Strategic Hires Bring the Expertise of Nine More Faculty Members to CHEMS

The Michigan State University Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science (CHEMS) has welcomed nine new faculty members during the past two years. CHEMS currently has 39 research and partially appointed faculty members. Meet the newest additions:

2018

Research Professor Ray Boeman is the associate director of the Vehicle Technology Area Scale-up Facility for the Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI) in Corktown, Detroit. Since October 2015, he has had a joint appointment with MSU as the MSU-Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Professor of Composite Materials and Manufacturing. He has conducted research on composite materials, fracture mechanics, adhesive bonding, photomechanics, mechanical properties, materials processing, damage mechanisms, and nondestructive evaluation.

Assistant Professor Robert Ferrier is an expert in polymer science who is interested in combining his background in polymer physics and chemistry to create new materials that solve engineering challenges in energy, the environment, and health. He came to MSU as a postdoctoral fellow in chemical engineering from the University of Texas at Austin.

2017

Assistant Professor Xanthippi Chatzistavrou is an expert in glass-ceramic composites, with applications in dentistry and orthopedics. Her research is focused on biomaterials with bioactive and bactericidal properties for tissue healing and regeneration for hard and soft tissue regeneration. She came to MSU as a research fellow from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry.

Assistant Professor Shiwang Cheng brought his understanding of the mechanics and dynamics of polymers and polymer nanocomposites to MSU. One of his goals is to design novel composite materials that can be applied to emerging challenges in the environment and to energy, such as gas separation, desalination, batteries, and supercapacitors. He came to MSU as a postdoctoral fellow in dynamics and mechanics of polymer nanocomposites at ORNL.

John Dorgan joined MSU as the David L. and Denise M. Lamp Endowed Chair in Chemical Engineering Professor. He is an expert in polymer materials science. His interests include polymer science with a particular emphasis on "green" polymers made from renewable resources. (Read more on page 3—endowed chairs).

Assistant Professor Elias Garratt joined CHEMS, the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), and Fraunhofer USA. A physicist by training, his work explores relationships between the structure of matter at the micro- and nano-scales to their properties as applied to transformative technologies like diamond electronics. He came to MSU as a research physicist from the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Stephen Kamin is a teaching specialist for undergraduate chemical engineering courses. He works in the unit operations lab during spring semester and teaches the process design class each fall. Kamin retired as a chemical engineer from Dow Coming in Midland after a 36-year career. His industrial experience is in silicone manufacturing technology.

Assistant Professor Aljoscha Roch of CHEMS, ECE, and Fraunhofer USA, is an international expert on 3D printing technology and material development for printing processes. He is working with Fraunhofer USA to build up printing competencies in 3D printing technology and flexible printing processes with an aerosol printer. He was group manager for printing at Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft in Dresden, Germany, prior to coming to MSU.

Assistant Professor Hui-Chia Yu joined MSU in CHEMS and computational mathematics, science and engineering. His research focuses on mesoscale and micro-scale modeling and simulations of electrochemical dynamics of lithium-ion battery and solid oxide fuel cell electrodes. He is developing and utilizing smoothed boundary and phase field methods for computational implementations. He previously was an assistant research scientist at the University of Michigan.

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
It has been another fantastic year in the Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science as we continue to strive for excellence in teaching, research, and service in the advancement of knowledge and innovation in our fields. It is my pleasure and honor to present you with an update of the activities and accomplishments in CHEMS.

Since our last update, we have welcomed several new faculty members who further enhance and expand the richness of our research programs. They have joined the areas of polymers, composites, and electronic materials. We have also added depth to our computational materials science program. Read about these talented additions on page 7 of this newsletter.

This newsletter also provides an update on the activities of our dedicated faculty members and the numerous prestigious honors they have received because of their hard work.

In today’s world, partnerships with industry and global institutions play an ever-increasing role in research and innovation, and our department has been active in seeking and developing these connections. The Institute for Advanced Composites (IACMI) is rolling into its fourth year and includes a host of industry partners working closely with CHEMS faculty and staff on lightweight polymer composites for vehicles at the prototyping facility in the Corktown area of Detroit.

