
APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

JOIN YOUR COLLEAGUES IN HERHEY, PA



[“Molecular Milestone: Crafting a Sweet Future Through Chemistry”](#)

54th Middle Atlantic Regional Meeting
(MARM2026) will be held in
Hershey, PA, 17 – 19 May 2026.
MARM 2026 will be an in-person event.



[Reserve your room at the Hershey Lodge](#)
Book Block Rates through 27 April 2026

MONTHLY DINNER MEETING:

The four hundred and eighty-second meeting of the Susquehanna Valley Section of the ACS will be the Wilkes University [Bone Lecture](#) held on Wednesday, April 15th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the JPAC on the second floor of the Henry Student Center. The speaker will be Jennifer Heemstra of the Department of Chemistry at Washington University in St. Louis. The presentation will be preceded by a cocktail hour (4:30-5:30 PM) and dinner (5:30-6:45 PM) at Bank and Vine, 268 S. Main St., Wilkes-Barre (Dinner and RSVP details below).

Tracking the Edits That Rewrite the RNA Code

Jennifer Heemstra, Ph.D.
Washington University

ABSTRACT: RNA undergoes extensive chemical modification in cells, resulting in changes to protein expression or even the sequences of the proteins generated. Adenosine-to-inosine (A-to-I) editing is one of the most widespread and impactful of these modifications and is catalyzed by adenosine



deaminases acting on RNA (ADARs). Resulting inosines base pair with cytosine, essentially re-coding adenosine sites to guanine. Editing is essential for a number of processes, including embryogenesis, neurological function, and innate cellular immunity. Dysfunctional editing is also linked to auto-immune diseases, neurological disorders, and several types of cancer. Despite this importance, numerous challenges remain for studying A-to-I editing, and our overall understanding of the locations and frequency of inosine sites remains limited. To address this challenge, we have repurposed EndoV from an RNA-cleaving enzyme into an RNA-binding protein and demonstrated its use for mapping of A-to-I editing sites and global profiling of RNA inosine content in cells and tissue samples.

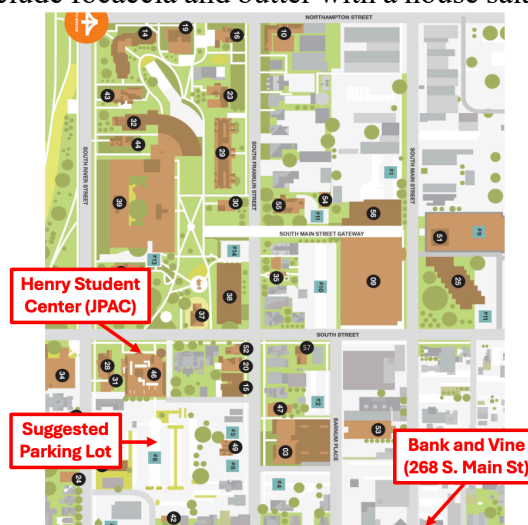
BIOGRAPHY: Jen Heemstra received her B.S. in Chemistry from the University of California, Irvine, in 2000. At Irvine, she performed undergraduate research investigating the folding of synthetic beta-sheet mimics, which instilled in her a love of supramolecular chemistry. She then moved to the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where she completed her Ph.D. in 2005, studying the reactivity of pyridine-functionalized phenylene ethynylene cavitands. After a brief time in industry as a medicinal chemist, she moved to Harvard University to pursue postdoctoral research exploring mechanisms for templated nucleic acid synthesis. Jen began her independent career in 2010, and she is currently the Charles Allen Thomas Professor and Chair in the Department of Chemistry at Washington University in St. Louis. Research in the Heemstra lab is focused on harnessing the molecular recognition and self-assembly properties of nucleic acids and proteins for applications in biosensing and bioimaging. An avid science communicator and mentor, Jen has received numerous awards for her teaching, research, and leadership, including the Cottrell Scholar Award and the National Science Foundation CAREER Award. She is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Outside of work, Jen enjoys spending time with her spouse and two kids, as well as rock climbing, cycling, and running. You can check out her blog [here](#) and her book *Labwork to Leadership* [here](#).

