



2010

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Recommended Citation

Fields '12, Kristin, "Senior Chemistry Students Honored by ACS" (2010). *News and Events*. Paper 1327.
<http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/1327>

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Senior Chemistry Students Honored by ACS

February 16, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Three Illinois Wesleyan University senior chemistry majors, Jennifer Faust from St. Louis, Mo., Scott Krabbe from Kirkland, Ill., and Sara Costello from Lockport, Ill., have been selected as 2010 Illinois Heartland American Chemical Society Collegiate Scholars.

The prestigious award, according to those in the field, is given by the American Chemical Society (ACS). Recipients are determined by their grade point average, contributions to research in the field and overall involvement in activities. Faust, Krabbe and Costello will be recognized in a ceremony in Peoria in March and will receive a certificate and a \$200 award.

Faust, who plans to pursue a doctorate in physical chemistry, has participated in The National Science Foundation's Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program. While studying with REU at the University of Arizona the summer of 2006, she focused on research in developing an alternative energy device that mimics photosynthesis in purple bacteria. During the summer of 2009 Faust traveled to Argentina through REU as well, where she studied photochemical research at the University of Buenos Aires. While on campus at Illinois Wesleyan, Faust has worked with the research group of Chair and Associate Professor of Chemistry Rebecca Roesner since the beginning of her junior year. Their project focuses on characterizing the macrocyclic molecules synthesized by other students in the group.

"I feel honored first to have been nominated for the award by my professor and then to have been recognized by local chemists in the Heartland ACS division," said Faust.

Krabbe has conducted research in organic chemistry at Boston University through REU as well, focusing on the use of Ruthenium photoredox catalysis for the intramolecular cyclizations. Since his spring semester of his sophomore year, including the summer of 2008, Krabbe has conducted research on campus at IWU in the Laboratory for Environmentally Friendly Organic Synthesis under the guidance of Ram Mohan, who is IWU's Earl H. and Marian A. Beling Professor of Natural Sciences. His work focuses on the use of Bismuth(III) compounds as environmentally friendly catalysts. Additionally, he has worked on projects such as the allylation of tetrahydropyranyl ethers catalyzed by bismuth bromide followed by in situ derivatization to give highly functionalized esters. Krabbe is currently the vice president of the IWU Chemistry Club.

Costello, whose goal is to obtain a master's degree in forensic chemistry and a doctorate in analytical chemistry, has studied at the University of Florida through the REU program. While at the University of Florida, her research concentrated on analytical chemistry. During her time at IWU, Costello has worked with Assistant Professor of Chemistry Brian Brennan and is currently working with adjunct faculty member James House. Costello's work with Brennan focused on developing novel therapeutic agents for sickle-cell disease. Her research with House involves studying the solvatochromism of iodine, a simple probe molecule, as a potential means of quickly assessing solvent polarity.

“I feel excited and honored to be recognized alongside two of my classmates whom I admire,” said Costello.

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