

The 5th Annual Workshop of the Undergraduate Research in Mass Spectrometry Interest Group
ASMS 2014, Baltimore, MD, June 15-19, 2014

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The interest group sponsored a workshop on “Getting the Most out of Undergraduate Mass Spectrometry Research” on Monday, June 16. It was a panel discussion designed for undergraduates attending the ASMS meeting and focused on how to leverage undergraduate research experiences into success in graduate school and industry. The panel featured Scott Gronert (Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richard Beardsley (Scientist at Genentech), Bo Yan (Postdoctoral Associate at Boston University) and Justine Arrington (Graduate Student at Purdue University). Members of the panel each briefly spoke about benefits of undergraduate research and then answered questions on how to choose graduate programs and groups, how to network at conferences, how to find positions in industry, and the challenges of research in general. There were about 30 students and faculty members attending the workshop.

In addition, the Interest Group organized and sponsored a variety of activities at this year’s meeting aimed at undergraduates and faculty at primarily undergraduate institutions.

- 1) Undergraduate Poster Session, Sunday June 15. This year’s poster session, organized by Darrin Smith and Dil Ramanathan, featured 38 entries. This session provides undergraduates a valuable opportunity to present their research to multiple experts (judges). This year, we used the first ½ hour of the opening mixer for an undergraduate reception time. This timing worked well, providing students a chance to both enjoy the refreshments and also to mingle before their presentation. We also appreciated the additional signs ASMS provided advertising and directing people to the section.
- 2) Breakfast Tutorial for Undergraduates, Monday June 16. Professor Alison Danell of East Carolina University gave a presentation on “Making the most of ASMS: What to see, hear and do”. Topics covered included navigating the program, how to network, and basics of mass spectrometry. Feedback from undergraduates was overwhelmingly positive. We hope to continue this tutorial at future ASMS meetings and would like to find a way to increase attendance. Perhaps a different time would help, possibly Sunday before the big tutorials, and this would allow us to open the tutorial up to undergraduates and graduate students attending their first ASMS conference.
- 3) Lunch with the Experts, Monday June 16. Undergraduates were invited to attend a lunch in the exhibit hall for informal discussions with former ASMS award winners and rising stars. Feedback from the students was quite positive. A suggestion was made to create a rotation in which the students move around to different tables so as to interact with more experts.
- 4) Discussion for PUI faculty, Tuesday June 17. A breakfast meeting was organized for PUI faculty. Professor Kelsey Cook from the University of Tennessee and the National Science Foundation was available to answer questions about funding opportunities for PUI faculty and about strategies for obtaining high-end mass spectrometers for PUI institutions through the MRI program.

A brief business meeting was held and we agreed that the “meeting within a meeting’ for undergraduates was a good idea and that we would like to continue this concept at future ASMS meetings. All agreed that the next step is to increase awareness of the events and to improve communication to the ASMS membership of the opportunities for undergraduates. J.C. Poutsma and Elaine Marzluff agreed to stay on as co-chairs for an additional year and Professor Elizabeth Stemler from Bowdoin College agreed to help out as much as possible next year.