Meet the New ASA/CSCA Fellows

The ASA/CSCA selects its Fellows from among our members who have been part of the organization for five years or more and who demonstrate a commitment to Christian service at work, at home, and through participating in ASA/CSCA events and publications. Read the brief profiles below, and join us in congratulating them!

Steven L. Ball
Steven Ball is a professor of physics at LeTourneau University, joining the faculty in 2001. He graduated from Baker University in Kansas, majoring in mathematics and physics. He completed his PhD in experimental high energy physics in 1989 at the University of Kansas with a focus on hadronic B meson decays. His work with the ARGUS Collaboration in Germany continued with the Max-Planck-Institute for Nuclear Physics, then as a research fellow at Cornell University, resulting in over 100 articles in refereed journals.

He has been teaching in Christian higher education since 1993, having taught physical science, astronomy, creation and evolution, and cosmology in addition to a broad range of undergraduate physics courses. His passion lies in finding a meaningful fit between science and biblical faith. One goal of this work is to be a voice of reason in the midst of the emotional conflict between science and biblical faith, helping to show that both are mutually supportive.

Ruth M. Bancewicz
Ruth Bancewicz is based in the UK, and joined the ASA while working for its British sister organization, Christians in Science. Through ASA meetings and friendships with many of its members, she has come to understand some of the differences and similarities between the science-faith dialogue on either side of the pond.

Ruth studied genetics at Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities, and was a postdoc in cell and molecular biology at Edinburgh. She considered a career in science communication, but a vacancy with Christians in Science led her into science and religion. She has been based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge, since its foundation in 2006, where her role is to develop accessible resources for churches. She has led three projects in which a number of ASA members have been involved: Test of FAITH, God in the Lab, and Wonders of the Living World (forthcoming).

Andrew B. Bocarsly
A member of the ASA since 2013, Andrew Bocarsly is a professor of chemistry at Princeton University, where he has carried out research and teaching since 1980. Andrew’s research interests are in the areas of solar fuels, alternate energy, and the chemistry of carbon dioxide mitigation. He teaches undergraduate general chemistry, and a variety of inorganic courses at the graduate level. Andrew has had the opportunity to explore the science-faith interface with undergraduates at Princeton through speaking invitations at a number of campus faith-based organizations.

Andrew was a plenary speaker at ASA 2013. As an outgrowth of his ASA activities and in collaboration with his wife, Patricia Fitzgerald-Bocarsly (another ASA Fellow), a Sunday School course exploring the science-Christian nexus was developed and taught. This course has led to the development of a science group at their local church. Andrew is active in the leadership of Stone Hill Church of Princeton and views faith in Jesus as Lord and Messiah as an integral part of his Jewish beliefs.

Thomas E. Ferko
Tom Ferko is a professor of chemistry and chair of the Department of Chemical Sciences at California Baptist University (CBU). He has been a member of the ASA since 2009 and is a founding member of the ASA local chapter in Southern California, which he currently chairs. He has also helped to organize the chapter’s annual Winter Day Conferences since 2013.

Tom received his PhD from Purdue University in analytical chemistry, and it was during his graduate studies that he became a follower of Christ, partially through the Graduate InterVarsity Christian Fellowship chapter at Purdue. His research interests have focused on trace-level analysis in environmental samples, and he was recognized as CBU’s Distinguished Scholar of the Year in 2008.

Tom is a member of Cornerstone Bible Church in Fullerton, CA, and has led four short-term missions teams through his church in addition to five service-learning teams through CBU.

Patricia Fitzgerald-Bocarsly
Patricia Fitzgerald-Bocarsly is a tenured professor of pathology at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and was recently appointed as a provost for Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences. Her research area is viral immunology with an emphasis on HIV infection and aging of the innate immune system. Pat teaches both medical students and graduate students and mentors PhD students in her laboratory.

Pat has been involved with the ASA for the past five years, serving on the board of Christian Women in Science and chairing sessions and making presentations at ASA annual meetings. At her church in Princeton, NJ, she and her husband, Andy Bocarsly, presented a Sunday School class on science and faith and have started an interest group for scientists called “Stone Hill Science”; the group’s purpose is to engage the faith community in the faith/science dialogue and present the compatibility of traditional science and faith. Pat and Andy have three grown children, including two who are scientists, and have three scientifically curious grandchildren.

Robert S. Geddes
Bob Geddes joined the ASA in 2002. He became a part of the CSCA Executive Council in 2008, and has been its secretary treasurer since 2009. He was happy to serve as the local arrangements chair for the joint 2014 ASA/CSCA/GIS Annual Meeting in Hamilton, ON.

