

The 2025 MARM Awardees

The E. Ann Nalley Middle Atlantic Region Award for Volunteer Service to the American Chemical Society recognizes the volunteer efforts of individuals who have served the American Chemical Society, contributing significantly to the goals and objectives of the Society through their Regional Activities. In her 28 years of service to ACS, Jennifer McCulley has been an passionate volunteer at local, regional, and national levels. At the local level, she has served as section treasurer, program chair, and chair of the South Jersey Local Section. Jennifer served regionally on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting Board (MARM) and was a member from 2015-2023. She served as subcommittee chair over Website and Technology for 3 years where she improved the website and data management for the section. She also worked on developing a regional award for Chemical Technical Professionals as a joint venture between MARM and the CTA. Most recently, she has been the point person for the South Jersey section partnering with the Princeton section to co-host a future MARM meeting. At the national level, Jennifer has served on the Committee on Technician Affairs and is the current chair of the Membership Affairs Committee. Jennifer is a strong leader and an advocate for issues that benefit the chemistry community.



Jennifer
McCulley

The William "Bill" Suits Award for Outstanding Student Volunteer Service to ACS recognizes an outstanding undergraduate student. Andrew Thampoe is a dedicated and passionate researcher in the field of drug discovery, with a particular focus on oncology. Currently pursuing a combined Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Chemistry at Johns Hopkins University, he has maintained a perfect GPA while actively engaging in various research projects. Andrew has also demonstrated leadership through his role as the founder and president of the Organic & General Chemistry Initiative, which supports students in mastering chemistry concepts. Additionally, Andrew has shown exceptional dedication to volunteer service through his involvement with the American Chemical Society (ACS). His efforts include organizing and leading workshops, mentoring younger students, and actively participating in community science fairs. His outstanding volunteer service has not only benefited the society but also fostered a greater appreciation for chemistry in the community.



Andrew S.
Thampoe

In Appreciation

The MARM 2025 Awards Committee would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who helped make our awards program a success. We appreciate the tireless efforts of the nominators from the local sections. We also offer a special thank you to the Board of Directors of the American Chemical Society, the Middle Atlantic Region of the American Chemical Society Board Members, the ACS Office of Regional Meetings and Expositions, the ACS Committee on Minority Affairs, and the Division of Chemical Education (CHED) for ensuring a smooth and enjoyable experience for all attendees. Your dedication and support are greatly appreciated!



ACS
Chemistry for Life®

AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

Sponsored and Hosted by
the North Jersey Local Section

Thursday, May 29, 2025
6:30 pm–8:00pm

The Chancellor's Suite
University Center
Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey

Program

Opening Remarks

Dr. Lynda Box, MARM 2025 Awards Committee Chair

North Jersey Section Welcome Address

Dr. Robert Menger, North Jersey Section Chair

MARM Committee Welcome Address

Dr. Brian Gibney, MARM Executive Committee Chair

Recognition of North Jersey Section Fifty and Sixty Year Members

Mrs. Diane Krone, NJACS Awards Committee Chair

2025 MARM Awards Address

Dr. Rigoberto Hernandez, ACS President-Elect

2025 MARM Regional Award Presentations

Stanley Israel Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Sciences

Presented to Ms. Jakyra Simpson, STEAM Sneakerheads
Presented by Dr. Rigoberto Hernandez, ACS President-Elect

E Emmet Reid Award for Teaching at Small Colleges

Presented to Dr. Rita Upmacis, Pace University
Presented by Dr. Malika Jeffries-EL, ACS Director-At-Large

ACS Division of Chemical Education for Excellence in High School Teaching

Presented to Ms. Maria Zeitlin, Smithtown High School East
Presented by Dr. Malika Jeffries-EL, ACS Director-At-Large

E Ann Nalley Award for Volunteer Service to ACS

Presented to Ms. Jennifer L. McCulley, Agilent Technologies
Presented by Ms. Bonnie Lawlor, ACS District III Director

William Suits Award for Outstanding Student Volunteer

Presented to Mr. Andrew S. Thampoe, Johns Hopkins University
Presented by Ms. Bonnie Lawlor, ACS District III Director

Recognition of 2025 MARM Planning Committee Chairs

Presented by the ACS Board of Directors

Closing Remarks

Dr. Cecilia Marzabadi, MARM 2025 General Chair

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The **Stanley Israel Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Science** recognizes individuals and/or institutions who have advanced diversity in the chemical sciences and significantly stimulated or fostered activities that promote inclusiveness within the region. Jakyra Simpson, also known as Ky the Chemist, is a dynamic chemist, educator, and science communicator dedicated to making STEM accessible through culture-driven education. As the founder of **STEAM Sneakerheadz**, she merges hip-hop, sneaker culture, and art to teach chemistry in engaging, relatable ways. Her innovative outreach has impacted thousands of students, particularly in the Mid-Atlantic region, inspiring the next generation of diverse scientists. Jakyra has a strong commitment to increasing public awareness of chemistry through hands-on workshops, lectures, and multimedia content. With this award, she aims to expand her impact by launching "**Creative Chemistry with Ky**," a YouTube series designed to expose students to chemistry careers and opportunities.



Jakyra
Simpson

ACS Division of Chemical Education (CHED) Region Award for Excellence in High School Teaching recognizes, encourages and stimulates outstanding teachers of high school chemistry in the Middle Atlantic Region. Maria Zeitlin the 2025 MARM Awardee, has been a chemistry instructor at Smithtown HS East since 2003, where her primary teaching responsibility has been teaching AP chemistry. Maria engages her students through inquiry-based activities, often using storytelling to connect concepts to real world events. Additionally, she is the coordinator of the ThInK Discovery Science Research Program at Smithtown HS East, where students are mentored in research and experimental methodology to prepare them for national science competitions, and organizes an annual Science Research Symposium. Ms. Zeitlin is a previous recipient of the ACS Nichols Foundation Chemistry Teaching Award and has been a member of the ACS for over 15 years.



Maria
Zeitlin

The E. Emmet Reid Award in Chemistry Teaching at Small Colleges in the ACS Middle Atlantic Region recognizes, encourages and honors high quality and outstanding achievements in teaching and research at small colleges. Dr. Rita Upmacis is a distinguished professor at Pace University's Dyson College of Arts and Sciences, specializing in Chemistry and Physical Sciences. She earned her BSc and PhD in Chemistry from the University of Nottingham, UK, and completed postdoctoral research in Bio-inorganic Chemistry at the California Institute of Technology. Her research focuses on oxidative and nitrative stress during inflammation and disease, particularly examining the effects of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids. Dr. Upmacis has received numerous awards, including the 2024 Outstanding Four-Year Undergraduate College and University Chemistry Faculty Teaching Award from the NY section of the American Chemical Society. Highly regarded by her students for her exceptional teaching skills, Dr. Upmacis is praised for her clear and engaging lectures that make complex chemistry concepts accessible and understandable. Students appreciate her dedication to ensuring everyone comprehends the material. Her approachable and caring nature, combined with her structured and supportive teaching methods, makes her a favorite among students. Many highlight her ability to make the subject enjoyable and her commitment to student success.



Rita
Upmacis
