

# THE MIDLAND CHEMIST

A publication of the Midland Section of the American Chemical Society

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## Chair Column

*Mark Jones, Chair, Midland Section ACS*



Recent events show that racism remains entrenched in our society. The response to those events gives hope that change, lasting change, is happening.

My grandmother could not tend to the farm by herself after the death of my grandfather, a farm that had been in her family for generations. I worked all day hauling decades of junk out of the barns in preparation for sale, working with farmhands that I had known all of my life. When we returned from one of our trips to the dump, my grandmother called us to supper. There were two plates set at a table. Nearby, another table was set with a single plate. I grabbed the single plate and moved it to eat at the same table as the farmhands, the black farmhands. My dad had to physically restrain my grandmother. I knew my grandmother as a kind and generous person. The overt racism she displayed in that moment was a side of her that I had never seen before.

I'd been working side-by-side with the farmhands Ben and William for hours. That was OK, but breaking bread with them was over the line. Over the line because the color of our skin wasn't the same. It was so over my grandmother's line that she could, in their presence, looking them in the eye, tell them that she disapproved of them sitting at the same table as her grandson. It wasn't about their character. It wasn't about the men they were. It was purely superficial. It was reflexive. It was just the way things were in my grandmother's world. It made no sense to me.

What was natural to me was unimaginable to my grandmother. I assumed her views, her racist views, were generational. I took some solace in thinking that racism would fade into the past as generations changed. Recent events returned my thoughts to that day and my misplaced optimism. That was back in the 1970's, over 40 years ago. I was clearly, sadly, overly optimistic. Too little has changed. Racism is clearly still with us, a problem of our time. Far more concerning to me are the now daily videos showing racist behavior by my generation. Horrible, racist behavior is on daily display thanks to ubiquitous cameras and a surplus of racists compelled to share their racist views. People are still acting like my grandmother acted over 40 years ago. My grandparent's generation is long gone, yet racism persists. It is our problem. It is something that we must eradicate.

It is up to us and the actions we take. I am once again proud of the greater Midland community. Local leaders are taking a stand. The community rallied in support of the peaceful Black Lives Matter protest recently. Major local employers are seizing the moment, raising awareness, and taking action. The National ACS has posted resources to inform and educate allies. At the local section, we are exploring how we can enter the discussion and influence the future. Stay tuned.

### **Continuing COVID-19 Pandemic Precautions**

***Amanda Palumbo and Gina Malczewski, Midland Section ACS***

As a precaution against the COVID-19 pandemic, and in compliance with best practices as advised by government agencies, a number of Midland Section ACS events will be hosted virtually only, postponed until further notice, or cancelled entirely.

Our committees have a selection of exciting networking and career development events coming up once the public health situation allows. Many thanks for your continued community support and partnership.

For the most up-to-date information on events and activities, please visit <http://www.midlandacs.org/>, or <https://www.facebook.com/MidlandACS.org/>.

### **2020 Outstanding High School Chemistry Students**

***Diana Deese, Chair, Midland Section ACS Awards Committee***

Congratulations to the 2020 Outstanding High School Chemistry Students! I am sorry that we were not able to hold our annual spring awards banquet due to the current coronavirus pandemic situation. Still, 23 of the 51 high schools that were contacted responded with their nominations this year (see below and on page 3).

If conditions allow, and the Midland local section is able to put together a social event later in the year to honor all of those receiving recognition in several events that were cancelled this spring, you will all be invited. In the meantime, please join me in wishing the best of luck to all of the 2020 Outstanding High School Chemistry Student recipients!

