



## **ACS-KC SECTION SPENCER AWARD BANQUET AND OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**WHAT:** *Annual Spencer Award Dinner and Presentation*

**WHEN:** *Thursday, October 8, 2026; 5:30pm Social; 6:00pm Buffet Dinner*

**WHERE:** *Grand Street Café, 4740 Grand Ave, Kansas City MO*

**AWARD WINNER:** *Dr. Michael Appell, USDA-ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research*

**MENU:** *After an array of appetizers and a cash bar, we will be treated to a Buffet Style Dinner featuring House Salad; Roasted Mushroom Risotto + Creamy Goat Cheese Polenta; Brussel Sprouts + Grilled Broccolini; Marinated Grilled Sirloin, Chicken Parmesan, and Shrimp & Chorizo Paella. Wine will be offered on each table.*

**COST:** *Free for students & post docs (if a reservation has been made, otherwise, \$10); \$10 for teachers, professors, & retirees; \$20 for all other attendees.*

**RSVP:** *Please RSVP to Sarah Leibowitz: [sleibowitzacs@gmail.com](mailto:sleibowitzacs@gmail.com) by October 1, 2026. Thank you!*

**WHAT:** *October Membership Meeting: Tues. October 13, 6:00pm*

**WHERE:** *Arthur Mag Conference Center, 425 Volker, KCMO*

**SPEAKER:** *Dr. Kelsey Miles, Chemistry Professor/Award Winning Songwriter/Speaker*

**TALK:** *Life Experiments™*

*This isn't a lecture. It's live chemistry and original music, built around one idea: Life isn't meant to be solved. It's meant to be discovered.*

**MENU:** *Pizza from Minsky's, Veggies, Beer, Wine & Soft Drinks*

**COST:** *\$5*

**RSVP:** *Please see sidebar for RSVP info. Thank you!*

\*Please RSVP for the Spencer Award Banquet to Sarah Leibowitz  
[sleibowitzacs@gmail.com](mailto:sleibowitzacs@gmail.com)  
by October 1, 2026.



**ACS**  
Chemistry for Life

- AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY 1876-2026
- 150 YEARS!!
- \*Make sure to check out our website!!
- [www.acs-kc.com](http://www.acs-kc.com)

\*Please RSVP for the Membership Meeting to James Partridge  
[jimmy12231985@gmail.com](mailto:jimmy12231985@gmail.com) by Oct. 9, 2026

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## **Spencer Award Winner's Biographical Sketch:**

### **Michael Appell, Ph.D. (AGFD and AGRO)**

**Dr. Michael Appell** resides in Dunlap, IL, known for academic excellence, rich Midwestern history, and a family-friendly small-town reputation. Dr. Appell is a Research Chemist (retired) and collaborator in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS). He is a multidisciplinary scientist and American Chemical Society Fellow with expertise in biochemistry, antimicrobial assays, analytical science, organic chemistry, cheminformatics, and materials science. His current research focuses on discovering environmentally friendly antimicrobials, formulations, and controlled-release materials. He also develops approaches to reduce exposure to mycotoxins and other sources of foodborne illness (remediation).

Dr. Appell's goal is to develop greener and safer approaches to reduce exposure to regulated mycotoxins and other foodborne pathogens. Dr. Appell has researched a broad range of scientific fields during a 23-year research career and has authored or co-authored 142 publications and presentations, including 58 in the past seven years. Dr. Appell is internationally recognized as a leader in the areas of food safety and biomaterial utilization, as evidenced by invitations to be a keynote speaker at major scientific meetings, including FoodMicro in Istanbul, Turkey, commodity group meetings, ACS Presidential Symposia, and an NSF workshop to set up priority areas for a new \$50 million program covering the Nexus of Food, Energy, and Water. U.S. Senator Herbert Kohl's office advised BioSentinel, Inc., to work with USDA, ARS to address their interest in food safety, which resulted in a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) partnership for which Dr. Appell was the Principal Investigator (PI). Dr. Appell is an invited editor of two books on food safety and applied nanotechnology. In 2013, Dr. Appell received the Distinguished Service Award of the Agricultural and Food Chemistry Division (AGFD) of the American Chemical Society for his sustained leadership and success in attracting and mentoring future agricultural and food chemistry leaders. Dr. Appell has been elected an ACS Fellow and a Fellow of the AGFD for his contributions to science.