On the international front, we have established two new dual-PhD degree programs: one with the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai, and a second with the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras. Industrial and international programs such as these further broaden the experiences of our students and help prepare them for tomorrow’s world.

Our instructional programs continue their long tradition of excellence in both chemical engineering and materials science and engineering. I am happy to report that both undergraduate programs received full ABET accreditation this past year. We have a large and vibrant population of close to 1,000 graduate and undergraduate students in our two programs. You will read about several of their impressive achievements, as well as the remarkable efforts of some of our distinguished alumni.

We are proud of our achievements and excited about confronting the challenges of tomorrow. I hope you will enjoy reading this brief summary of activities and look forward to updating you on our progress in the future.

Donald Morelli
Morelli Named CHEMS Chair
Donald Morelli, interim CHEMS chair for nearly two years, was named chair in June 2017 following a national search.

Morelli is a professor in the CHEMS department. He served as director of the MSU/DOE Energy Frontier Research Center on Revolutionary Materials for Solid State Energy Conversion from 2008 until 2016.

He joined MSU in 2007 after spending 21 years in the industry at General Motors Research Laboratories as a senior research scientist.

Morelli replaced Martin Hawley, who stepped down as chair in August 2015 after 13 years of service. Hawley is senior associate to the dean of engineering and director of the MSU Composite Vehicle Research Center.

“Don is leading the department into a new era marked by growth in its research and educational mission,” Engineering Dean Leo Kempel said.

Yue Qi
CHEMS Professor to Champion Inclusion and Diversity
Yue Qi became the first associate dean for inclusion and diversity in the College of Engineering in June 2018.

The professor of chemical engineering and materials science is spearheading new diversity and inclusion programs, pushing existing programs forward, and overseeing faculty development activities while coordinating college inclusion and diversity activities with other MSU units.

“Being diversity and inclusion competent allows us to better serve our society,” she said.

She joined MSU in 2013 after 12 years as a research scientist at General Motors.

From the Chair
Carl Lira, associate professor of chemical engineering, is a section co-editor for the 9th edition of Perry’s Chemical Engineers’ Handbook, which is the definitive guide for practicing chemical engineers.

Lira is a co-editor of Section 4 on Thermodynamics, along with Richard Elliott from the University of Akron, Paul Mathias from Fluor Corp., and Timothy Frank from the Dow Chemical Company.

Perry’s Handbook was first published in 1934 and has been a source of chemical engineering knowledge for chemical engineers, and a variety of other engineers and scientists for more than 70 years.
Lamp Endowed Chair in Chemical Engineering

John R. Dorgan, an expert in polymeric materials and composites from the Colorado School of Mines, is serving as the inaugural David L. and Denise M. Lamp Endowed Chair in Chemical Engineering. The faculty position was created by the Lamp family of Dallas in 2014.

“My interest is fairly traditional—to understand flow migration in manufacturing polyethylene pipe and film,” Dorgan said. “One of my ongoing projects is the optimization of biodegradable polymer fibers for use in hydraulic fracturing operations.”

Dorgan is a past president of the BioEnvironmental Polymer Society. He led a successful effort to organize C2B2, an industry-sponsored research center involving faculty and staff members from the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado State University, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

David Lamp (CHEMS ‘80) has worked in the petroleum-refining industry, including technical, operations, commercial, and senior management for almost 40 years.

Johansen Crosby Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering

Richard Lunt was appointed as the Johansen Crosby Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering. “Receiving the Johansen Crosby endowed chair in chemical engineering is an incredible honor that will help advance our research on energy-related materials, technologies, and education,” Lunt said. “I am excited to carry on the academic excellence exemplified in Professor Edwin Johansen Crosby’s (CHEMS ’50) career.”

