

Andrews University Chemistry Lecture Series

Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry to host 15 speakers for its 54th annual lecture series

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By: Desmond Hartwell Murray, associate professor of chemistry

The Andrews University Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry will host 15 different and dynamic speakers on a wide range of topics for its 54th annual lecture series. The series was formally renamed the Dwain L. Ford Guest Lecture Series four years ago in honor of former department chair and chemistry professor Dwain L. Ford on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the seminar program he started. Ford also started the Berrien County Forensic Lab on the campus of Andrews University.

This year's series features two guest speakers during the fall 2019 semester and 13 during the spring 2020 semester. The topics range very broadly and include the following: new analytical instruments and methods; food safety; breast cancer; methods for reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide; the significance of color, colorants and color structures in nature and their possible commercial applications; the chemistry and future of cannabis and cannabinoids; the intriguing properties of novel boron-based new materials that are touted to revolutionize sensors, catalysts, and batteries; the importance of rare earth metals in 21st century technology and global economy; recent discoveries of how to detect perfluorinated surfactants; and natural molecules in

humans that induce psychedelic experiences and the discovery that productive enzymatic activity occurs even after death of organisms.

Just as fascinating is the background and biography of the guest speakers who come from universities, industries and a national laboratory across the United States and abroad. One is a Pulitzer Prize winner for environmental journalism, another is an Andrews University chemistry alum who will be obtaining her PhD in September 2019, another one is a chemistry professor at the world-famous University of Cambridge, another explores solutions to and advances in breast cancer treatment at nearby Harper Cancer Research Institute on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. Another presenter from University of Illinois is a leading expert on chemical imaging, and one lecturer will be coming from Argonne National Laboratory situated just outside Chicago. Ten of the lectures will be given in person as the lecturer visits Andrews University, while five will be done via an online videoconferencing webinar format. Several of the lecturers will be coming from adjoining Midwest state universities, such as University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin, Indiana University and Wayne State University.

The Guest Lecture Series is another way Andrews University, the premier institution of higher education in Southwest Michigan, and the Andrews University Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry, in particular, seek to bring world-class education, information and experts not just to its students but to the entire surrounding community.

These public science lectures are generally held at 4:30 p.m. (EST) in the science building on the campus of Andrews University. The lecture series is co-sponsored by the Andrews University Office of Research & Creative Scholarship and by the Berrien County Regional Education Service Agency. Each week notifications will be sent out broadly, including in the Andrews Agenda (andrews.edu/agenda) and in the Benton Spirit Community Newspaper (bentonspiritnews.com) providing more specific information on the upcoming lecture and guest speaker.

This year the fall lectures will also be co-sponsored by the Andrews University Department of Behavioral Sciences and the Institute for Prevention of Addictions. This is meant to provide a multidisciplinary audience and perspectives as well as “teaching moments” on the topic of cannabinoids, which is having a broad impact socioeconomically, legally and scientifically and has relevance that is global, national and local in community, church, government and nongovernmental organizations.

All are invited to attend this year-long lecture series on the campus of Andrews University. For more information, please connect with Desmond Hartwell Murray, series coordinator and associate professor of chemistry at Andrews University.