*
DR. DONALD MENCER Wilkes University
- IV. Ron Blatchley High School Chemistry Teacher of the Year Award.....***Mr. Ronald Blatchley*
MS. DONNA BARRETT Scranton Preparatory School
- V. National Chemistry Week Awards ...***Dr. Holly Bendorf*
6-8 Category
SOPHIA REINER Upper Dauphin Area School District
Teacher – Ms. Madison Renn
9-12 Category
KATHERINE LEGG Honesdale Area School District
Teacher – Ms. Michelle Tonkin
- VI. David H. Frederick Memorial Awards in High School Chemistry***Dr. Charles Mahler*

EXAM A RUNNERS-UP

- SOPHIA WHITCOMB Line Mountain High School
Teacher – Dr. Shelley Herb-Fausey
- JACK PETERS Selinsgrove High School
Teacher – Ms. Tracy Hepner
- TRINITY BILBAY Jersey Shore Area Senior High School
Teacher – Mr. Alex Hunter
- MCKENZIE CAWLEY Central Columbia High School
Teacher – Ms. Leah Kubasek

EXAM A WINNERS

- GAVIN MAUST Middle-West High School
Teacher – Ms. Jenna Mowery
- JAMES KUPETZ Old Forge Jr./Sr. High School
Teacher – Ms. Adrianna Rupprecht

JONAH CAHN Abington Heights High School
Teacher – Ms. Carolyn Siwak

JACE THOMAS Hanover Area Jr./Sr. High School
Teacher – Dr. Jocelyn Holodick-Reed

BLAKE BLASICK Danville Area High School
Teacher – Mr. Paul Dennehy

EXAM B RUNNERS-UP

KRISTEN KUHN'S Mifflinburg Area High School
Teacher – Mr. Matthew Wells

LILY HEAD Honesdale High School
Teacher – Ms. Michelle Tonkin

KENDALL MATASH Berwick High School
Teacher – Ms. Christine Readler

EXAM B WINNERS

RAYMOND CHEN Mid Valley Secondary Center
Teacher – Dr. Jacob Banik

MATTHEW BEDFORD Scranton Preparatory School
Teacher – Ms. Donna Barrett

VII. College Award Winners *Dr. William Kerber*

EMILY BIRCHARD Commonwealth University - Bloomsburg

JULIA REYNOLDS Bucknell University

HEATHER M. KEMPER King's College

JUAN MARTINEZ Lycoming College

JESSICA SUSKI Misericordia University

GRACE MCDONALD University of Scranton

CHRISTINA VO Susquehanna University

SAMANTHA ANDES Wilkes University

VIII. "Solving the Puzzle of the Rare Earth Elements"

Dr. Roger Turner

The lanthanides are metallic elements that have been known as "rare earths" since the late 18th century. Hard to separate and hard to study, these elements troubled chemists for a century and a half. After a brilliant young chemist destined for tragedy used them to rationalize atomic numbers just before World War I, they languished as afterthoughts floating at the bottom of the periodic table for decades. But the quirk of quantum chemistry that makes them so hard to separate has recently made them essential to today's electronics and the green technologies we may need to avoid destabilizing the climate. Producing them is toxic, however, and currently concentrated in China. This talk uses the history of "rare earth" to explore how we might rethink metal production in

ways that enhance democracy and does not create environmental sacrifice zones. Learn about: Why China dominates rare earth production now, and why the US did previously. Several key applications of rare earth metals. How the methods for studying and separating rare earth elements have changed since the 1780s

BIOGRAPHY

Roger Turner is a historian of science and museum curator. He helps diverse audiences better understand how science shapes our daily lives. His storytelling brings to life the passionate people behind things we rely on, from metals and medicines to plastic bags and weather forecasts. Roger earned a PhD in History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania in 2010. His particular scholarly expertise is in 20th-century atmospheric science, scientific instruments, and environmental monitoring. At the Science History Institute in Philadelphia since 2016, Roger produces digital exhibits and delivers educational programs. He has given invited talks at SciX, the American Meteorological Society, an ACS chapter, public libraries, colleges, and local science societies. Usually, the audience is entertained. Sometimes they learn something too. Roger was the lead historian in the Rare Earth Elements project, convening scientists, artists and historians to explain the promises and problems of the lanthanide metals. This project won a Horizon Prize for Education from the Royal Society of Chemistry in 2023. At the Science History Institute, Roger helped launch the student role-playing game Conflicts in Chemistry: The Case of Rare Earth Elements, worked on the film The Instrumental Chemist, developed the playful online experience Instruments of Change, and contributes to museum exhibitions. He wrote and curated Mechanochemistry: The Science of Crush for Google Arts & Culture and also authors the occasional Distillations magazine story.

2025 ACS SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY SECTION OFFICERS

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The American Chemical Society (ACS) is a nonprofit scientific society dedicated to advancing the chemical sciences. It is a global leader in chemistry-related information and research, providing access through various databases, peer-reviewed journals, and scientific conferences. The ACS boasts a global membership of over 200,000 individuals from more than 125 countries. It serves as a premier professional home for chemists, chemical engineers, and related professionals and is a major force in scientific publishing. ACS also conducts public awareness campaigns like National Chemistry Week and Chemists Celebrate Earth Week.

The ACS presents numerous awards for outstanding achievement in various fields of chemistry through national, regional, divisional, and local section levels. The ACS also recognizes and celebrates significant achievements and locations in the history of chemistry including The Joseph Priestley House and laboratory. The Susquehanna Valley Section of the ACS includes members from eight counties in central to northeastern Pennsylvania and is also home to The Joseph Priestley House, a National Historic Chemical Landmark.