Lunt is known for his role in the development of a solar concentrator that, when placed over a window, creates solar energy while allowing people to see through it. He is the recipient of numerous other awards, including an NSF CAREER Award, the DuPont Young Professor Award, and the MSU Innovation of the Year Award, among others.

C. Robert and Kathryn M. Weir Endowed Associate Professorship

S. Patrick Walton began as the Weir Endowed Associate Professor in 2017. The endowed position will support his work in the development of nucleic acid-based diagnostics and therapeutics.

“It is an honor to be recognized and to be given the flexibility to explore new avenues of research with support from the endowment,” he said.

Walton directs MSU’s Applied Biomolecular Engineering Lab. In 2017, he was awarded the MSU Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor Award. He served as the director of MSU’s CoRe Experience program for first-year engineering students from 2012–2017.

C. Robert Weir (CHEMS ’42) served in the U.S. Naval Reserve before joining Commonwealth Industries in Detroit to provide metallurgical processing and electroplating services for the auto industry. He rose to president of Commonwealth, retiring in 1983. In 1997, he was presented one of the college’s highest honors, the Claud R. Erickson Award for exemplified leadership.

Walton is also the new associate chair for CHEMS.

CHEMS Students to Benefit from MSU’s One-of-a-Kind STEM Building

MSU is embracing its future with a new $100 million, 117,000-square-foot STEM Teaching and Learning Facility being built adjacent to the Engineering Building in the former Shaw Lane Power Plant. Groundbreaking ceremonies were Aug. 31. The building will feature modern classroom and lab space that will be shared by biological sciences, chemistry, computer science, physics, and engineering units.

Among those getting new lab space will be materials science.

Interim MSU President John Engler said faculty and academic staff members are currently developing new, more effective ways to teach the STEM disciplines.

“Just as our university founders built the nation’s first laboratory building devoted to teaching scientific agriculture, we are also providing our undergraduate students and faculty with cutting-edge facilities designed to support their success,” Engler said.

The STEM building is scheduled to open in the fall of 2020.

CHEMS Chair Don Morelli, Engineering Dean Leo Kempel, and Engineering faculty members Martin Crimp, Dirk Colbry, Anne Eisenlohr, and Tom Voice got to play in the dirt at groundbreaking ceremonies on Aug. 31.
MSU Innovation Celebration

The 2018 MSU Innovation Celebration highlighted groundbreaking technology from labs and start-up companies from across MSU during ceremonies in the Huntington Club in Spartan Stadium in April. Advanced materials, the Internet of things, new therapies for fighting antibiotics resistant bacteria, and many more technologies were showcased, along with new start-up companies.

Two from the CHEMS department received top honors:

University Distinguished Professor Lawrence T. Drzal was presented the 2018 MSU Technology Transfer Achievement Award. His accomplishments include nearly 100 inventions, more than 400 peer-reviewed papers, 35 patents, and 16 technologies licensed to industry. Applications for his expertise range from automotive and construction industries to fuel cells, batteries, and electronics.

The MSU Innovation of the Year Award was presented to CHEMS Chair and Professor Donald Morelli for his work in thermoelectric technology. Thermoelectric materials convert waste heat sources into electricity. “In our search for efficient, abundant, and nontoxic thermoelectric materials, we were led to the tetrahedrites, a family of compounds of commonly occurring elements,” Morelli said. “The fact that they are naturally occurring minerals is an added bonus.”

Faculty Honors

Ofoli Elected Fellow of AIChE

Associate Professor Robert Y. Ofoli was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and honored for his achievements during the 2018 AIChE Spring Meeting in Orlando in April. Fellowship in AIChE represents the highest grade of membership among the organization’s 60,000 members in 110 countries.

Ofoli was recognized for his distinctive service to chemical engineering, and research contributions in the areas of nano-catalysis and nanostructured interfaces.

CHEMS Chair and Professor Donald Morelli said fellowship in AIChE is a clear indication that Ofoli’s peers hold him in the highest esteem.

“When helps raise the stature not only of Robert but also of our department, college, and university. We are proud to have him as a colleague,” Morelli added.

