



# THE REACTION TIMES

*All the news that's fit to react to.*

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March, 2022

## Quick Reference Guide to Services

Division Web Site: [www.acsmedchem.org](http://www.acsmedchem.org)

Division Hall of Fame:  
[www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=hof](http://www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=hof)

Division Awards and Prizes  
[www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=awards](http://www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=awards)

Link to Division Newsletter Archive:  
[www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=newsletters](http://www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=newsletters)

Link to Archived MEDI Meeting Abstracts:  
[www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=nationalmeetings](http://www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=nationalmeetings)

ACS Web Page  
[portal.acs.org](http://portal.acs.org)

Journal of Medicinal Chemistry  
[pubs.acs.org/journal/jmcmar](http://pubs.acs.org/journal/jmcmar)

## Scientific Program for the Spring ACS Meeting, San Diego, CA (March 20-24, 2022)

**(ACS Abstract system now closed for this meeting)**

SUN	Synthetic Lethality
SUN	CNS Drug Discovery
SUN	MEDI Awards
SUN	Oral Session and Posters
SUN	MEDI DEI&R Event
MON	Biocatalysis in Medicinal Chemistry
MON	Drugging the Undruggable
MON	General Oral Session
MON	Poster Session
TUES	Deuterium in Medicinal Chemistry
TUES	Solute Carrier Proteins
TUES	Psychedelic Drugs
WED	First Time Disclosures
WED	Ternary Complexes
THU	Modern Screening Approaches

## 2022 Executive Committee Members

2022 Chair: Amanda Bryant-Friedrich

2021-22 Program Chair: Maria-Jesus Blanco

2022 Vice-Chair: Amjad Ali

Industrial Councilor 2022-24: Katerina Leftheris

Industrial Councilor 2021-2023: William J. Greenlee

Academic Councilor 2020-22: Jane Aldrich

Academic Councilor 2021-23: Carrie Haskell-Luevano

Secretary/PR Chair 2020-22: Jay Schneekloth

Membership & Intl. Chair: Daniel Harki

Treasurer 2021-23: Paul Ornstein

2022 Past Chair: Jake Schwarz

YMCC Chairs : Lori Ferrins, Erika Araujo

Contact information for Division Officers appears at the end of this Newsletter and at [www.acsmedchem.org](http://www.acsmedchem.org).

## Message from the Chair

Dear MEDI Members,

As I write this message, the Division is engaged in a flurry of activity preparing to offer excellent scientific programming for our community at the Spring ACS Meeting in San Diego California. We are fortunate to have Maria-Jesus Blanco as our Program Chair, coordinating the execution of an excellent program which showcases the best that Medicinal Chemistry has to offer. At the same time, she is preparing for the Fall ACS Meeting to be held in Chicago, IL August 21-25. If you have not submitted your abstracts, please do so by the March 29<sup>th</sup> deadline.



Industrial Vice-Chair Amjad Ali, the Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC), appreciates the submission of symposium proposals for the 265<sup>th</sup> ACS Meeting to be held in March of 2023 in Indianapolis, IN. The theme of this meeting is **“Crossroads of Chemistry”**. If you missed the opportunity to submit a proposal for this meeting, please feel free to reach out to any member of the MEDI LRPC or Executive Committee to begin making plans to propose an exciting symposium for the Fall 2023 Meeting in San Francisco, CA (Theme: **Harnessing the Power of Data**).

The MEDI Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 is currently being reviewed with plans to create a new plan for the years 2023-2027. Please be on the lookout for a survey in the next month soliciting your suggestions and input which will be foundational for this new plan. MEDI is here to serve its members, to do that your voice needs to be heard.

Please be sure to visit our newly launch MEDI Division website where you can find information on upcoming meetings, award winners and announcement for award nominations and much, much more.

On a personal note, I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to chair this wonderful division. The members believe in the mission of Medicinal Chemistry and are making amazing contributions to providing the world with the knowledge, products and guidance that it needs to secure a healthy future for the nation and the world while recognizing the need and making strides to include all individuals who have the ability and desire to contribute. Thank you for this opportunity.

