

## Meet a New ASP Member

by Dr. Diane S. Swaffar

ASP continues to welcome several new members to the society during this new year. We are pleased to feature our newest associate member, Ms. Laura Sanchez. She is a second-year doctoral student in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC), California. Ms. Sanchez is pursuing a Ph.D. in organic chemistry, with a focus on marine natural products. We are grateful to Ms. Sanchez for giving us the opportunity to get more acquainted with her.

### Why did you join ASP?

I was interested in connecting my research with pharmacognosy. I did not want to do chemistry without understanding and delving into the biological implications of my research. Also, my advisor, Dr. Roger Linington, is an active ASP member. This is the first time I am joining a scientific society or organization as a graduate student.

### How did you hear about the ASP?

I first learned of the society last summer upon Dr. Phillip Crews' return from the 49th Annual ASP Meeting in Athens, Greece. He was the recipient of the 2008 Norman R. Farnsworth Research Achievement Award, which was presented to him at that meeting. I found out about it at a "Happy Hour" celebration for Dr. Crews attended by the Crews and Linington laboratories.



DR. BEN CLARK

Ms. Laura Sanchez in her scuba gear with Dr. Crews' graduate student, Eric Mejia, taken aboard the Kona Aggressor II on a recent collecting expedition last November in Kona, Hawaii. Ms. Sanchez, Dr. Roger Linington, and Indonesian collaborators were getting ready to scuba in search of secondary metabolites from bacteria that live in the sediment.

### What was your background before joining Dr. Linington's lab?

I obtained a B.A. in Chemistry from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. During the summer before my senior undergraduate year in 2006, I was awarded a summer undergraduate research fellowship (SURF) at UCSC in Dr. Crews' lab through an National Science Foundation Research Education for Undergraduates grant. The project I worked on involved isolating products from the sponge *Plakortis quasiamphiaster*. I would also like to add that my undergraduate advisor, Dr. Leroy "Skip" Wade, Jr., was very influential in my decision to pursue graduate school.

### What are your current research interests in pharmacognosy?

I am currently working on a project in which libraries based on a natural product scaffold are being tested for activity against the neglected tropical disease, leishmaniasis. I am also working on turning these compounds into probes for mode of action studies.

### What would you like to achieve through your membership?

I would like to be able to acquire a broader understanding of the biological impacts of the synthesis that I am working on.

### What do you like doing in your spare time?

I enjoy kickboxing, bowling, and I like to play softball and dodgeball.

### What are you currently reading?

I am currently reading *Angewandte Chemie* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and if I'm not reading a science journal, then I am reading "The Winter of Our Discontent" by John Steinbeck.

### What is your favorite movie?

That would be "The Sweetest Thing."