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3-30-2006

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Chem Club is in its element

Summary: If your only idea of chemistry is a laboratory filled with test tubes, Bunsen burners and teachers dressed in lab coats, UMM Chem Club students may change your mind.

(March 30, 2006)-If your only idea of chemistry is a laboratory filled with test tubes, Bunsen burners and teachers dressed in lab coats, students at the University of Minnesota, Morris may change your mind. UMM student chemists are "in their element" when it comes to putting a new twist on what some may view as a mundane concept of chemistry.

Along with others at UMM, the UMM Chem Club has been awarded a Beautiful U grant. The Club, which will receive the grant April 20, will use the funds to help beautify the science building by painting molecules and other chemistry items in stairwells.

"I've been very excited to work with the club. They enjoy sharing chemistry with both the UMM and the off-campus community," said Jennifer Goodnough, UMM assistant professor of chemistry and Chem Club co-adviser. "They try to do things that involve the entire campus community."

Students applied for the grant to help beautify the U, and even though they received it, they will be using Chem Club money earned through fundraising to help cover the cost. "The Chem Club is a group of hard working kids—both the officers and the members," said Goodnough, who has been Chem Club co-adviser since she came to UMM four years ago.

Among other activities, Chem Club members research and submit their work to the American Chemical Society (ACS), which has again honored the Club for the eighth year. Eight students traveled to Atlanta, Ga., at the end of March to present their posters, along with the 18,000 other scientists and students, during the ACS Conference. Students who attended were Jenna Benson, Megan Mekoli, Janice Lee, Sarah Lofgren, Lisa Jordan, Stacie Lilliquist, Jake Melby and Lauren Goodrich.

Seniors Stacie Lilliquist, Caledonia, and Lisa Jordan, Roseville, co-presidents of the club, have been active in Chem Club since their sophomore year. Chem Club also offers events in which the entire campus community can participate such as a chili cook-off at the beginning of the school year, a field trip to a beer factory in New Ulm, and hosting Chemistry Week in the fall.

"I'm really glad I joined," said Lilliquist, "it completed my UMM experience to be part of a group I really care about."

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