He worked as a geologist for about 15 years, in mineral exploration and with the Ontario Geological Survey. He then returned to school to become a Presbyterian minister, and served a church in Hamilton for nearly 20 years. ASA and CSCA service has been a major retirement project.

Bob’s wife Lynne, a retired physiotherapist and past department head at McMaster University, like Bob, enjoys ASA annual meetings. Bob lives vicariously through their two children: daughter Jennifer is a Presbyterian minister on Vancouver Island, and son Jeff is on the faculty of the Earth and Environment Department at Boston University.

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Dear friends—

As we head into this holiday season, we have many reasons to be grateful. God continues to bless the ASA with timely gifts and other surprises. Just when we think we might fall short of a financial target, someone brings in an unexpected contribution. On another metric, we’ve added seven new Local Chapters to our ranks this year (four of those just since July’s Annual Meeting), making a total of 33 chapters across the US and Canada. As I said at our last State of the ASA meeting in Boston, our membership is becoming increasingly engaged and active, and that is cause for thanksgiving and celebration!

I traveled north from Los Angeles this fall to visit our Silicon Valley Chapter (launched in January), as well as our brand new Northern California Chapter (launched in September, and serving Sacramento, Davis, Chico, and beyond). Just this past week I met with the new California Baptist University Chapter (also launched in September), and Vicki and I have plans to visit the new Philadelphia Chapter (launched in July) before Christmas. We’re also hoping to get a new chapter going at Princeton University during that same timeframe. As always, please let us know if you’re interested in starting something new in your own hometown.

In other news, excitement is already building for the 2019 Annual Meeting at Wheaton College next July. We have a great slate of confirmed plenaries speaking on the theme of “Exploring Creation,” including physicist Gerald Gabrielse, astrophysicist Deborah Haarsma, historian and theologian Jennifer McNutt, biologist Kenneth Miller, medical doctor and researcher James Sherley, and radiation biologist and bio-nanotechnology expert Gayle Woloschak. It promises to be a wonderful time of sharing both scholarship and fellowship, so mark your calendars now for July 19–22 in the Chicago area, and help us spread the word.

Enjoy the holidays with your friends and family, and join us as we praise God for his faithfulness!

With gratitude,

Leslie

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Donald H. McNally

Don McNally has combined academic and business careers for the past 25 years, and has served as Executive Director of the CSCA since 2003. He has recently stepped down as Executive Director of the CSCA, and will serve in the capacity of archivist for the CSCA and continue to be an active member of the CSCA Hamilton local chapter. Don’s primary work has been in the development of collaborative business networks and educational initiatives in the study of faith and science. He completed his PhD at the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology at the University of Toronto with an area of specialty in the study of science and religion in the early Victorian period.

Don chaired the Curriculum Committee as part of the establishment of Redeemer University College in 1982. He established a program in science and religion at St. Michael’s College, University of Toronto, where he taught from 1986 to 1998. He was also cofounder of the Pascal Centre for Advanced Studies in Faith and Science at Redeemer University College (1988–1992). During this period he also founded NetAccess Systems Inc. which remains one of Canada’s leading independent ISPs.

Don codirected with CSCA Past President Thad Trenn the John Templeton Foundation Science and Religion Course Program Summer Workshop at Victoria College, University of Toronto, between 1996 and 1999, and helped to establish the Hamilton Area Science and Religion Forum at McMaster University (2005–ongoing) as part of the local initiatives program of the Metanexus Institute.

Patricia M. Pauley

Patricia Pauley is a research meteorologist at the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), Marine Meteorology Division. Her work centers on improving the processing and quality control of meteorological observations for use in the US Navy’s operational numerical weather prediction systems. Before working at NRL, she was an assistant professor of meteorology at the Naval Postgraduate School. She received her BS, MS, and PhD in atmospheric sciences, all from Purdue University, and she is a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society.

Patricia has been a member of ASA since 1988 and has enjoyed reading PSCF, gaining much from the diversity of perspectives presented there. She has been very involved in the local church over the years, serving as a deaconess, teaching both children’s and adult Sunday School, and currently playing viola in one of the worship teams at her church. She has also enjoyed speaking to her children’s and now grandchildren’s classes at school about weather phenomena and about being a scientist and a follower of Jesus Christ.
Heather Prior

Heather Prior joined the faculty of The King's University in Edmonton, AB, in 2000, and she loves teaching and learning about biology and many other subjects together with her students and colleagues. Before King's, she earned a degree at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, and then went on to study genetics and eventually complete a PhD at the University of Alberta. Along the way she married a sociologist, was an English teacher in China, gave birth to a son, and adopted a daughter.