Most Sincerely,

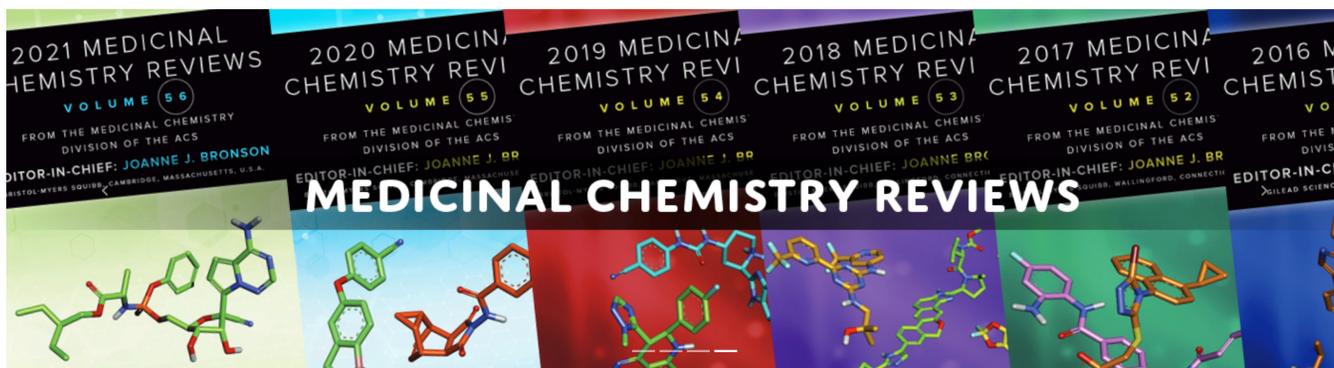
Amanda Bryant-Friedrich  
Chair, ACS Division of Medicinal Chemistry

## New Website Design Launched

The ACS Division of Medicinal Chemistry website, [www.acsmedchem.org](http://www.acsmedchem.org), has been redesigned! The new site was launched in preparation for the San Diego meeting and features a modern design, mobile compatibility, and improved user access. The site contains division announcements, an embedded Twitter feed, and member access to Medicinal Chemistry Reviews. Come check it out!



[HOME](#) | [ABOUT MEDI](#) | [HALL OF FAME](#) | [AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS](#) | [EVENTS](#) | [ACTIVITIES](#) | [JOIN MEDI](#)



Announcements



Tweets by @AcsMedi



## Amanda Garner to Receive Robertson Award



The American Chemical Society Division of Medicinal Chemistry is pleased to announce that **Professor Amanda Garner** has been selected as the 2022 recipient of the David W. Robertson Award, sponsored by Pfizer, Inc. This award is in memory of David W. Robertson, a widely respected, highly successful and creative medicinal chemist. The award, given in even-numbered years, is intended to recognize seminal contributions by young scientists to medicinal chemistry. Nominees, who must be age 40 or younger at the time of nomination, can be employed in academia, industry, government or by a private research organization and must be engaged in the research of biologically active substances. The nominee must have had a primary role in the discovery of a novel therapeutic agent(s), target(s), theoretical concept(s) in medicinal chemistry or drug discovery, and/or made a significant scientific discovery that enhances the field of medicinal chemistry.

Prof. Garner received her undergraduate training at Allegheny College, Pittsburgh PA. She Pursued her Ph.D. in Chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh, where she studied under Prof. Kazunori Koide, After which she completed an NIH postdoctoral fellowship at the Scripps Research Institute with Prof. Kim Janda. She joined the University of Michigan in 2013, and she is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry. Recently, she was appointed the Director of the Interdepartmental Program in Medicinal Chemistry. Professor Garner's research focuses on RNA as a therapeutic target, where she uses medicinal chemistry and chemical biology approaches

to study RNA-targeting molecules, RNA-protein interactions, and profile kinase-substrate interactions. Congratulations Professor Garner!

## Larry Hamann Wins the Division of Medicinal Chemistry Award



The Division of Medicinal Chemistry is pleased to announce that **Larry Hamann** has been selected as the recipient of the 2022 Division of Medicinal Chemistry Award, Sponsored by the Thomas J. Perun Endowment Fund. The Division of Medicinal Chemistry Award is given in even years, and the presentation and award symposium are held at the National Medicinal Chemistry Symposium. This award is open to any scientist or team of scientists whose research has, directly or indirectly, had a significant effect on medicinal chemistry. Although other types of accomplishments (such as a new research tool or a biological discovery) will not be excluded, emphasis shall be placed on (a) medicinal chemistry, (b) recent contributions, and (c) scientists whose accomplishments have not already been adequately recognized in the

form of other honors.