Dr. Appell was the first to use nanosponge materials to reduce exposure to toxins in fruit-based beverages and to advance nanotechnology beyond water to food matrices, which is critical for food safety applications. This seminal work established Dr. Appell as an authority on the challenging use of nanotechnology to solve agricultural problems in food matrices. In recognition of this originality, Dr. Appell served as a keynote speaker at the National Science Foundation (NSF) workshop to set priority areas for a new \$50 million program in sustainable nanotechnology and was invited to organize eight symposia at American Chemical Society (ACS) national meetings and three ACS presidential symposia. Dr. Appell's calculations on carbohydrates provided insight into important forms of carbohydrates that have become the standard of the field. Dr. Appell recognized the need to investigate new stable forms of carbohydrates and the importance of soft computational techniques to enable high-level calculations on the unusual forms of carbohydrates that exist in nature.

## **ABSTRACT for Dr. Appell's Spencer Award Presentation:**

### **"Greener Solutions for Crop Security: Engineering Agro-based Materials to Mitigate Pathogen Threats and Support Commodity Quality"**

Pathogens and other agricultural contaminants pose a persistent threat to global crop security and agricultural sustainability. To address these challenges, novel chemical strategies have been developed to mitigate pre- and post-harvest contamination, enhancing the resilience of agricultural commodities. Recent advancements in multidisciplinary approaches that integrate artificial intelligence, materials science, and analytical chemistry include the development of predictive quantitative structure-activity relationship (QSAR) models. These computational tools are essential for identifying effective, safe agro-based antifungals for crop protection and for accurately predicting the phytotoxicity of natural toxins. Furthermore, engineered agro-based materials successfully detect and permanently sequester contaminants from complex agricultural matrices. By combining computational informatics with agro-materials development, these innovations provide robust, greener agrochemical methodologies to safeguard the agricultural supply chain, advance sustainable contaminant management, and preserve quality.

## Nominator of Award Recipient

**Atanu Biswas, PhD, Lead Scientist, USDA-ARS-NCAUR, Peoria IL**

“Dr. Appell has demonstrated strong creativity and originality by conceiving, developing, and implementing novel strategies to address complex problems in the fields of drug development, carbohydrate chemistry, material science, lipid chemistry, and food safety. Dr. Appell is internationally recognized for developing methods to improve food safety and advancing bioproducts, elucidating the chemical mechanisms behind their beneficial properties. Dr. Appell added new dimensions to materials used to reduce exposure to toxins and was the first investigator to use mesoporous silica and nanoporous materials to solve food safety problems that existing technology could not address. Specifically, Dr. Appell provided expertise to enable the covalent sequestration of toxins that permanently removed the toxins from beverages.”

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## Our October Membership Meeting Speaker

### Biography

Dr. Kelsey Miles is an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Avila University in Kansas City and an award-winning songwriter. As a chemist in research labs and lecture halls, and as a musician in recording studios and on stages across the country, she discovered the same lesson: breakthroughs come from experimentation, not certainty.

That lesson became the foundation for her CEO Framework (Calibrate. Experiment. Optimize.) and her message: Think Like a Scientist. Create Like an Artist. Through live science and original, her programs transform that philosophy from an idea audiences hear into an experience they share.

Kelse was named Avila University's 2026 Professor of the Year and was a semifinalist at the 2025 International Blues Challenge.

### About the Presentation:

#### Life Experiments™

*This isn't a lecture. It's live chemistry and original music, built around one idea: Life isn't meant to be solved. It's meant to be discovered.*

As scientists, we understand that uncertainty is the starting point of discovery. Yet in our own lives, we often look for certainty before we're willing to act. Life Experiments™ explores what becomes possible when we bring scientific curiosity and creative courage to the choices we make beyond the lab. Through live chemistry and original music, participants experience the CEO Framework (Calibrate. Experiment. Optimize.) in action as they question assumptions, test possibilities, and use what they discover to refine their direction.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**\*October's Spencer Award Presentation & Banquet:** This prestigious award will be presented to Dr. Michael Appell, USDA-ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, on Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at Grand Street Café, 4740 Grand Ave., KCMO. We hope you'll mark your calendar and plan to join us. See details on Page 1 of this publication.