Her current research work with undergraduate students includes investigating cataracts using a zebrafish eye model, exploring how faith and decisions about infertility intersect, and a project on honeybee diseases in Alberta.

She was introduced to the ASA by King’s colleagues and has become more involved by serving as the Edmonton local chapter coordinator for the CSCA and organizing and hosting many events.

Sarah M. Richart

Sarah Richart earned her PhD in microbiology at Colorado State University. She first heard about the ASA as a postdoc at the University of Alberta. She started her teaching career at The King’s University College in Edmonton where she taught alongside involved ASA members and became interested in science and faith discussions before taking her current post at Azusa Pacific University (APU).

Sarah is interested in integrating faith and microbiology with plastic accumulation in classroom teaching, and has presented this work at a regional ASA meeting and a national American Society for Microbiology (ASM) Conference. She also speaks on related topics within the APU community. Sarah engages in research on the history of ethical and theological responses to smallpox vaccination in Colonial Boston and England, and has presented some of her findings at a national ASM conference.

In 2016, she served as local arrangements cochair of the ASA annual meeting at APU, where she was reunited with many wonderful colleagues, including those from Edmonton.

Christopher M. Rios

Chris Rios serves as Associate Dean in the Graduate School at Baylor University and teaches in the Department of Religion. He has degrees from Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Baylor University. A historian of science and religion, his research focuses on evangelical scientists in the United States and Great Britain. His 2014 publication After the Monkey Trial: Evangelical Scientists and a New Creationism (Fordham University Press) explored the history of the American Scientific Affiliation and Christians in Science from their founding to the 1980s. He also directs the Bernard Rammm Graduate Scholars Program at Baylor.

Chris lives with his wife and children in Austin, TX, and attends All Saints Episcopal Church. He has been an ASA member since 2009. His service to the ASA has included serving as the co-editor for the 75th anniversary of the ASA issue of PSCF.

Hugh Ross

Hugh Ross is founder and president of Reasons to Believe, an organization that researches and communicates how God’s revelation in the words of the Bible harmonizes with the facts of nature.

With a degree in physics from the University of British Columbia and a PhD in astronomy from the University of Toronto, he continued his research on quasars and galaxies as a postdoctoral fellow at the California Institute of Technology before transitioning to full-time ministry. In addition to founding and leading Reasons to Believe, he remains on the pastoral staff at Sierra Madre Congregational Church.

His writings include journal and magazine articles and numerous books—Always Be Ready, Improbable Planet, Why the Universe Is the Way It Is, and more. He has spoken on hundreds of university campuses as well as at conferences and churches around the world.

He lives in Southern California with his wife, Kathy.

Deborah Shepherd-Webster

In 1981, with a BS in physics, Deb Shepherd-Webster began her career as a research engineer. She spent 10 years working on space-based sensors and training NASA astronauts for Space Lab shuttle missions. In 1991 she obtained a PhD in astronomy at the University of Wisconsin. For 17 years she worked as an astronomer and project manager at the California Institute of Technology and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, researching star and planet formation and helping to build and commission radio telescopes in the USA, Chile, and South Africa.

Although raised a Christian, Deb left the church as a teenager and remained agnostic for 35 years, studying Buddhist meditation, yoga, and Tai Chi. In 2008 she became a Christian and she joined the ASA in 2011 where she started the ASA New Mexico chapter. In 2013, Deb started on the path to become a deacon in the United Methodist Church; she moved to California where she obtained her MDiv from Fuller Theological Seminary.

In 2015, Deb worked in the D. R. Congo to develop a strategic plan for the Katanga Methodist University and to help build a high school in Muleji village. She taught math and science at Learning Works Charter School, and she is now an adjunct professor at Hope International University. Deb works at First United Methodist Church of Pasadena, creating a new initiative to develop a faith-based response to climate change.

Kathleen Tallman

Kathleen Tallman is a professor of biology and chemistry at Azusa Pacific University (APU) where she teaches upper-division courses in anatomy, neurobiology, and physiology. Her research with undergraduate students focuses on ways to protect the blood-brain barrier from stroke and inflammation.

Kathleen has been a member of the ASA since 2013. She has presented several times on faith integration in the anatomy lab at the Southern California Christians in Science Winter Day Conference, at an ASA annual meeting. She served as a local arrangements cochair for ASA 2016 held at APU. She also published an article in Christianity Today (May 2018) on “His Body Was Gone: How Jesus Unexpectedly Showed Up in My Anatomy Lab.”

She lives in San Dimas, CA, with her husband and three children.