Larry Hamann, Ph.D. is currently the Co-founder, president, and CEO of a startup biotechnology company in stealth mode. Previously, he was Global Head, Drug Discovery Sciences at Takeda Pharmaceuticals, with responsibility for Medicinal Chemistry, Structural Biology & Biophysics, Biochemistry, Proteomics, Early Target Discovery, Computational Chemistry, Computational Biology, Systems Engineering, and Global Research Externalization. Larry also served as Corporate Vice President and Global Head of Small Molecule Drug Discovery and Cambridge Site Head at Celgene. In his 29 years of drug discovery, he has led or overseen teams responsible for more than 18 clinical stage compounds, including the FDA approved DPP4 inhibitor saxagliptin (Onglyza™) for type II diabetes, and the FDA approved first-in-class HCV NS5A inhibitor daclatasvir (Daklinza™) for hepatitis C, as well as a number of molecules currently in clinical development for hematologic malignancies, solid tumors, and autoimmune and neurodegenerative diseases. Prior to Celgene, Larry held various roles at Novartis and Bristol-Myers Squibb, and began his career at Ligand Pharmaceuticals. Larry is co-inventor on > 70 patents, co-author on > 80 scientific publications, and serves as a standing member of the NIH Study Section for Synthetic and Biological Chemistry. In August of 2017, Larry was awarded the American Chemical Society's Heroes of Chemistry Award for contributions to the discovery of the pioneering hepatitis C drug, Daklinza®. Larry holds a BS in Chemistry from the University of Detroit and a PhD in Organic Chemistry from the University of Michigan. Congratulations!

## Division of Medicinal Chemistry Predoctoral Fellowships

The Division of Medicinal Chemistry is pleased to announce that four graduate students have been awarded predoctoral fellowships to support their outstanding work in the field of medicinal chemistry. The Division thanks the sponsors of the awards, which are listed below. Congratulations to all the winners!

### Fellowship winners:

Gavin Smith - Emory University  
Babak Mahjour - University of Michigan  
Samantha Meyer – The Scripps Research Institute  
Jared Anderson – University of Minnesota

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## Join MEDI on social media!

@ACSMEDI on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ACSMediDivision/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/acsmedi/>

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### Nominate a Mentor, Mentee, or Colleague for a MEDI Award

The Division offers a number of awards to recognize medicinal chemists at various stages of their careers. Please consider submitting a nomination for one of these awards:

The Philip S. Portoghese Journal of Medicinal Chemistry - Division of Medicinal Chemistry Joint Lectureship honors the contributions of an individual who has had a major impact on medicinal chemistry research. **Deadline: April 1.** <https://www.acsmedchem.org/portoghese-lectureship-acsmedicinal-chemistry-division>

The **Medicinal Chemistry Hall of Fame** honors those who have made outstanding contributions to medicinal chemistry through research, teaching and/or Division service. You can visit the Hall of Fame at <https://www.acsmedchem.org/?nd=inductees>. Deadline **May 31**.

The Division of Medicinal Chemistry makes available a limited number of grants of \$1000 annually to aid young chemists in presenting papers at the ACS National Meetings. Applicants must be ACS MEDI Division regular or student members (click [here](#) to join), and not have previously received a travel award. Each University department can have only one awardee. Application deadlines are the same as the abstract deadline for each meeting. In order of priority, the following individuals will be considered for awards: Graduate Student, Postdoctoral Fellow, individual with less than five years post-Ph.D. experience. The scientific merit of the paper to be presented will also be considered. Travel grants are limited to US-based applicants.

Follow the links for further information.

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## MEDI Election Results

The Division held its annual election in November. Congratulations to those who were elected, and our sincere thanks to all who put forth their names.



