

Several graduate students from UC Riverside had a major impact on the 3rd Annual [University of California Chemical Symposium](#), which was held at the UCLA Lake Arrowhead Conference Center and brings together graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from the entire UC system. The UCCS 2018 drew over 100 graduate student and post-doctoral attendees in addition to keynote speakers Prof. [Adam Veige](#) from the University of Florida and Prof. [Carrie Partch](#) from UC Santa Cruz. The Royal Society of Chemistry sponsored poster prizes in six subject areas and two of these were claimed by UCR graduate students.



Chad Cruz from UC Riverside with his prize-winning poster on charge-separated S-bridged chromophores at the 2018 UCCS poster session.

The [PCCP](#) Poster Prize for best poster in the Physical Chemistry category went to **Chad Cruz**, a graduate student at UC Riverside jointly in the [Chronister group](#) and the [Bardeen research lab](#). Chad presented on studies using anthracene in sulfur-bridged chromophore systems and examining the effects of changing the S oxidation state. His work shows significant insights into ways to tune excited-state properties in these bridged systems that could be used for optoelectronic devices due to their potential for forming long-lived charge-separated states.



Bill Weigel from UC Riverside with his prize-winning organic poster on anacardic acid derivatives for enzyme-inhibition studies.



Dave Martin was invited by students to attend the UCCS as a faculty member.

The [Organic & Biomolecular Chemistry](#) Poster Prize in the Organic Chemistry category went to **Bill Weigel**, a graduate student in the research group of [Dave Martin](#), who was also specially invited by students to attend as a faculty member. The Martin Group's research focuses on the design and synthesis of bioactive molecules; Bill presented his work on the use of computational docking studies to design anacardic acid derivatives, which he then synthesizes in order to study structure-activity relationships with enzymes. Specifically, they are examining the inhibition of the enzyme SUMO E1, which is known to be involved in oncogenesis, by these rationally-designed substrates.

One of the most unique aspects of UCCS is the team that puts it all together. The symposium is organized by and for graduate students and postdocs from all UC campuses who work together throughout the year to coordinate various aspects of the entire event. **Emily Moses**, who works in the [Tang Group](#) at UCR, served as Assistant Director of Scientific Programming. Emily and her team were responsible for evaluating submitted abstracts for scientific content to ensure a diverse representation from subject areas and campuses.



Emily Moses served as Assistant Director of Scientific Programming for the 2018 UCCS.



Connor Easley served as 2018 Executive Director of Programming and is now serving as the 2019 Chair of the University of California Chemical Symposium.

Connor Easley, also from the [Bardeen Group](#), served as Executive Director of Programming and was responsible for coordinating all elements of the program with the venue and suppliers. Connor was selected as the 2019 Chair of the UCCS and will be responsible for managing and coordinating [the team](#) that will work throughout the coming months to expand the 4th UCCS, which will be extended by one day and is aiming to grow to 150 attendees. The next UCCS will take place March 24-27th 2019 in Lake Arrowhead, California where we expect to see more exciting research from UCR and continue to recognize the hard work of the graduate students and post-doctoral fellows behind this unparalleled program.