**\*October Membership Meeting:** Dr. Kelsey Miles, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Avila University in KC & award-winning songwriter will entertain us with a little bit of both on October 13 at the Arthur Mag Conference Center, 425 Volker Ave., KCMO! Please mark your calendar and plan to join us!

**\*National Chemistry Week (NCW):** National Chemistry Week is a public awareness campaign that promotes the value of chemistry in everyday life. This year it runs October 18-24 with the Topic being "Construction" and the Theme: "Chemistry Under Construction." This annual program unites ACS local sections, student communities, ACS divisions, businesses, schools, and individuals in communicating the importance of chemistry to our quality of life.

**\*November Membership Meeting:** Dr. Grant Shivers, Senior Scientist II, Chemical Development, Cambrex Charles City will give talk on Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at the Arthur Mag Conference Center, 425 Volker Ave., KCMO. Details to follow but mark your calendar to attend!

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## ACS Celebrates 150 Years!

*Throughout our history, ACS has evolved to meet the needs of the scientific community. What began with 35 chemists in 1876 has grown into a global community of more than 281,000 individuals united by a passion for science. This marks an important milestone in our evolution to unify the ACS experience, making it easier to discover opportunities, resources, and community.*

*As ACS celebrates its 150th anniversary, we are evolving our brand to reflect who we are today: the world's scientific community, advancing, connecting, and empowering scientists across disciplines, industries, and generations. This evolution reaffirms our mission to advancing scientific knowledge, empowering the global scientific community, and championing scientific integrity.*

*Inspired by what we can accomplish together, our evolved brand honors our 150-year legacy while embracing the global, collaborative, and interdisciplinary future of science.*

*Join us as we build a more connected, inclusive ACS for generations to come.*

# ACS-KC Standing Committees & Chairs

Please consider volunteering on one (or more) of our committees!

We welcome your thoughts, ideas, and contribution!

\*Please contact Gary Clapp ([geclapp424@gmail.com](mailto:geclapp424@gmail.com)) if you are interested in one of the committees. Thank you! We would appreciate it, and we welcome your input and assistance!



Check us out on **FACEBOOK**: ACS-KC and **LINKEDIN**: ACS-KC

## COMMITTEES and CHAIRS

|                                                   |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
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| ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT.....                    | Dr. Shuo Han, UMKC                      |
| FINANCE.....                                      | Dr. Jeffrey Woodford, MWSU              |
| LONG RANGE PLANNING.....                          | <b>OPEN</b>                             |
| MEMBERSHIP.....                                   | Mr. Alex Marin, Honeywell               |
| MINORITY AFFAIRS.....                             | <b>OPEN</b>                             |
| NCW & GREEN CHEMISTRY COORDINATOR.....            | <b>OPEN</b>                             |
| NEWSLETTER EDITOR.....                            | Mary Jean Clapp, EDUStaff/emPowerU      |
| NOMINATIONS Local Section Executive Committee.... | <b>OPEN</b>                             |
| PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS.....                       | Dr. David Van Horn, UMKC                |
| PROGRAM.....                                      | Dr. William Gutheil, UMKC               |
| PUBLIC (Government) AFFAIRS.....                  | <b>OPEN</b>                             |
| PUBLIC RELATIONS.....                             | Dr. Gary Clapp, CIA Labs                |
| SAFETY.....                                       | Michele Sanders, Harcross Chemicals     |
| SENIOR CHEMIST.....                               | Mr. Mark Northrup, Retired              |
| SPENCER AWARD NOMINATIONS.....                    | Dr. Tom Hemling, TCH Animal Health, LLP |
| WEBMASTER.....                                    | Dr. Gary Clapp, CIA Labs                |
| WOMEN CHEMISTS.....                               | Michele Sanders, Harcross Chemicals     |

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OCTOBER 2026  
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Kansas City Chemist  
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