Tim Wallace

Tim Wallace was raised in a Christian home by parents trained in chemistry and medicine, where there was never any perceived conflict between science and faith. He received a PhD in electrical engineering from Purdue University, and then moved to Massachusetts to work for MIT’s Lincoln Laboratory. At Lincoln, he worked on radar development and especially data exploitation, in the areas of naval radar and space surveillance. He led the development of several systems to assist analysts using machine intelligence.

In the early 1980s, Tim’s interest and participation in the ASA increased when his uncle Bob Herrmann became executive director. He enjoyed many local chapter meetings. Starting in 2000, he began attending the annual meetings on a regular basis. He served on the program committee of the 2018 annual meeting and also presented a talk on artificial intelligence. In addition to the ASA, Tim participates in the Cambridge Roundtable on Science and Religion.

Roger Wiens

Roger Wiens is a planetary scientist in charge of the ChemCam laser spectroscopy instrument on the Curiosity Mars rover; he is delivering the SuperCam instrument for NASA’s next rover. A graduate of Wheaton College and the University of Minnesota (physics), Roger carried out research at UCSD and Caltech, and has been at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) for the last two decades.

Roger grew up in a Mennonite community in southern Minnesota and came to faith at an early age. He joined the ASA around 1980, and has been active in various churches as a worship leader and teacher. In the 1990s, he saw the need for a response to the young-Earth movement and wrote “Radiometric Dating: A Christian Perspective,” which has been on the ASA website for 20 years, with more than 100,000 reads. His book Red Rover: Inside the Story of robotic Space Exploration describes his teams’ space exploits.

Roger received the title of Chevalier from the French government and the Vermeil Medal from the French Air and Space Academy; he is a LANL Fellow. Roger is strongly supportive of the ASA and its mission to and by Christians in the sciences.
Gordon Student Chapter Event

By Kristiina Boettiger

On Wednesday, October 3, 2018, the Gordon College Student Chapter of the ASA represented the club at the Hamilton-Wenham science fair. Along with other Gordon College club recruiters, they set up a table with promotional information about the affiliation as well as experiments and props.

As the pictures show, roughly 500 attendees heard about the ASA by receiving water bottles, pop sockets, or journals. The club members also conducted experiments, for example, a DNA extraction from peas. Two posters, detailing the goals of the club and the mission of the organization, as well as student internship stories were great resources.

The student chapter leaders are the following:
Liza Antonelli, Biology ’21
Kristiina Boettiger, Biology ’18
Emma Folkerts, Biochemistry ’20
Robert Mech, Physics ’19

In addition, two students from the psychology department, Stephanie Boettiger ’19 and Jess Fox ’19, joined them to demonstrate the measurement of brain waves from body movements; this prop drew many onlookers.

The best aspect of the event was that the ASA student chapter leaders accompanied by Gordon College’s Physics and Biology Clubs, as well as Gordon’s student chapter of Beyond Benign and the American Chemical Society, were able to represent a wide array of the sciences, including biology, physics, psychology and neuroscience, chemistry, and kinesiology. By attending this event, the ASA student chapter leaders were invited to represent the ASA at a different fair the following semester.
DC Chapter Event

By Mike Biedler

On September 14, 2018, an audience of approximately 50 from ASA's Washington DC chapter and others interested in the intersection of science and faith gathered at National Presbyterian Church, one of the chapter's two rotating church hosts, to take in ASA Fellow Jennifer Wiseman's talk on “A Universe of New Discoveries and New Questions.”

During her presentation, Jennifer—a senior astrophysicist at Goddard Space Flight Center who studies the process of star and planet formation in our galaxy using radio, optical, and infrared telescopes—summarized recent discoveries in astronomy facilitated by the Hubble Space Telescope, including incredible phenomena such as gravitational waves, intriguing detections of early galaxies, and indisputable evidence of planets orbiting other stars. These new discoveries, she argued, come with new and challenging questions, such as What would be the character of life on exoplanets?, What is the universe’s very-long-term future?, How do seemingly “destructive” processes contribute toward sustainable life on Earth?, and How do faith-based perspectives address questions that reach beyond the science alone?

Jennifer managed the audience’s expectations by stating that not only is science currently unable to answer most of these questions, but that even Christian theology and various theodicies struggle to provide sufficient answers. Nevertheless, she argued, the central focus of the Christian faith—the incarnation of Jesus Christ and his subsequent ministry, death, and resurrection—provides the basis for finding comfort in scripture’s assurances that God is in control, and that the way the universe operates is divinely intended, governed, and purposeful.

