

Portland Section Meeting Notice

Vol 65 no 10

<https://acsportland.org/>

October 2026

Decarbonization Potential of Alternative Fuels: Expanding Chemical Principles to Climate and Environmental Integrity

a talk by

Dr. Irving Rettig, Environmental Defense Fund

Thursday October 8, 2026, 6-9pm

Leikam Brewing
5812 E Burnside St
Portland, OR 97215

Dinner Reservations

Reserve your dinner for \$25/person (\$15 for undergraduate students, high school teachers, unemployed members). \$5 added for tickets purchased at the event.

Schedule: 6pm Social—6:45 pm buffet dinner—7:45 pm program

Please contact Rob Jensen <robert.p.jensen@gmail.com> for any questions.

Lecture summary, speaker bio and Scholarship Awardees next pages.

Looking Ahead

Looking Ahead: Join us next month on Thursday, November 12th for another exciting meeting at Leikam Brewing featuring Jared Kinnear, Reuse Program Manager with Clean Water Services.

Rob Jensen, Chair
Natasja Swartz, Chair-Elect
Irving Rettig, Past Chair

Dave Reingold, Secretary
Jordan Devereaux, Treasurer
Andrew Baggett, Councilor 1

Jim Tung, Councilor 2
Hannah Boxberger, Alt. Councilor 1
Larry Furan, Alt. Councilor 2

Hannah Boxberger, Webmaster
Martha Dibblee, Email, Newsletter

Decarbonization Potential of Alternative Fuels: Expanding Chemical Principles to Climate and Environmental Integrity

Irving Rettig, PhD. Lecture Summary: As demand for and investment in alternative fuels for hard-to-abate sectors accelerates, ensuring that high-integrity, low-emission fuels and feedstocks are available, economically competitive, and utilized in key geographies and industries is necessary to achieving global-scale decarbonization. Understanding the chemical and chemical engineering principles that underlie the current manufacturing infrastructure used to make these chemical fuels has proven key to evaluating alternative methods of production, handling, and use. This talk will outline a comprehensive systems assessment approach developed by the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) for evaluating alternative fuels and discuss how scientifically informed and responsible deployment decisions can avoid compromising clean air, ecosystems or climate stability. Focusing on current and emerging value chains in high-energy, building-block chemicals as alternative fuels and fuel-precursors, this talk will highlight key climate, air quality, and environmental considerations, identify gaps in conventional assessments, and propose safeguards and best practices needed to maximize the climate and environmental integrity of industrial systems.

Irving Rettig Bio



Dr. Irving Rettig (he/him) is a Fuels & Feedstocks Scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a global nonprofit environmental research and advocacy group using science, economics, and law to find sustainability solutions that work. At EDF, Dr. Rettig's research aims to evaluate chemical, climate, and environmental strategies towards achieving decarbonization and de-fossilization in the industrial manufacturing sector. His work focuses on quantifying climate-relevant emissions and developing value chain-informed best practices, combining emissions data with systems analysis to advance practical, science-backed climate solutions towards the sustainable methods of fuels and feedstocks production. An excitable chemist and passionate science communicator, he is dedicated to translating complex research into actionable insights for industry, policymakers, and the public.

2026 Portland Section Photo-op: Scholarships and 60-yr recognition



Katie Goodell, Willamette University



Merren Troll, Willamette University



Milah Kahn, Pacific University



Alan Guerrero, Portland State University



Gabe Morrow, University of Portland



Rob Jensen, Portland Section Chair, Martha Dibble, 60-yr member, Natasja Swartz, Chair-Elect.

Group photo of scholarship winners next page



L to R: Rob Jensen, Portland Section L620 Chair; Katie Goodell, Willamette University; Merren Troll, Willamette University; Gabriel Morrow, University of Portland; Milah Kahn, Pacific University; Alan Guerrero, Portland State University; Natasja Swartz, Chair-Elect, Portland Section ACS.

A History of the ACS Portland Section Student Scholarships

In 1968 the Portland Section Executive Committee decided that each year the Section should recognize outstanding junior chemistry majors resident in the local area, and attending colleges and universities within the area of the Portland Section by scholarship awards to support their senior year studies at these institutions. Pre-medical students were explicitly excluded from scholarship consideration. Scholarship candidacy is established by chemistry department nomination, and evaluated by the Section's Scholarship Committee. The first scholarship was awarded to Loren Brown of the University of Portland. This \$500 scholarship, the Sherman Schaffer Award (SSA), was named after Sherman Schaffer, an ACS National Office functionary who was instrumental in helping Harold Zeh, Father James Anderson, Richard T. (Dick) VanSanten, and other Portland chemists to realize their dream of establishing an ACS local Section in the Portland area. This dream had been realized in 1961.

- 1971—An additional scholarship, the Portland Section Award (PSA), was established. The two scholarships each amounted to \$750.
- 1977—The name of the PSA was changed to the Harold Zeh Award (HZA).
- 1985—The name of the SSA was changed to the James Anderson Award (JAA).
- 1988—A third Section scholarship, the Richard T. (Dick) VanSanten Award (DVSA), was established, fully endowed by an exceedingly generous gift to the Section from its namesake.
- 2014—A generous donation in 2014 was received from the Estate of Phyllis Zeh.
- 2021—the Portland Section Executive Committee established the Tom Dunne-James Currie Scholarship to recognize underrepresented students in their sophomore year. Two students were awarded these scholarships in 2021.
- 2023— The Portland Section Executive Committee authorized 2023 excess scholarship funds to be awarded as another legacy scholarship called the Portland Section Award (PSA).

During the 58-year period from 1968 through 2026, 164 outstanding chemistry majors have received scholarships from the Portland Section for an aggregate value of over \$345,000. To donate to the Scholarship Fund visit the Portland Section Square site at <http://bit.ly/SQUOSSF> online or mail your tax-deductible donation (check payable to ACS Portland Section Scholarships) to

Portland Local Section ACS
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Vancouver WA 98666

The Portland Section ACS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
TIN 93-6034605