**Dr. Amjad Ali** was elected Vice Chair and Long Range Planning Committee Chair. He will serve a year as Vice Chair, a year as Chair, and a year as Past Chair. Dr. Amjad Ali is Executive Director of External Discovery Chemistry at Merck Research Laboratories in Kenilworth, New Jersey. In this position he is responsible for strategic and operational oversight of a team of senior internal Merck scientists at six research sites who guide a global network of CRO chemists for all of Merck's small molecule and therapeutic peptide projects. Amjad received his B.Sc. (Hons). in Chemistry from University of Hertfordshire, UK in 1990 and a Ph.D. from the University of Nottingham, UK in 1994. He was a Fulbright postdoctoral fellow in the research laboratory of Prof. Stephen F. Martin at UT Austin, where he conducted research towards the total synthesis of manzamine alkaloids. Amjad joined the Rahway, NJ medicinal chemistry group of Merck and Co. Inc. in 1998 and in his 23+ year career at Merck his research contributions have spanned the drug discovery paradigm from lead ID to Phase III, including membership of early and late-stage development

teams. He assumed his first project leadership role in 2001 and since then has led drug discovery programs in a variety of therapeutic areas including CNS, anti-infectives, immunology, atherosclerosis, thrombosis, hypertension and immuno-oncology. He has delivered nine candidates to the clinic including Merck's CETP inhibitor Anacetrapib, which successfully completed two Phase III trials. Amjad's research efforts have resulted in over 100 peer-reviewed publications, two book chapters and 25 invited lectures on his research at scientific meetings and universities around the world. Amjad has been the recipient of the MRL Key Innovator award, which is the highest internal honor in the MRL division of Merck.

As a member of the American Chemical Society, Amjad has served in various capacities spanning a period of over two decades. His early ACS activities were with the ACS North Jersey local Section (2000-present), having held various positions including twice serving as Chair of the Organic Topical Group (OTG), Chair of the North Jersey Section and Executive committee member, a position he currently maintains. He is founder and co-Chair of the ACS Shanghai medicinal chemistry conference that was first held in 2018 and he will be co-Chairing the ACS National Medicinal Chemistry symposium to be held in New York City in 2022. He has served as Industrial Councilor (alternate) for the ACS Medicinal Chemistry Division (2014-2017), he is a member of the ACS committee on Ethics (2020-present), is a Divisional Chair of the 2022 ACS MARM meeting and is the Merck sponsor and coordinator for the E. B. Hershberg Award for Important Discoveries in Medicinally Active Substances (2013– present). Amjad is a strong advocate for the inclusion and equitable treatment of individuals from underrepresented groups in the scientific community and has served as the ACS Women's Chemistry Committee Merck coordinator in 2018, he is the liaison for the Merck ACS Scholars program which is a scholarship program for underrepresented minority students who major in undergraduate chemistry-related disciplines (2018-present) and he is currently a senior mentor for the Merck Research Award for underrepresented chemists of color (2021). Amjad's scientific accomplishments at Merck and service to the ACS were recognized in 2015 when he was elected Fellow of the American Chemical Society.



**Dr. Katerina Leftheris was re-elected Industrial Councilor, for the 2022-2024 term.**

Katerina Leftheris, Ph.D., is currently a Vice President of Chemistry at Pliant Therapeutics. She has over 20 years of small molecule drug discovery and development experience, primarily in immunology, oncology, metabolic disease and neurodegeneration. Previously, Dr. Leftheris was site-head of Discovery Chemistry for Celgene, San Diego, where she led the chemistry team in advancing five novel clinical candidates in immunology and oncology. Prior to joining Celgene, Dr. Leftheris was the Senior Director of Vitae Pharmaceuticals where she expanded the chemistry team and led several small molecule programs in the metabolic disease area. Earlier in her

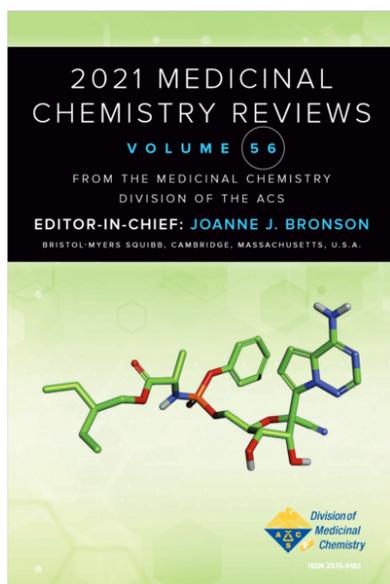
career, Dr. Leftheris held positions of increasing responsibility in Discovery Chemistry at Bristol-Myers Squibb. Dr. Leftheris has over 110 publications and issued patents. Dr. Leftheris received her B.A. in chemistry from Smith College, Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of California, San Diego and completed postdoctoral studies at the University of Pennsylvania.