High School	Recipient	Planned Area of Study	University/College Plans	What Science They Would Like to See
All Saints Central High School	Valerie Jones	Physical Therapy or Sports Medicine	--	--

Arthur Hill High School	Summer Adeyemi	--	--	--
Bay City Central High School	Mackenzi Chappel	Zoology	MSU	Cure for cancer
Beal City High School	Sydney Soules	--	--	--
Birch Run High School	Emah Cassidy	--	--	--
Breckenridge High School	Katherine Steinhouse	--	--	--
Bridgeport High School	Janiya Strodes	Medical Field	--	--
Calvary Baptist Academy	Jack Wolfe	Chemistry/Biophysics or Pharmacy	UofM or Cedarville University	Medicines to treat radiation poisoning
Chesaning Union High School	Traci Martin	--	--	--
Coleman High School	Ty J. Klopff	Sports Management	Alma or Northwood	--
Freeland High School	Morgan Rohde	Pre-Med	Delta/CMU or SVSU	Cure for cancer
H.H. Dow High School	Caleb Qju	STEM Career	Several colleges under consideration	--
Hemlock High School	Carter Miller	Dental Technology	CMU	Colonization of other planets
John Glenn High School	Sophia Reinhardt	Physician	University of Detroit Mercy	Vaccines such as one for COVID-19
Midland High School	Nathan Witt	Intersection of Business and Chemistry	UofM	Efficient solar technologies for the EV industry
Morey Flex-Tech High School	Aydn Schwartz	Large Machine Operator	--	--
Sacred Heart Academy	Katie McDonald	Elementary Education	CMU	Cure for Parkinson's and COVID-19
Saginaw Arts & Sciences Academy	Nathaniel Watson	Unknown	Unknown	Solution for COVID-19
Shepherd High School	Darren Flannery	Pharmacy	MMCC/Ferris	Antibiotics resilient to bacterial adaptation
St. Charles High School	Deseray Nixon	Psychology	Ferris or CMU	Technologies to help diagnose people faster
St. Louis High School	Dilynn Everitt	Pre-Med	UofM	Cure for cancer
Swan Valley High School	Nicholas Peters	Chemical Engineering or Pharmacy	Purdue or Ferris	Identify and cure unknown diseases
Bay City Western High School	David Hadd	Electrical Engineering with Biomedical Applications	Michigan Tech or UofM	Cyborg technologies

In next month's issue of the *Midland Chemist*, please watch for the award recipients in other categories (as I have yet to notify them). Thank you and stay safe!

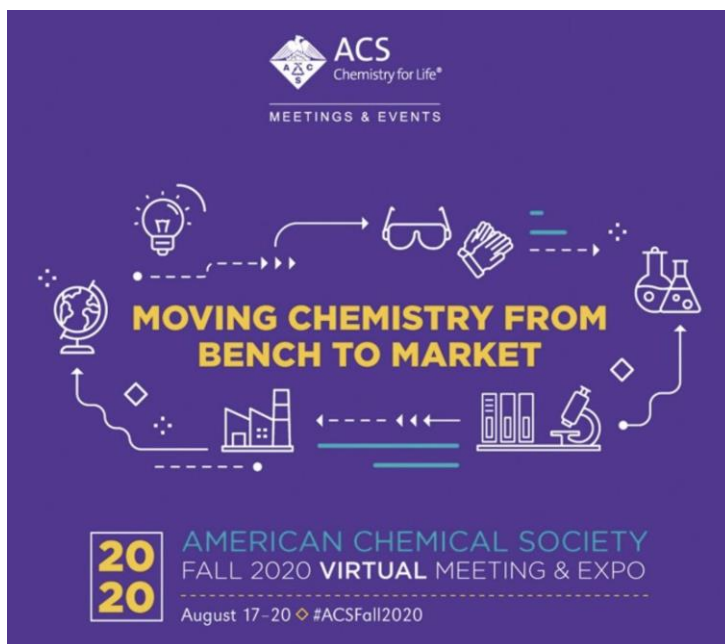
## Fall 2020 Virtual National ACS Meeting & Exposition

Steve Keinath, Co-Editor, *The Midland Chemist*

Editor's note: This article is reprinted, in part, from the June 30, 2020 issue of *Science Coaches / ACS Matters*, an online publication of the American Chemical Society.

As you may have already heard, the [ACS Fall 2020 Virtual National Meeting & Exposition](#) will be held entirely online, August 17–20, 2020, and you have the convenience of participating from the comfort of your own home.

- There will be more than **250 broadcast sessions**, live daily kickoffs, interactive poster presentations, and more. Gain access to cutting-edge research with the **over 5,000 papers scheduled to be presented**.
- We're hosting **virtual networking events** to help you **connect and share ideas** with your peers from around the world. In addition to **robust chat and messaging** features, **video rooms** will be available throughout the meeting for **deep-divide conversations** and social events.
- The **ACS Expo** is going virtual too! Meet and interact with exhibitors, make connections, and discover new technological developments.



