



Chemistry Teacher of the Year Award 2023

There are about 40 High School Chemistry Departments with whom OCACS has established connections. In accordance with ACS Goals to Support Excellence in Education (Goal 3) and Communicate Chemistry's Value (Goal 4), the Orange County Section recognizes a teacher as the Orange County Chemistry Teacher of the Year.

Teachers are nominated by another teacher or administrator from their school through an online form. They submit answers to questions about their assignments and teaching philosophy, as well as letters of recommendation from four former students. Three teachers are short-listed to have our committee visit their classrooms and interview others at the school before making their choice.

Giving this award is always a very difficult and time-consuming task as there are so many outstanding teachers in our county.

The Process we follow to select the awardee is described in an attached document. In 2023 the Section Board discussed whether we should raise the monetary amount of the Award, and this was approved. This document, as well as the announcement and thank you template are also attached.

The Orange County High School Chemistry Teacher of the Year Award was presented at a short ceremony during the 2023 ACS Orange County High School Chemistry Awards Banquet, which was held on Wednesday May 17, 2023, at Concordia University, Irvine. This event recognizes high school students for their performance in the Chemistry Olympiad, First Year Exam and County Science Fair.

The 2023 choice was **Valerie Thompson** from University High School. Among the documents in the package are the letters of recommendation sent by some of Valerie's former students, the letter congratulating her on winning the award, and the brief explanation of why she won that was read out in front of the roughly 220 people at the dinner.

The two other finalists were **Andrea Chou** from St.Margaret's Episcopal School and **Anie Robinson** from Sage Hill High School.

The winner's father was in attendance at the dinner, and he expressed his pride in this daughter's achievement, and subsequently wrote a letter to the Section in appreciation of our "good work". His letter is attached as one of the exhibits.