

OCACS College Awards 2021

	College/ University	Sponsoring Faculty	Student Recipient	Message from Faculty
1	Cal. State University Fullerton	Prof. Nicholas T. Salzameda Associate Professor Graduate Advisor Dept of Chemistry & Biochemistry California State University, Fullerton	Shaina Nguyen	<p>Shaina Nguyen is a graduating Honors and President's scholar majoring in Biochemistry at California State University, Fullerton. Shaina is also a MARC scholar while working in Dr. Nicholas Salzameda's bioorganic chemistry laboratory synthesizing novel therapeutics for the West Nile virus. As an outstanding researcher, Shaina has won numerous awards including the California State University Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology Glenn Nagel undergraduate research award. After earning her undergraduate degree, Shaina plans on attending an MD/PhD program. Shaina is an exceptional person with a high potential for scientific research, she will be an outstanding physician-scientist and most deserving of this high honor. I congratulate Shaina on all her accomplishments and look forward to her beginning the next stage in her career.</p> <p>- <i>Nicholas T. Salzameda, Ph.D.</i></p>
2	Cerritos College	Prof. Rena Lou	Joseph Chen	<p>Mr. Joseph Chen is one of the most outstanding students that I have taught during the past 20 years. He is majored in pre-pharmacy and has an amazing academic record at Cerritos College –he has earned 78 units with a perfect GPA of 4.0! He is extremely dedicated, determined, creative, and helpful. In and outside of classroom, students look up to him for his insight in chemistry concepts and problem solving. He is currently volunteering at Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center assisting with the vaccination effort. Joseph plans to get a Doctor of Pharmacy and become a pharmacist, serving the community to promote health and wellness. We are very proud of him and wish him the best on his academic and career pursuits.</p> <p>- <i>Dr. Rena Lou, Professor of Chemistry</i></p>
3	Chapman University		Brian Han and Dela Hatfield	<p>1) In Dr. Ogba's lab, Brian has championed a project using theoretical chemistry techniques to understand how calcium salts can be used as cheap, abundant, and non-toxic alternative catalysts for facilitating chemical transformations. Brian has been relentless in his approximately two-year pursuit to complete this data-intensive project and has successfully pushed the project to an advanced manuscript-writing stage. Brian is also an excellent science communicator and has constantly set the bar in the research group for giving effective and clear research presentations. Brian will be sorely missed as a strong intellectual voice in Dr. Ogba's research group.</p> <p>2) Dela is a highly motivated, intelligent, and dependable young woman. Her research was focused on designing complex microgels for biological applications. She acquired a great understanding of</p>

				<p>microgel synthesis, post-synthesis modification, and characterization of these microgels. She spent numerous hours in the lab working enthusiastically on her research project. I found her very engaging in the research and eager to learn. She was fully devoted to understanding the complexity of polymer-based microparticle synthesis. She is very hardworking and proved her resilience in the project of complex core-shell microgel synthesis. She learned some unique analytical techniques, including dynamic light scattering and laser confocal microscope. I wish her all the success in her future academic career and life endeavors!</p> <p>- <i>Dr. Islam</i></p>
4	Concordia University	Prof. John W. Kenney, III.	Lucas Senkbeil	<p>It is my pleasure to introduce Concordia's 2021 college chemistry awardee Mr. Lucas Senkbeil, also the recipient of a Presidential Honor Scholarship, Concordia's most prestigious full-tuition scholarship award. He graduated from Concordia as chemistry major with over 180 semester units earned. He has been engaged in multiple chemistry research projects starting in high school. His research has proceeded with ever increasing sophistication and depth throughout his undergraduate years. He is a published co-author of an astrometric double star research study. Two other chemistry projects in which he is the primary student investigator and project leader are nearing the publication phase. He has served with distinction as vice-president of the Concordia Student Affiliates Chapter of the ACS, National Chemistry Week Coordinator, and Student Senator. He is equally adept at singing in Concordia's award-winning choir that tours internationally, playing concert hand-bells (including a stint as a studio hand-bell musician by invitation from ABC Television), acting as a principal cast member in university-produced plays, and fabricating custom parts for research in the machine shop. He is accepted into Environmental Science graduate program at Baylor University. The Concordia chemistry faculty takes great pleasure in nominating Lucas for this award.</p> <p>- <i>Dr. John W. Kenney, III</i></p>
5	Cypress College	Prof. Lenore Landis	Allison Burick	<p>Congratulations to Allison Burick, the OCACS student of the year from Cypress College! Allison is the top performing student in organic chemistry. Beyond her academic excellence, Allison is known for her willingness to offer support and encouragement to her peers. Allison has served our school community as a Supplemental Instruction (SI) Leader in the chemistry department for four semesters. Her enthusiasm and passion for chemistry are inspiring, and her kindness and sense of humor make her such a joy to be around. Allison plans on becoming a science professor one day, and we are extremely proud of her!</p> <p>- <i>Lenore Landis</i></p>
6	Fullerton College	Prof. Tilahun Yimenu	Ashley Vergara Mendez	<p>I want to congratulate Ashley for being the recipient of the OCACS Outstanding Chemistry Student Award from Fullerton College. Ashley is a chemistry major who is currently completing the second semester organic chemistry course. Everyone of the chemistry faculty had the best to say about</p>