DINNER: The cocktail hour will be held from 4:30-5:30 PM and dinner from 5:30-6:45 PM, both at Bank and Vine (268 S Main St, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701). The cocktail hour will include appetizers, and there will be a cash bar. Dinner will include focaccia and butter with a house salad. Entrée choices include a choice of pasta pomodoro, crab-stuffed cod, chicken marsala, and bone-in pork chop. As a result of the generosity of the Catherine Bone estate, our guests will be provided with dinner at no cost. Please RSVP to Gail Kozich, 570.408.4715 or gail.kozich@wilkes.edu, noting your entrée choice by April 13th 2026.

DIRECTIONS TO WILKES UNIVERSITY:

GPS: Wilkes University parking can be accessed at 141 S. Main St, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702.

Detailed parking information can be found [here](#).
Detailed directions can be found [here](#).



Restaurant, parking, and lecture locations.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE JOSEPH PRIESTLY HOUSE:

April 15th, 2026, from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Friends of the Joseph Priestly House are honored to host the America 250 PA MOBILE UNIT.

Address: 472 Priestly Ave, Northumberland, PA 17857

More information can be found at the Joseph Priestly House [website](#).

LOCAL STEM COMPETITIONS:



A list of all STEM competitions for high school students is posted on our [website](#). If you have any questions about the contests or have suggestions for others, please contact the person indicated on the site. Questions may also be directed to the [Local Section Councilor](#).

2026 UPCOMING LOCAL SECTION MEETINGS:

April 15th, 2026 @ Wilkes University

May 2026 Annual Awards Banquet

Fall 2026 Meetings TBA

OPEN POSITIONS IN THE LOCAL SECTION:

Do you want to use your talents to help other chemists in the Susquehanna Valley section? Listed below are examples of positions that need to be filled by willing individuals, along with websites that give organizing ideas:

- Susquehanna Valley Local Section Chair-Elect
This three-year position is the usual office taken on by local chemists who want to begin to become more involved in the local section.
- [Chemistry Olympiad](#) Chair
Administer Local Chemistry Olympiad Competitions in coordination with the National Chemistry Olympiad.
- WCC ([Woman Chemists Committee](#)) Chair
Help attract, retain, develop, promote, and advocate for women to positively impact diversity, equity and inclusion in the Society and the profession.
- CMA ([Committee on Minority Affairs](#)) Chair
Help increase the number & participation of racially & ethnically underrepresented scientists in the Society and its governance.
- CH&S ([Chemical Health and Safety](#)) Committee Chair
Help provide authoritative technical resources and mentorship in chemical health and safety for all.
- Project SEED ([Summer Experiences for the Economically Disadvantaged](#)) Coordinator
Coordinators are responsible for establishing programs, identifying mentors, recruiting students, fundraising, and organizing activities such as field trips.

- SCC ([Senior Chemists Committee](#)) Chair
Help improve communication among senior chemists, increase the number of senior chemists' groups, and the level of their engagement within local sections.
- CCEW ([Chemists Celebrate Earth Week](#)) Coordinator
Help promote the positive role that chemistry plays in protecting our planet.

If you are interested in learning more about these volunteer activities, please contact the section Councilor (Donald Mencer, donald.mencer@wilkes.edu).

NATIONAL ACS MEETINGS:



Fall 2026 ACS National Meeting

The Fall 2026 national meeting will be a hybrid event.

The meeting will be held 23 – 27 August 2026, and the in-person event will take place in Atlanta, Georgia.

Abstract submission ends March 30, 2026!

See the [website](#) for more information.

JOIN THE ACS:

If you know of anyone who would benefit from being a member of the American Chemical Society, please direct them to the membership website: <https://www.acs.org/membership.html>

ACS LEGISLATIVE ACTION NETWORK:

Legislation that may impact the chemical enterprise comes before Congress on a regular basis, and the ACS is committed to keeping its members informed and encouraging them to weigh in on high-priority issues. To see the position of the ACS on many legislative issues, visit the ACS LAN website: <https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/policy.html> To find out how to become more active in ACS advocacy activities, see the [advocacy website](#).

Joining the ACS's grassroots legislative advocacy network, ACT4CHEMISTRY, will allow you to stay up to date on policy issues and contact legislators on behalf of chemistry and chemists, go to their website, follow the [Act4Chemistry X](#) account, or email advocacy@acs.org.

Act4Chemistry Advocacy Issues. To take action go to the website
<https://www.acs.org/policy/memberadvocacy.html>

Susquehanna Valley Section Web Page: svs-acs.org. Please send any comments about the monthly newsletter to your Local Section Secretary, Sydney Bachman, sydney.bachman@stellantsystems.com