Ofoli has been an active member of AIChE, including serving as the 2017 chair of the AIChE Career and Education Operating Council, and in various roles for the national Chem-E-Car program.

He is a past winner of the AIChE Gary Leach Award (2007) and has twice received the MSU College of Engineering Withrow Teaching Excellence Award. Ofoli is the advisor for the MSU student chapter of AIChE.

Withrow Teaching Excellence Award

Maddalena Fanelli, a CHEMS teaching specialist, was honored with a Withrow Teaching Excellence Award during the 28th annual Engineering Awards Luncheon in March. Her award proclamation called her “a passionate educator who is dedicated to student learning, inside and outside of the classroom . . . going above and beyond to make herself available to students.”

Taking on Global Challenges

Associate Professor Jason Nicholas is among the 12 current fellows in the Academy for Global Engagement (AGE). Fellows are trained to leverage connections, resources, knowledge, and skills obtained throughout their fellowship to advance their own global research. His research interests are metal-to-ceramic joining, processing-structure-property relationships, solid oxide fuel cells, and nano-composite electrode tailoring.

Now in its fifth year, AGE is designed to create a new generation of international research experts at MSU by offering early- to mid-career faculty the opportunity to expand their scholarship on a global level.
Student Honors

International Student Leader

Kasey Coleman, a senior in chemical engineering, is now the highest ranking undergraduate officer in the 300,000-member Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She was elected as the second international vice president during the 68th international convention in Houston in July. She is responsible for mobilizing undergraduate activities toward the sorority’s national initiatives. The sorority has been providing service and sisterhood since its founding in 1908.

Coleman also received the Michigan State University Black Alumni Distinguished Community Service Award during Homecoming ceremonies Oct. 5-6.

Multiple Honors for Wortman

Honors College member and chemical engineer James Wortman ’18 finished his MSU career with several distinguished recognitions.

In 2018, he received a national honorable mention for third place at the American Institute of Chemical Engineering (AIChE) Student Design Competition. He also received the Board of Trustees’ Award for having the highest scholastic average—a 4.0 GPA—at the close of his last semester at MSU. This award is among the highest honors presented by MSU to students.

In 2017, he was a Society of Chemical Industry Scholar in an internship at Chemtura Corp. in Arkansas. The American Chemical Society program funds internship opportunities for exceptional students.

Wortman is now a doctoral student in chemical engineering at the University of Michigan, where his research interest is heterogeneous catalysis for clean energy. He is from Harwinton, Connecticut.

Engineering Graduate Research Symposium

MSU’s 2018 Engineering Graduate Research Symposium showcased almost 300 poster presentations and celebrated both the Outstanding Graduate Student Awards and the Fitch H. Beach Award nominees during ceremonies in March at the Breslin Center.

Outstanding Graduate Student Awards were presented to Sayli Bote in chemical engineering, who is advised by University Distinguished Professor Ramani Narayan, and Yuanchao Liu in materials science, who is advised by Professor Scott Calabrese Barton.

PhD student Christine James received an honorable mention for Outstanding Graduate Research during the Fitch H. Beach Awards. She is advised by Associate Dean Yue Qi in chemical engineering.

Sustaining AIChE National Recognitions

MSU chemical engineering undergraduates again drew national honors in 2018 during the AIChE Student Design competition. Spartan Engineers received two of the top three national awards in the individual-student category this summer.

Evan Draplin ’18 earned second place honors and James Wortman ’18 was presented with a third place honorable mention in the 2018 competition, which was to design a safe and sustainable chemical process to produce dimethyl ether (DME). DME is used as a chemical feedstock and also shows promise as an alternative transportation fuel.

Both Spartan Engineers have been invited to present their winning solutions at this fall’s AIChE annual conference in Pittsburgh.

In 2017, Eric Monville ’17 received a third-place national recognition in the annual AIChE Student Design contest. Last year’s design problem focused on the creation of a manufacturing facility for Nylon 6-6.