				<p>Ashley, hard-working, detailed, and always seeking to know more are some of the common comments. In her own words:</p> <p>“A few aspirations that I have in life is to obtain a Ph.D. in my major (Chemistry) and be able to contribute and help with any research projects that come along my way. With that being said, I hope that I will be able to teach and inspire others in majoring in my career most importantly, women of color. I hope I’ll be able to achieve the level of respect and admiration that I have had for former professors. Most importantly, I’m hoping to transfer to a 4-year university this upcoming fall. I hope to be accepted to any UCs that are willing to have me.”</p> <p>- <i>Tilahun Yimenu, Ph.D.</i></p>
7	Golden West College	Prof. Kay Dutz	Vicky Tran	<p>Vicky has taken the entire chemistry series here at GWC, and has shown excellence in every course. Normally we struggle choose our top student; this year, Vicky was high above the rest! All of her instructors have nothing but good things to say. Vicky is tenacious and settles for nothing less than perfection. After transferring, Vicky intends to pursue a career in healthcare. I asked her what she likes best about chemistry and she said, “it’s magical, and when I am performing the reaction, I simply feel like a witch making my own potions.” Congratulations, Vicky, you deserve this award!</p> <p>- <i>Kay M. Dutz, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor at Golden West College)</i></p>
8	Irvine Valley College	Prof. Keith Donavan	Zachary Falkowski	<p>Zachary Falkowski is nominated by Steven Nguyen of Irvine Valley College. Zach is an outstanding student, maintaining the highest performance throughout the general and organic chemistry sequences while also completing undergraduate research at UCI. To have Zach in your class is to have a super inquisitive, intelligent, hard working student, who always helps other around him. He was a pleasure to have at IVC and we wish him luck on his next journey!</p>
9	Mt. San Antonio College	Prof. Parisa Mahjoor	William Floyd	<p>The message from the instructor () is:</p> <p>It was my pleasure to have William Floyd in my Chem 40 Hybrid and Chem 50 Hybrid classes. He was an exceptional student; always prepared for each lecture and always ready with questions. He was an even better lab mate. Not only was he fully prepared for each experiment, but he was ready to help each of his lab mates with their work. William won Outstanding Chemistry Student Award at Mt. SAC for Chem 50 and Chem 80 both. William was one of the best students I have had and is most deserving of this award. Congratulations, William!</p> <p>- <i>Parisa Mahjoor</i></p>
10	Saddleback College	Prof. Teresa Bear	Anthony Gavin	<p>Anthony Gavin has been selected as the 2021 ACS Chemistry student of the year for Saddleback College. In addition to being an outstanding chemistry student himself, Anthony has supported our chemistry department for the past 3 years as one of our most popular chemistry tutors. In addition to the ACS Chemistry Award, Anthony has been selected by the department to be the recipient of the prestigious Harold Friedman \$10,000 scholarship in Chemistry for his personal academic achievement and dedication to chemistry students in the Saddleback Chemistry Tutoring Program.</p>

				<p>Anthony will be transferring to either UC San Diego or UC Berkeley this fall to earn a B.S. in Biochemistry. Anthony is a true ambassador of Saddleback College and we look forward to celebrating him as he moves on to his next academic milestone.</p> <p>- <i>Dr. Teresa Bear</i></p>
11	Santa Ana College	Prof. Stacey Littlejohn	Ngoc Hong Diep Le	<p>The Santa Ana College Chemistry department would like to congratulate Ngoc Hong Diep (Jennie) Le as the selected recipient of this prestigious award. Jennie has excelled in our chemistry courses here at SAC. She also has worked for the chemistry department as a Supplemental Instruction facilitator, where she was selected to tutor chemistry students for two years. She has been an outstanding student for us and we are excited to see what the future holds for her.</p> <p>- <i>Professor Stacey Littlejohn and the Santa Ana College Chemistry Department</i></p>
12	Santiago Canyon College	Prof. Amanda Henry	Ryan West	<p>Ryan West is a biochemistry major and has done exceptionally well in her chemistry classes at Santiago Canyon College. She is a member of the Honors program, STEM academy and STEM club. She is part of Project RAISE at CSUF, working in a biochemistry research lab. She has presented at conferences and will oversee new students that will be starting in the lab. She is a well sought-after SI and IA for various classes because she is approachable, caring and creative. Ryan is a first generation, underrepresented student, who is raising her pre-teen daughter as a single mother. She is incredibly dedicated, hardworking, and passionate. She is a great student and even greater person. Ryan West was nominated by Amanda Henry and the SCC Chemistry Department.</p>
13	University of California, Irvine	Prof. Susan King	Michael Trinh	<p>Michael obtained an AS degree in Physics from Mission College in Santa Clara and transferred to UCI as a junior. He joined the Evan's group just as the COVID-19 pandemic hit, but he has been working in-person since the lab opened up in June. Michael has demonstrated considerable experimental skill in synthesizing oxygen- and moisture-sensitive organometallic uranium complexes. His contributions to the organouranium project are substantial and he will be a co-author on at least two organouranium papers. In addition, Michael has initiated a major rare-earth metal electrochemical project to examine the electrochemistry of a complete set of analogous rare-earth complexes to compare their Ln(III)/Ln(II) redox potentials. Although several graduate students have tried to do this, none have succeeded, and Michael is bringing this project to conclusion before he begins graduate school in Fall 2021.</p>