After her presentation, Jennifer addressed many and varied questions from the audience, which included National Presbyterian Senior Pastor David Renwick.
First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa (FPCSR), California, has established a recent tradition called “The Gallery at First.” Local artists and craftspersons who are also Christians are invited to display their work; each “show” runs about two months. While looking at some recent photos from Hubble, FPCSR Elder and ASA Fellow Jack Swearengen was struck with the idea that those photos are entirely worthy of the Gallery—not to mention the Craftsman. Jack worked with Bob Shoulders and Mario Zelaya—two amateur astronomers from the congregation—to select, download, and print thirteen Hubble photos, and Jack hung them in the gallery. Each image is accompanied by a physical description and a biblical passage or theme. The introduction to the exhibit reads, in part,

The intent in displaying these photos is to build an awareness of the enormity and expansive nature of the Universe and inspire our reverence for God’s majestic creation. We hope that the viewer’s sense of awe relates not only to the view of what lies beyond our solar system, but includes the fact that the one who made it all has directed his attention and purpose toward us.

It so happened that while we were working on this idea, ASA Executive Director Leslie Wickman was scheduled to give a seminar at our summer series called “Enlighten Up!” Leslie immediately resonated with the vision and volunteered to return for the opening reception if her schedule allowed.

The photo to the left shows Leslie—with a somewhat enraptured look on her face—speaking on behalf of the Artist (or Designer, if you prefer) at the reception on September 16. Behind Leslie is “Pillars of Creation in Eagle Nebula”; the caption beneath it reads, “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their stary host by the breath of his mouth’ Psalm 33:6.”

The “Pillars of Creation,” over 5-light-years tall, have been carved from galactic clouds of gas and dust by blistering ultraviolet light. Ionized gas glows with the characteristic colors of hydrogen, nitrogen, sulfur, and oxygen. Within the darkest depths of the pillars, new solar systems are being formed.

Jack is putting the exhibit into a Power Point presentation, and he will make it available on the ASA website.
CSCA Update
By Mark McEwan

As CSCA's three-year Local Chapters Project, funded by a grant from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, Inc., draws to a close, we have much to be thankful for. We've increased from 3 to 11 local chapters, and have exceeded the expectations of our grant in many ways. Thanks to the tireless efforts of volunteers across Canada, we have more than tripled the number of science-faith events we were expecting to hold.

This fall we have been blessed to have well-known speakers such as Alister McGrath and Darrel Falk at our chapters in the west, and Katharine Hayhoe in our easternmost chapter. Our Executive Council members are also travelling this semester, with President Janet Warren speaking on “Alternative Medicine and Christianity” in both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and Vice President Patrick Franklin speaking in Toronto and at our Annual General Meeting in Ancaster. This fall also has Student and Early Career Representative Tim Opperman and Project Development Officer Mark McEwan doing a series of talks and student meals in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario.

Stay tuned to www.csca.ca for a major project-end newsletter, which will more fully detail the results of our project.

ASA New Members July–September 2018
Please join us in welcoming these new members!

Dwight Allen –Kensington, MD
Ashley Anderson –Monrovia, CA
David Anderson –Honolulu, HI
Kelley Anderson –Watertown, SD
Noel Anderson –Fargo, ND
William Armistead –Silver Spring, MD
Kenneth Arnold –Somerville, MA
Matthew Axtman –Macon, WI
Rhiannon Blaauw –Wheaton, IL
Ryan Bowen –Nashville, TN
Eri Brink –Ipswich, MA
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Members in Glory
By Randy Isaac

Judson McClure
(1938–2018), Chemist

Judson Perry McClure died in Peekskill, New York, on September 18, 2018. He was born in Longmont, Colorado, on February 7, 1934. He had a PhD in chemistry and enjoyed reading science, history, and literature, but he was a simple man at heart, devoted to his family, to his wife, Nancy, to his students, to Mercy College where he taught and chaired, and to Community Bible Church where he worshipped. In every area where he had responsibility, he was practical, conscientious, and faithful but unassuming.

Jud joined the ASA in 2006 after his good friend, Randy Isaac, became executive director. He thoroughly enjoyed the journal and often discussed the articles with Randy.
It's not every day that three different science and faith organizations from around the world come together in mutual pursuit of questions at the intersection of theology, society, and the natural world. This summer's ASA/CSCA Annual Meeting is one of the special occasions in which our American and Canadian sister organizations will come together with our friends across the pond, the English group Christians in Science.

As with every ASA/CSCA Annual Meeting, we will enjoy lectures from top scholars in a wide range of disciplines, from psychology to ethics to physics and biblical interpretation. This synthesis of science and the spiritual, so important to being a Christian in the sciences, is also quite rare, as conference themes go. Our Annual Meeting is a special time of...