AIChE’s national challenge for students provides them with an opportunity to create real-life solutions for a chemical engineering design situation. The problem’s solution requires a wide range of skills in calculation and evaluation of both technical data and economic factors.

Since 1968, MSU has had the best record of any school nationally for awards in this national contest. Other past winners include Rebecca Carlson ’17 and Ariel Rose ’16—one first prize in the William Cunningham Award team category in 2016. That same year, Rebecca Jacobs ’16 took a top prize with the Walter Howard Design Award for Safety.

Read about past AIChE contest winners at https://www.chems.msu.edu/academics/undergraduate/aisee.
Spartan Engineers among IACMI’s Largest Class of Interns

Three CHEMS students were among the largest class of interns ever hosted by IACMI this summer. Forty-three interns worked at 19 locations as part of IACMI’s mission to develop the advanced manufacturing workforce. Spartan interns were:

- Senior Christopher Cugini worked with University Distinguished Professor Lawrence Drzal in MSU’s Composite Materials and Structures Center.
- Junior Justin LaBelle (right) returned to the IACMI Scale-up Research Facility in Corktown for his second summer internship.
- PhD student Erik Stitt worked at the DuPont Experimental Station in Wilmington, Delaware.

The MSU interns joined students from Brigham Young, Clemson, Colorado, Massachusetts, Penn State, Tennessee, Tulsa, and Wisconsin.

Right: Three MSU CHEMS students were part of IACMI’s large interns group this summer. Among them, Justin LaBelle returned to the Corktown facility to work in cutting-edge composites manufacturing.

2017 Red Cedar Circle Award

Joe S. Lin, of Gardena, California, founder of Diotec Electronics Corp, was the recipient of the 2017 Red Cedar Circle Award.

When Lin left Taiwan and traveled to MSU to begin work on his master’s degree in 1976, he had never traveled abroad and spoke very little English. With no small sense of panic, he missed his first class and failed his first quiz due to his limited English comprehension. Fortunately, his professors were very supportive, and his advisor, Professor Carl Cooper, was able to guide him through a successful first quarter at MSU.

Department Chair Donald Anderson soon offered him a teaching assistantship. Within a year he had received his master’s degree in chemical engineering and scholarships from the Amoco and Exxon Foundations to support his PhD studies.

“The acceptance and support I received from all faculty members and classmates helped develop my strong sense of community for being a member of this tight knit MSU family,” he said. “Gradually, I grew and developed into a good chemical engineer and a better person. For all these invaluable gifts and kindness I received from my MSU family, I am forever grateful!”

Lin received a master’s degree in 1977 and a PhD in chemical engineering in 1981. After receiving his doctorate, Lin joined Exxon Research & Development Co. in Baton Rouge. He spent two productive years in Louisiana before striking out to California, where he met his wife, Peggy, and started a family.

In 1983, he founded his company, Diotec Electronics Corp., a specialty diodes and semiconductor business. Today, Diotec Electronics is headquartered in Gardena, with major manufacturing, laboratory, and test facilities in Penang, Malaysia.