**With so much content on demand, you don't have to miss a thing! Presentations will be available on demand anytime and anywhere around the world from August 17 through August 28, 2020.**

For more information, visit the [Virtual Meeting & Expo FAQs](#) page for ongoing updates. You can also stay in the loop by signing up to receive [National Meeting updates](#) by e-mail.

## **Jeff Seifferly Retires After 39 Years of Service** **Steve Keinath, Co-Editor, *The Midland Chemist***

Editor's note: This article is reprinted, in part, from a Dow announcement published in June 2020.



Jeff Seifferly, R&D/TS&D Technologist, PE Fluids and Polymers, Dow Performance Silicones, retired at the end of June 2020 after 39.2 years of service. Jeff joined Dow Corning Corporation in 1981 after receiving his Associates Degree in Applied Science in Electronic Engineering Technology from Delta College.

During his career, Jeff has contributed in a variety of areas including high voltage insulator development, semiconductor fabrication materials, and thin film technology, plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition, and nano silicon technology development. He is the inventor or author 14 patent invention disclosures, 4 patents, and 20 external papers and presentations. Jeff also received a Dow Corning Technical Achievement and Public Service Award.

He was a founding member of the Mid-Michigan Technician Group in 1991 and is a member of the American Chemical Society Committee on Technician Affairs. He is the recipient of the Midland Section ACS Outstanding Chemical Technician Award in 2014, and the National Chemical Technician Award from the ACS Division of Chemical Technicians in 2015. He is also a charter member and certified ACS "Science Outreach Coach," working with chemistry teachers since 2010.

Jeff has been a member of the Dow Corning Employees Scholarship Committee since 1993 and its Chair since 2005. He is very active in the Great Lakes Bay community, holds leadership roles on several boards and committees in the arts, education, and youth sports, and is the Grand Knight of Bay City Knights of Columbus Council 414. Jeff was a recent recipient of the Dick and Carol Hardy Community Improvement Award for his pervasive and diverse commitment to bettering his community.

In his retirement, Jeff is looking forward to spending time with his wife, Aileen, and their family, completing his ever-growing home improvement list, and expanding his mobile DJ business.

Added note: Although Jeff has formally retired from his corporate life day job, he stated that he is planning to remain active in his volunteer service roles with MMTG and the ACS. He is still serving on the National ACS Committee on Technician Affairs, still Secretary of the Mid-Michigan Technician Group, and will continue to Chair the Dow Corning Employees Scholarship Committee.

Congratulations on your retirement, Jeff!

**Central Regional Meeting Rescheduled to November 2020**  
**CERM 2020 Organizing Committee, American Chemical Society**

The health and well-being of our members, attendees, and staff is paramount. As a result of the rapidly changing situation related to the spread of and recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), we are rescheduling the [2020 Central Regional Meeting](#) (CERM) to November 2020.

Thus, the May 27-29 dates were cancelled for health and safety reasons. Please join the ACS Columbus Section as we reschedule to November 2020. A full refund of registration fees for the cancelled dates will be processed by the ACS.



We will continue to monitor and follow the state and national government safety guidelines to keep everyone safe. Thank you for your patience as we continue to "Plan with Optimism and Decide with Science" in approaching the rescheduled November 2020 event (dates to be published soon).

Please visit the [Central Regional Meeting website](#) for additional information, or reach out to us directly by e-mail at [reglmtgs@acs.org](mailto:reglmtgs@acs.org) for any questions. Again, please join us as we reschedule the May 2020 CERM meeting to November 2020 in Columbus.

**2020 Midland Section ACS Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting, October 10**  
**Anirudha Banerjee, 2020 Fall Scientific Meeting Chair, Midland Section ACS**

The 2020 Fall Scientific Meeting Committee is announcing that a virtual format meeting will be held this year.

