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12-3-2020

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### Recommended Citation

Stewart, Shea, "Chemistry Chair Elected as Fellow of Prestigious Science Association" (2020). *University of Mississippi News*. 882.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/882>

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## Chemistry Chair Elected as Fellow of Prestigious Science Association

**Greg Tschumper earns rank with American Association for the Advancement of Science**

DECEMBER 3, 2020 BY SHEA STEWART

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Greg Tschumper, UM professor and chair of chemistry and biochemistry, has been elected as a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Photo courtesy of Dianne Bond/Bella Vie Photography

OXFORD, Miss. – Greg Tschumper, professor and chair of chemistry and biochemistry at the **University of Mississippi**, has been elected as a fellow of the **American Association for the Advancement of Science**.

Formed in 1848 to mark the emergence of a national scientific community in the U.S., the AAAS is the world's largest multidisciplinary scientific society and seeks to advance science, engineering and innovation around the globe. It is a leading publisher of cutting-edge research through its Science family of journals and has members in more than 90 countries.

A member of the AAAS since 2015, Tschumper was elected to the rank of fellow for his "distinguished contributions in the fields of physical chemistry and computational quantum chemistry, including seminal studies of water clusters, hydrogen bonding and noncovalent interactions."

"It is a tremendous honor to be elected a fellow of such a prestigious scientific society," said Tschumper, who **joined the UM faculty in 2001**. "It is, without a doubt, the most significant accolade of my career, and I am still in a state of disbelief.

"I hope this national recognition highlights the quality of research being conducted here at the University of Mississippi, particularly in the **Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry**."

With this designation, Tschumper becomes only the second current Oxford campus faculty member who is an active AAAS member to be elected as a fellow. Steve Duke, an adjunct research professor in the National Center for Natural Products Research based at the School of Pharmacy, was elected a fellow of the AAAS in 1993.

"This is an incredible honor for Dr. Tschumper, and I am so happy that his outstanding work to advance his field is being recognized by the prestigious AAAS," Provost Noel Wilkin said. "Too often, people think of 'the university' as the buildings or spaces.

"Instead, the university makes a difference in the world and in the lives of our students because of the outstanding work being done by the amazing faculty and staff. Dr. Tschumper is a great example of how our faculty are changing the knowledge of society by advancing their fields."

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### Campus Briefs

#### Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children's play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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#### Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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### Ole Miss In the News

#### Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith's Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school's first African-American student.

Tschumper earned his bachelor's degree from Winona State University and his doctorate at the University of Georgia. He worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the public research university ETH Zürich in Switzerland and later as a postdoctoral fellow at Emory University before joining the Ole Miss faculty.



Greg Tschumper has been honored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science for his cutting-edge work in computational chemistry. Tschumper and his research team study the subtle interactions between molecules, especially those involving water, using quantum physics, mathematics and high-performance computing instead of traditional laboratory experiments. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

"My path to chemistry was significantly influenced by two amazing chemistry teachers in high school," Tschumper said. "I distinctly remember a conversation with one of them about why water forms drops and beads up on most surfaces instead of spreading out like oil.

"Interestingly, part of my current research program is dedicated to studying the phenomena responsible for that behavior."

Tschumper's Ole Miss research group is devoted to obtaining answers and insight to important chemical problems in essentially every area of chemistry through theory and computation rather than experimentation.

"My group studies the subtle interactions between molecules, especially those involving water because it plays a vital role in many physical and chemical processes within our bodies and across our planet," he said. "Unlike experimental chemists, however, we use quantum physics, mathematics and high-performance computing to study these phenomena instead of performing experiments in a lab."

Tschumper has been a member of the American Chemical Society for 25 years, a member of the World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists for 16 years and a member of the Mississippi Academy of Sciences for 15 years. Earlier this year, he was elected a full member of Sigma Xi, the scientific research honor society.

At UM, he has been awarded the **Cora Lee Graham Award for Outstanding Teacher of Freshmen** in 2009 and the **Faculty Achievement Award in 2015**.

He became chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in January 2017.

"Being elected fellow in this esteemed professional organization is verification of something we have known locally for some time: that Dr. Tschumper has, and will continue to have, a significant impact on his field," said Lee Cohen, dean of the university's **College of Liberal Arts**. "Based on my experiences with Greg, he is an academic triple threat: an excellent teacher, a productive researcher and an outstanding department chair."

Much of modern science is a team effort, and Tschumper said his success as a scientist is built on contributions from his collaborators, students and mentors, and the support of family members.

"I certainly would not be where I am today without my parents, Bob and Pat Tschumper, who instilled the importance of hard work and perseverance in me at an early age," he said. "There is also a long list of teachers and mentors I'd like to thank, going back to my chemistry teachers at Aquinas High School in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

"Of course, I cannot overstate how important the support of my family has been over the years, and I need to thank my wonderful wife, Emily, and my two amazing daughters, Anne and Kate, for putting up with me when I start talking about research at home."

The AAAS Council elects members to become fellows for efforts on behalf of the advancement of science, or its applications, that are scientifically or socially distinguished.

This year, 489 members were honored by the AAAS as fellows. The **full list of new fellows was announced** Nov. 27 in the AAAS News & Notes section of the journal *Science*. An induction ceremony for the new fellows is scheduled for Feb. 13, 2021.

The tradition of AAAS fellows began in 1874, and fellows are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional ethics and scientific integrity for the lifetime designation.

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"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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