Lin is a member of the MSU Presidents Club and served as a member of the CHEMS Advisory Board from 2000–2007.
Julie L. P. Jessop
Associate Chair
S. Patrick Walton
Chicago. At MSU, her advisor was CHEM engineering at the University of Illinois at a clinical assistant professor of chemical meeting in Minneapolis. Today, she is a awards reception at the 2017 AIChE annual the profession. She was honored at an ements of this generation of chemical age of 35. It also promotes the achieve- (PhD ’14, chemical engineer-ment) is an “AlChE 35 Under 35!” The award is named a 2017 Fellow (BS ’10, chemical engineer- Betul Bilgin (PhD ’14, chemical engineering) was named a 2017 Fellow of the American Chemical Society. She is an associate professor of chemical and biochemical engineering at the University of Iowa. Her research interests include spectroscopy, epoxide/acrylate photopoly- merizations, dental resins, electron-beam polymerizations, and polymers from renewable resources. She has received a National Science Foundation CAREER award and the College of Engineering Faculty Excellence Award for Service. She is active in the American Chemical Society Division of Polymeric Materials: Science & Engineering as a past chair and current councilor in RadTech as a standing member of the Technical Confer- ence Review Committee, and for Project Lead the Way as an affiliate professor. Adam Pilchak (BS ’05, materials science) received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers from President Barack Obama in January 2017. He was one of only 102 scientists in 2017 to receive this honor, the highest bestowed by the U.S. government to science and engineering professionals early in their research careers. Pilchak, a native of White Lake, is an innovative materials research engineer in the Metals Branch, Materials and Manu- facturing Directorate, Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. He received a doctoral degree in materials science and engineer- ing from Ohio State University in 2009. Linsey Seitz (BS ’10, chemical engineer- ing) joined Northwestern University as an assistant professor of chemical and biological engineering in September 2018. A former Alumni Distinguished Scholar at MSU, she served as an undergraduate research assistant for Professor Christina Chan. Seitz received master’s and PhD degrees in chemical engineering from Stanford University and was a postdoctoral fellow at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany. James Lanny Tucker (BS ’71, MS ’72, chemical engineering) is the senior patent counsel for Eastman Kodak Company (EKC) in Rochester, New York. He recently completed 44 years at EKC and was honored for writing more than 1,000 U.S. patents for Eastman Kodak. 2018 Red Cedar Circle Award Prabhat Shukla, founder of Fluorotherm Polymers Inc., in New Jersey, received the Red Cedar Circle Award during the 2018 Alumni Awards banquet in May. As president and chief executive officer for more than 20 years, he has built Fluorotherm into a coveted trademark that is recognized internationally for expertise in fluoropolymers and heat exchanger fields. He received a master’s degree in 1973 and a PhD in 1980 in chemical engineering from MSU. Shukla began his engineering journey at IIT, Kharagpur, India, where he received a BTech in chemical engineering in 1973. He left India in 1974 to begin a master’s degree in chemical engineering at MSU. He changed his direction in 1979 to focus on environmental engineering and research into air pollution control from coal powered plants, completing his PhD in 1980. After graduation, he began working for DuPont in its Teflon (fluoropolymers) R&D division as a research engineer. There he started new operations in Japan and Holland, helped write a chapter in the Kirk & Othmer encyclopedia, and was part of a team formed to launch a highly successful new Teflon micro-powder product. He left DuPont in 1990 to start a new Fluoropolymers R&D department at Norton Perfomance Plastics (now Saint-Gobain). There he directed joint marketing projects with IG, DuPont, and Amoco, and rose to become the business manager responsible for $45 million in business. In 1992, he founded Fluorotherm as a joint venture with his then employer, Saint-Gobain. Today, Fluorotherm is a coveted trademark in its market segments, and is recognized internationally for expertise in the fluoropolymers and heat exchanger fields. He continues to cochair the Polymer Technology Network at Saint-Gobain. He has mentored minority engineering students at Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey. In 2007, he was recognized for his fluoropolymers training by the Midwest International Technical Institute, Manila, Philippines.
More than 230,000 alumni and friends have brought Michigan State University to a significant milestone: surging past the fundraising goal of $1.5 billion more than a year before the Empower Extraordinary campaign is set to conclude this fall.

The MSU College of Engineering reached its Empower Extraordinary capital campaign goal of $80 million in spring 2017. By the summer of 2018, the campaign total had surpassed $106 million.

“We have secured 20 new endowed chair and professor agreements during the campaign; our first year CoRe program has robust support from corporate partners; and we have raised record scholarship funds to help the next generation of Spartan Engineers,” Engineering Dean Leo Kempel said.

“My thanks to all our donors and a special thank you to the college’s fundraising team. Our success in Empower Extraordinary facilitates our tag line: ‘Who will Engineer tomorrow? Spartans Will,’” Kempel added.