

OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY DINNER MEETING:

The four hundred and eighty-fifth meeting of the Susquehanna Valley Section of the American Chemical Society will be the Wilkes University [Henry J. and Linda C. Pownall Lecture](#) held on Wednesday, October 21st, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Jean & Paul Adams Commons on the 2nd floor of the Henry Student Center. The speaker will be Professor Marie Heffern of the Department of Chemistry at the University of California, Davis. The presentation will be preceded by a reception (4:30-5:15 PM) and buffet dinner (5:15-6:45 PM) on the first floor of Kirby Hall. Please RSVP for dinner to Gail Kozich (gail.kozich@wilkes.edu) or 570.508.4715 by 19 Oct. 2026.

***Metalloendocrinology: How Copper, Iron, and Zinc Talk
to Hormones in Health and Disease***

Marie Heffern, Ph.D.
University of California, Davis

ABSTRACT: Copper, iron, and zinc are essential to life, but too much, too little, or the wrong form of these metals is linked to diseases from diabetes to cancer. What matters is not just how much metal is present, but where it is and what it is bound to. Most tools for studying metal "speciation" focus on the inside of cells, while clinical blood tests typically measure only total metal levels, which catch extreme deficiency or overload but miss subtler imbalances. In this talk, I will describe how my lab uses chemical reactivity to explore metals in the extracellular space, particularly blood, where metals interact with hormones and carrier proteins in ways we are only beginning to understand. I will discuss new detection methods, proteomics-based approaches, and molecular studies of clinically relevant biomolecules. I will also show how this emerging area, which we call



BIOGRAPHY: Marie Heffern is an Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Academic Personnel of the Department of Chemistry at the University of California, Davis, where she also serves as Scientific Director of the Campus Mass Spectrometry Facilities and Co-Director of the NIGMS T32 Chemical Biology Program. Her research sits at the intersection of bioinorganic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and chemical biology, focusing on how trace metals like copper, zinc, and iron influence hormone function and metabolic health, with the goal of uncovering new biomarkers and diagnostic approaches for conditions such as diabetes, liver disease, and cancer. She earned her B.S./B.A. in Chemistry and Religious Studies, with a minor in Ancient Religions and Classical Languages, from the University of Southern California. She received her Ph.D. from Northwestern University as an NSF Graduate Research Fellow with Prof. Thomas Meade, and completed postdoctoral training at UC Berkeley as a UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow with Prof. Christopher Chang, developing imaging probes for redox-active metals in living systems. Recent recognitions include the ACS Jonathan L. Sessler Award for Emerging Leaders in Medicinal and Bioinorganic Chemistry, the Paul Saltman Young Investigator Award, the Agilent Research Catalyst Award, and appointment as a College of Letters and Science Dean's Faculty Fellow.

The reception will be held from 4:30-5:15 p.m. and dinner from 5:15-6:45 p.m., both on the first floor of the Kirby Hall. The cocktail hour will include appetizers and there will be a cash bar. Dinner will include salad, chicken francaise, short ribs, salmon, pasta, rolls, and butter, ending with mini cheesecakes and chocolate bombs. As a result of the generosity of the Pownalls, our guests will be provided with dinner at no cost. Please RSVP by 19 Oct. 2026 to Gail Kozich (gail.kozich@wilkes.edu) or 570.508.4715.

Locations for parking, Kirby Hall, and the Henry Student Center are shown on the map to the right.

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



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](#).

2025 UPCOMING LOCAL SECTION MEETINGS:

October 21st, 2026 @ Wilkes University

November 2026 @ Lycoming College

January 2027 Executive Board Meeting

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.
- 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.
- 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).

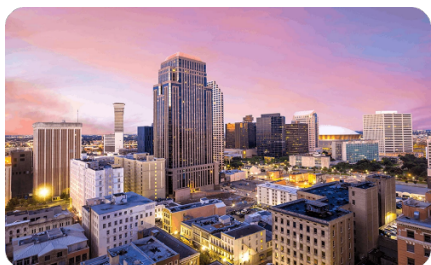


Topic: Chemistry Under Construction

This year, National Chemistry Week is celebrated October 18-24 with the theme “Chemistry Under Construction.”

Learn more about this year’s NCW [here](#).

NATIONAL ACS MEETINGS:



Spring 2027 ACS National Meeting

The Spring 2027 national meeting will be a hybrid event.

The meeting will be held 21 – 25 March 2027, and the in-person event will take place in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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’ 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