

Building Bridges Abroad: NESACS and the GDCh

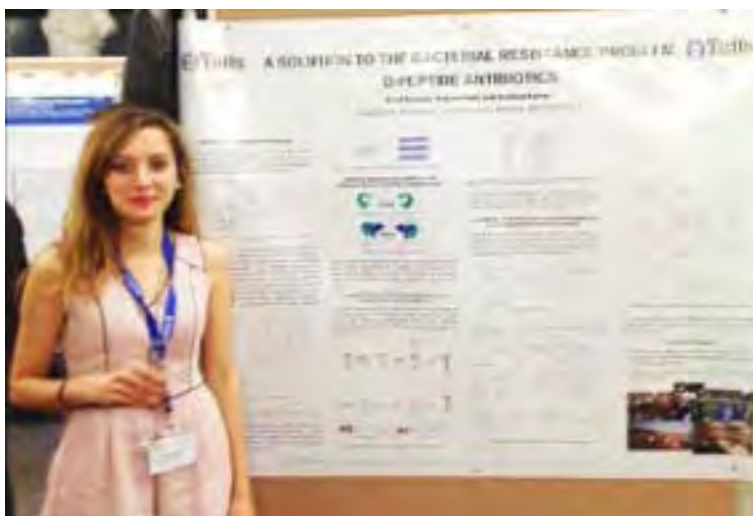
Jackie O'Neil, NSYCC Chair and member, German Exchange Committee

Earlier this year, 12 students (10 graduate and 2 undergraduates) from NESACS traveled to Jena, Germany, to participate in the 14th German Exchange Program with the German Chemical Society (GDCh). All the participants presented their research at the annual Frühjahrssymposium (Spring Symposium) of the Jungchemikerforum (JCF) on March 26- 29. Jena has a rich history of science dating back hundreds of years; during the week we stayed in Jena, we were able to experience some of this heritage as well as immerse ourselves in the current science with the JCF.



Jack Nicoludis (Harvard University), center, and Peter Thill (MIT), at right, touring the greenhouse at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology.

During the week-long trip, we were treated to visits to local scientific landmarks, such as the Carl Zeiss factory, the Hans Knöll Institute for Natural Product Research, Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology, the Carl Zeiss planetarium, as well as city tours in Jena and the neighboring city of Weimar- quite a list of places to visit! This proved to be an exciting way to spend our time in Jena over the first part of the week. Elisabeth Kapatsina of the GDCh was our primary guide while we were in Germany, and was helped by members of the local Jena JCF, the national JCF, including several members of the last exchange program that visited in the fall of 2013.



Emel Adaligil (Tufts University) in front of her poster at the Frühjahrssymposium.

The time at the Frühjahrssymposium in Jena was spent attending lectures and poster presentations, which were given by students from all over Europe. The symposium, which attracted greater than 300 participants, featured several keynote speakers who spoke on a variety of topics in chemistry. During the symposium, one of our participants, Tom Sisto (Boston University), was awarded the prize for “Best Poster” and received recognition and a certificate for his outstanding poster titled: Towards the bottom-up organic synthesis of homogenous armchair carbon nanotubes utilizing the cycloparaphenylenes.



Back Row: L to R: Tom Sisto (Boston University), Matt Marcinkowski (Tufts University), Emily Lewis (Tufts University and NSYCC), Peter Thill (MIT), Jack Nicoludis (Harvard University), Christian Schaumberg (JCF), Peter Frank (University of Southern New Hampshire), Elise Miner (North-eastern University), Brian Sneed (Boston College), Tobias Janoschka (JCF) Bottom row: Felicia Lucci (Tufts University), Stephanie Maiocco (Boston University), Jackie O'Neil (Alkermes and NSYCC), Emel Adaligil (Tufts University), Gloria Hong (Harvard University), Meredith Eno (Boston College), Elisabeth Kapatsina (GDCh) Photo: Leland Johnson, Jr.

Many lessons were learned from many conversations with the local and national leaders of JCF as well as with other younger chemists from other countries. The importance of international experience as a scientist cannot be understated — the collaboration of the younger chemists in Germany (and the rest of Europe) with their international counterparts helps prepare them for many professional opportunities early in their careers. By helping our younger chemists from NESACS participate in this type of exchange, we are without a doubt providing them chances to network with younger chemists all over the world, helping them learn more about professional opportunities, and continue to build a truly international approach to chemistry.