

2024 MARYLAND CHEMIST OF THE YEAR



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An evening plenty of knowledge and fun.

Dean Sarah L. J. Michel was the 2024 recipient of the Maryland Chemist of the Year Award. Congratulations! The ACS Maryland local section of the American Chemical Society honored Dean Michel with a dinner reception. The award is traditionally written in calligraphy, an art form that is rapidly disappearing. The award recognizes the awardee's contribution to chemistry and for research work carried out in Maryland. The description of Dean Michel's work was read by [professor Coop](#) (Pictures 1&2) and the award was given to the awardee by Beatrice Salazar, Chair the award committee (Pictures 1&2). There was also a State of Maryland Governor's Citation, which was read by Angela Sherman, former award committee chair (Picture 3).

The introduction of the program began with a remembrance of [Dr. David Yarkony](#), JHU, he was the Chemist of the Year awardee in 2020 and passed away in 2024. Next, Professor Coop introduced Dean Mitchell. He told us about her research, in particular the work that she carried with younger students in the Maryland area; a great contribution to the community. This work made the cover of [The Journal of Chemical Education](#) (Vol 97 issue 10).

[Dean Michel's](#) presentation began by sharing with the audience, which included the President of the University of Maryland, colleagues and students, her early research as a child on plant growth +/- light and her motivation to become a scientist (picture 6). It was a reminder that young minds are approachable, impressionable, and that older scientists could cultivate that curiosity and interest in children.

Dean Michel shared with the audience three "vignettes", as she called them, that represent some of her research interest. The first vignette was on Zinc Finger Proteins

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where zinc facilitates protein folding and crucial roles in modulation of transcription and translation. The second vignette was on metals as drugs, specifically, the use of iron nanoparticles that overcome pharmacokinetics obstacles to treat anemia. The final vignette dealt with the development of analytical methods for the detection of potentially toxic metals in electronic cigarettes. It was an evening where the audience was exposed to high quality, interesting science.



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Award Lecture, April 1, 2025



Acknowledgements

The ceremony was attended by 56 scientists, colleagues, and undergraduate, graduate and postdoc students. Dinner was served from the MJE catering service company and it was accompanied with wine courtesy of Professor Andy Coop, PhD. The volunteers from UM School of Pharmacy received a thank you gift and an award certificate from the ACS Maryland Section.

