

Meet a New ASP Member

by Amy Keller

ASP welcomes many new members to the Society this fall. Our featured new member, Dr. Jason Clement, is a resident of Frederick, Maryland, and works as a postdoctoral fellow at the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Clement took time out of his schedule to discuss his background, current research, and of course, his favorite movie. We are grateful for the opportunity to get more acquainted with him.

Why did you join ASP?

I joined ASP because I wanted to be able to meet others working in the natural products field and to maintain past contacts. The employment services and contacts available through the ASP website are also a great potential resource. ASP meetings I have attended have been very well-organized, and being part of the exchange of ideas at the meetings is another reason I joined the ASP. Someone once told me that natural products chemists are like one big family, and the ASP certainly contributes to this closeness.



MARY DEAN COLEMAN

Dr. Jason Clement

What are your research interests in pharmacognosy?

I am most interested in the discovery of potential antitumor agents from natural sources, although I am also interested in the treatment of infectious diseases. Nature has yielded to humanity many useful compounds for the treatment of disease, and I am committed to searching for new compounds that might ease the suffering due to cancer. I am also interested in the development of new bioassay methods for antitumor natural product drug discovery.

What is your scientific background?

I attended Western Carolina University (WCU) from 1996 to 2000, where I received my B.S. in Chemistry. While working with Dr. Royce Woosley at WCU, I performed analytical studies of the volatile organic chemical components of Canadian Hemlock trees in the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountain National Parks using GC-MS. After entering Dr. David Kingston's group at Virginia Tech in 2000, I worked on bioassay-guided isolation and characterization of natural products from both terrestrial plant and marine sources using enzyme-based assays. After receiving my Ph.D. in Chemistry in 2005, I joined the Molecular Targets Development Program (MTDP) at the National Cancer Institute in Frederick, Maryland, in January, 2006 as a Cancer Research Training Award postdoctoral fellow. Working with Dr. Tawnya McKee in the MTDP, I am currently isolating inhibitors of MDM2, a key regulator of the tumor suppressing protein p53.

What would like to achieve through your membership?

I have been inspired to work harder and think about projects differently after attending ASP meetings, and this is one of the main things I would like to continue to do. I would also like to continue to establish contacts with others in the field of pharmacognosy. All of us in the society can learn from each other, and we can spur one another on to better things in our work.

What are you currently reading and what is your favorite movie?

The Bondage of the Will by Martin Luther and *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart. My favorite movie is Ben-Hur.