**76th Midland Section ACS Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting: "Sticking with Chemistry"**

Date: Saturday, October 10, 2020

Registration: Please follow the Sign Up Genius link at [www.midlandacs.org](http://www.midlandacs.org)

Deadline: September 11, 2020

Abstract Submission: Please submit titles and 300-word abstracts to [acsfallsubmits@gmail.com](mailto:acsfallsubmits@gmail.com)

Deadline: September 4, 2020

Details of the virtual format meeting will be updated on [www.midlandacs.org](http://www.midlandacs.org). Please watch for updates, and please also see the Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting flyer on page 7. We wish you and your family well!



American Chemical Society Midland Section  
2020 Fall Scientific Meeting

# Sticking with Chemistry

Virtual Meeting, **October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Details of the virtual format will be updated on [www.midlandacs.org](http://www.midlandacs.org)

Registration \* Follow the Sign Up Genius Link at <http://www.midlandacs.org/> \* Deadline: **September 11, 2020**

Submission \* Please Submit Title & 300 Word Abstracts to [acsfallsubmits@gmail.com](mailto:acsfallsubmits@gmail.com) \* Deadline: **September 4, 2020**



Sponsored by ACS Midland Section and SVSU Chemistry Club

## In Memoriam – George Arlington Lee Gant Steve Keinath, Co-Editor, *The Midland Chemist*

Editor's note: The obituary notice for George Gant as it appears here is reprinted, in part, from the Saturday-Sunday (Weekend), June 20-21, 2020 issue of the *Midland Daily News*.

Although no longer an ACS member in recent years, George's obituary mentions his service in leadership roles with the American Chemical Society earlier in his career. According to Midland Section ACS Historian Wendell Dilling, George served as the Chair of the Registration Committee for the 1978 Fall Scientific Meeting. George was also a co-recipient of the very first Midland Section ACS Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Promotion of Diversity in Chemistry, Related Sciences, and Engineering, in 2002.



George Arlington Lee Gant was born December 5, 1941 in Wilson, NC to George William and Georgia Eugenia (Cooke) Gant and passed away June 17, 2020 at his home in Midland, surrounded in prayer by his family and friends. George lived a remarkable life with an abiding love to care for others, passion for science and discovery, and a desire to open opportunities for everyone to fulfill their dreams regardless of any obstacle.

George grew up in Greensboro, NC where he attended Dudley High School, graduating just after turning 16. He attended North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, earning bachelor and master's degrees in chemistry. Like so many who journeyed from around the world and the U.S. to work in Midland, George moved from Greensboro in 1965 to join Dow Corning Corporation as a chemist.

Midland opened her heart to George. He was among the first group of young African American scientists and their families who moved to Midland for pioneering careers in science at Dow Corning and Dow Chemical Company.

Spanning a career of 35 years at Dow Corning, he advanced well as he lived with multiple sclerosis (MS). He moved quickly into corporate executive management after completing advanced graduate education in management at Central Michigan University and Harvard Business School. His technical expertise earned significant patents in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. These scientific discoveries transformed the strength and performance of silicone-based adhesives and sealants that enabled innovations in building and architectural design, road construction, and automotive applications.

George often said, "If you see me fighting the bear, help the bear." To him, MS and its challenges were the bear. He approached his fight with MS as a scientist and shared everything that he learned about MS generously. He served as chair of the Board of Directors for the MS Society where millions of dollars were raised for research and patient support.

Over the course of a life well lived, he was recognized for his many civic, professional, and leadership roles, including chairman of the board of the Adhesive and Sealant Council. He also served in leadership roles in Kiwassee Kiwanis, American Chemical Society, American Management Association, Sigma Iota Epsilon, Sigma Xi honorary scientific society, International Mentoring Association, National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChE), and Midland Black Coalition. George was a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.

George cherished the welcoming fellowship of the friends he made and became a mentor to many young people regardless of their station in life. Along with his wife, Jackie, and children, Jon and Jeannine, while starting his career in research and development at Dow Corning, they established new family roots in Midland which still exist today.