**Dr. Andrew Scholte was elected Alternate Councilor, for the 2022-2024 term.**

Dr. Scholte is currently a Principal Scientist and Lab Head at Sanofi in Boston. He has more than 20 years of experience in academic and industrial organic synthesis and medicinal chemistry. Before Sanofi, he was a Staff Scientist at Genzyme. He has won numerous awards, including the ACS Leadership Development Award and a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) postdoctoral fellowship. He has extensively served the medicinal chemistry community, including previous service on the ACS Medicinal Chemistry Division Long Range Planning Committee. Dr. Scholte received his undergraduate training at Simon Fraser University, his Ph.D. from the University of Alberta, and completed postdoctoral studies at Boston College.

## 2022 Medicinal Chemistry Reviews Now Available to Members



2022 Medicinal Chemistry Reviews (Volume 56) is now available for downloading from the ACS MEDI Division website ([www.acsmedchem.org/](http://www.acsmedchem.org/)). Volume 56 has 22 chapters dealing with a range of therapeutic topics and novel small molecules. The .pdf version is free for ACS MEDI Division members, and books or individual chapters can be purchased by non-members. Please be sure to take advantage of your membership benefit.

**Instructions for obtaining your copy:**

1. Go to [www.acsmedchem.org](http://www.acsmedchem.org).
2. Click on 'Member Login' near the top right corner.
3. Log in using your ACS login credentials.
4. On your member page, one of the menu bar items is 'Resources.' Under 'Resources' you will see *Medicinal Chemistry Reviews*. Select this to get your electronic copy or to order the paperback version.
5. To download the .pdf version, follow the link in the first paragraph.

If you have any problem, please first be sure you are able to log in at [www.acs.org](http://www.acs.org). If you can do this and are still having difficulty, contact the Secretary, [secretary@acsmedchem.org](mailto:secretary@acsmedchem.org).

## Sponsorship for Division of Medicinal Chemistry Symposia

Division of Medicinal Chemistry symposia at National Meetings are presented in part through the financial support of sponsor companies. Sponsorship opportunities are available for all upcoming Division of Medicinal Chemistry Symposia. Symposium sponsors for national ACS meetings are acknowledged with a prominent sign outside the meeting room, and by session chairs during the symposium. In addition, a table is provided where company representatives can interact with meeting attendees and provide promotional materials. For more information on symposium sponsorship, contact the Program Chair, Amjad Ali ([amjad\\_ali@merck.com](mailto:amjad_ali@merck.com)), or the Division Treasurer, Paul Ornstein ([pornstein@apolloddc.com](mailto:pornstein@apolloddc.com)).

The Division would like to thank the generous sponsors of our San Diego symposia!

**Pfizer**  
**Goodwin Procter**

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### Mark Your Calendar: 2022 National Medicinal Chemistry Symposium



The 2022 National Medicinal Chemistry Symposium is returning, and will be held in New York City from June 26-29, 2022. The organizers are Amjad Ali, Merck ([amjad\\_ali@merck.com](mailto:amjad_ali@merck.com)) and Robert Devita, Mount Sinai School of Medicine ([robert.devita@mssm.edu](mailto:robert.devita@mssm.edu)). Please visit <https://www.nmcsnyc.org/> for more information!

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## ACS Division of Medicinal Chemistry Complete Officers/LRPC List 2017

### 1. Regular Executive Committee Members



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Jane Aldrich

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Daniel Harki

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Lori Ferrins

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Erika Araujo

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Katerina Leftheris  
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## 2. Alternate Councilors & Other Ad Hoc EC Members



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Craig Lindsley

**Journal of Medicinal Chemistry Liaison**

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## Long Range Planning Committee 2022



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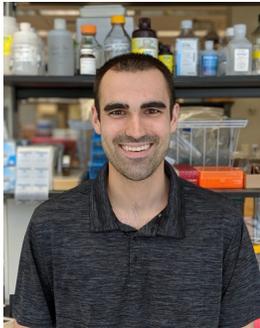
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