George is survived by his many friends and family. This includes George's care team, Jon Finney, Sarah Mitchell Harris, Kelly Lewis, Jolynn Sieggreen, Scott Gooch, Josh Arcuri, Erika Crampton, Renee Shocknesse, Rolando, George Lowry (deceased), and Phillip Martin (deceased); 50-Year Bridge Group, George Vogel, Gerry Cappo, Rudy Phillips, Tim Hueston, Bill Dennis, Carl Woods, Ted Skinner, and Sandy Berger; family friends, Charles (Ted) and Sherry Skinner, Melvin and Octavia Cabey, Theresa and Murray Finney, and many others; family, Gary (brother) and Glenda Gant, Gratia (sister) and Bobbe Wright, Sylvester and Claudette Thompson (cousin), Jackie Gant (former wife), Jeannine Gant (daughter), Jon (son) and Tracie Gant; grandchildren, Langston and Morgan Bowens, Zora Bowens, Symantha Gant, Aidan Gant, and Eleanor Bowens (great-granddaughter); nieces, Tulani Gant and Jenna and Molly Gant; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

George's funeral services were managed by Smith-Miner Funeral Home (2700 West Wackerly Street, in Midland). A visitation service was held on Monday, June 22, 2020 at Eagle Ridge Church of God, in Midland



from 12:00 to 2:00 PM followed by a graveside burial service at Midland Memorial Gardens at 3:00 PM. A memorial service will be held in 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions at present. The family would like to direct gifts to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Michigan Chapter, and North Carolina A&T State University, Chemistry Department.

## Upcoming Dates, Events, and Other Updates

- August 3 (7:00 – 8:00 PM) – Midland Section ACS Board meeting, MCFTA Board Room (in person), or via a WebEx conference call connection at [Midland Section WebEx Board Meeting August 2020](#), phone number: 989-633-1166.
- August 17-20 – Fall 2020 Virtual National ACS Meeting & Exposition. Meeting theme: *Moving Chemistry from Bench to Market*. For more information, please see [ACS Fall 2020 Virtual National Meeting & Exposition](#).
- September 4 – **Abstract submission deadline for 2020 Midland Section ACS Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting**. Please submit titles and 300-word abstracts to [acsfallsubmits@gmail.com](mailto:acsfallsubmits@gmail.com). For any questions, please contact Anirudha Banerjee, 2020 Fall Scientific Meeting Chair, at [fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org](mailto:fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org).
- September 8 (7:00 – 8:00 PM) – Midland Section ACS Board meeting, MCFTA Board Room (in person), or via a WebEx conference call connection at [Midland Section WebEx Board Meeting September 2020](#), phone number: 989-633-1166. **Please note: This Board meeting is being held on Tuesday evening, not the usual Monday evening.**
- September 11 – **Registration deadline for 2020 Midland Section ACS Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting**. Please follow the Sign Up Genius link at [www.midlandacs.org](http://www.midlandacs.org). For any questions, please contact Anirudha Banerjee, 2020 Fall Scientific Meeting Chair, at [fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org](mailto:fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org).
- October 5 (7:00 – 8:00 PM) – Midland Section ACS Board meeting, MCFTA Board Room (in person), or via a WebEx conference call connection at [Midland Section WebEx Board Meeting October 2020](#), phone number: 989-633-1166.
- October 10 – 2020 Midland Section ACS Virtual Fall Scientific Meeting. Meeting theme: *Sticking with Chemistry*. Please note: The **abstract submission deadline is September 4**, and the **meeting registration deadline is September 11**. For any questions, please contact Anirudha Banerjee, 2020 Fall Scientific Meeting Chair, at [fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org](mailto:fallscimeeting@midlandacs.org).
- November 2 (7:00 – 8:00 PM) – Midland Section ACS Board meeting, MCFTA Board Room (in person), or via a WebEx conference call connection at [Midland Section WebEx Board Meeting November 2020](#), phone number: 989-633-1166.
- November (Dates TBD) – 2020 ACS Central Regional Meeting, Columbus, OH. For more information, please see [https://cerm2020.org/?sc=200226\\_mtg\\_em\\_regional\\_CERM\\_od](https://cerm2020.org/?sc=200226_mtg_em_regional_CERM_od).
- December 7 (7:00 – 8:00 PM) – Midland Section ACS Board meeting, MCFTA Board Room (in person), or via a WebEx conference call connection at [Midland Section WebEx Board Meeting December 2020](#), phone number: 989-633-1166.

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