

UW STEM SPEED-MENTORING EVENT

2019



October 24, 2019
UW Conference Center
Laramie, WY

MEET THE MENTORS

Christina Barrineau is an aquatic habitat biologist with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. She leads river restoration and riparian enhancement projects throughout SE Wyoming. She received her M.S. from the University of Wyoming and her B.S. from Warren Wilson College. Christina enjoys skiing, hiking, hunting, camping, and spending time with her husband and young son.

Greg Brown is associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of botany at the University of Wyoming. He oversees the Science Initiative and is the former head of the Department of Botany and the Berry Biodiversity Center at UW. Dr. Brown has authored numerous papers and is an expert on the ecology and systematics of tropical plants in the bromeliad family. He holds a PhD from Arizona State University.

Katie Cheesbrough is a wildlife biologist for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in Encampment, WY. She is a terrestrial habitat biologist working on the Platte Valley Habitat Partnership Mule Deer Initiative. Prior to her position with WGFD, she was a wildlife biologist for the US Forest Service in Douglas. She holds a MS degree in Zoology and Physiology from the University of Wyoming.

Kelly Haigler Cornish is a program manager for the Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative at the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network. She has experience in technology transfer, intellectual property, data rights, indirect cost calculations, federal SBIR and STTR grants and contracts, and other small business topics related to innovation and research. Kelly loves working with existing small businesses to help them discover their innovative edge and working with startups that are taking the next big thing to market.

Mark Cupps was born and raised in Laramie. He mixed college classes, travel, and working as a carpenter and as a small business owner in Laramie from 1977 through 1986. He then attended chiropractic college at Western States Chiropractic College from 1986 through 1991. Next he returned to Laramie and has been a chiropractor here (except for a couple of years when he practiced in Washington State in 1993 and 1994) since 1991. He has been practicing chiropractic for 28 years and has owned his own business for 26 years.

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Kristin Di Bona received her B.S. in Chemistry and Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Developmental Biology from the University of Alabama in 2014. Following post-doctoral positions at the University of Texas at Austin and University of Wyoming, Dr. Di Bona co-founded Wyonics LLC in October of 2017 to develop sustainable technologies via ionic liquids, biopolymers, nanomaterials, and electrochemical technologies. Dr. Di Bona is currently working on a DOE Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant awarded to Wyonics to generate a sustainable supply of critical elements via natural resources and waste streams.

Amy Evans is the owner and principal engineer at Third Element Structural Engineering + Design in Laramie. She graduated from UW with a BS degree in Architectural Engineering and is originally from Rock Springs, WY.

Vivian Georgalas is the entrepreneurial services coordinator at the Wyoming Business Council, coordinating, developing and maintaining programs that support Wyoming entrepreneurs and startups. Originally from Norway, she moved to Laramie several years ago to complete her education in renewable energy and energy management MBA. She started working at Bright Agrotech when they were a maturing startup, before moving onto Plenty in an enterprise sales strategy role. The knowledge and perspectives gained by working at those companies really motivated her to continue to work in the startup and entrepreneurial space. She enjoys all that Wyoming has to offer and working towards providing better opportunity for others who want to remain in the state.

Nick Hauser is a product manager at MilliporeSigma in Cheyenne. He holds a PhD in Chemistry from UW.

Franki-Marie Herdt is the interim lead microbiology technical specialist at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center. She is an active member of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science and serves as the State President for Wyoming. She graduated from UW with a BS in Microbiology.

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Christina Hiegel is a senior engineer at Trihydro Corporation in Laramie. She has 18 years of experience in the environmental industry and is passionate about advocating for women in STEM. She volunteers for the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) at UW and across the States of Wyoming and Colorado. She also is active in mentoring women engineers and was responsible for developing the initial mentorship program at her current company. Christina is a registered civil/environmental engineer, client manager, and project manager. Ms. Hiegel has managed assessment and remediation projects for commercial, industrial, energy, federal, state, and municipal clients. She has managed projects with complex soil, groundwater, surface water, and vapor intrusion problems on a number of large sites, including both state and federal Brownfield projects. In addition, she has managed Phase I and Phase II site investigations, conducted Remedy Evaluations and Risk Evaluations, and has completed and conducted Use Control Areas and Institutional Controls.

Rhiannon Jakopak is an alumna of WRSP and is currently pursuing MS degrees in Zoology and Environment & Natural Resources at UW. Her work focuses on identifying how migration can influence species distribution and population dynamics. She is broadly interested in mammal ecology, but is especially interested in better understanding the processes that determine how species occupy landscapes. She hopes that her research can help to inform better management, conservation, and policy. When Rhiannon isn't being a graduate student, she likes to spend time hiking, watching birds, reading, and playing with her critters: Laverne (ferret) and Shia (pup).

Chad LeBeau is a Research Biologist with Western EcoSystems Technology (WEST) in Laramie. He has been conducting wildlife monitoring studies across the western U.S. since 2006 and coordinated the first study investigating the impacts of wind energy development to greater sage-grouse populations, which was featured in the New York Times. While his research focuses on greater sage-grouse, Chad has studied numerous other species including mule deer, pronghorn, white-tailed prairie dogs, lesser and greater prairie-chicken, and bald and golden eagles. In addition to species-specific research, Chad has consulted on multiple energy development projects across the western and southern U.S. where he has designed and implemented wildlife surveys, developed Eagle Protection Plans and Bird and Bat Conservation Strategies, and assisted development of Habitat Conservation Plans. Chad holds an MS degree in Ecosystem Science and Management from UW.

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Jessica Markham is from Laramie, WY and has worked for Trihydro for over 7 years. Her role as a recruiter in Human Resources allows her to talk to people across the country on a daily basis. At the same time she gets the opportunity to scout out new talent for their company. When Jessica is not in the office, she spends time in the mountains with her family, or out and about the town, enjoying what Laramie has to offer. She loves to workout, eat, and live every day to its fullest!

Ivy McLeod is originally from Basin, WY and graduated from UW in 1998 with a B.Sc. in Physics. She attended the University of Oklahoma, earning an M.S. in Physics/Meteorology based on research performed at the National Severe Storms Laboratory. Since then she has worked at NASA Johnson Space Center as a Flight Controller for the International Space Station.

John McPherson was born and raised in Wyoming. After graduating high school in Kemmerer, he attended UW. He finished his pre-dental education, and received a B.S. in biology. His dental training was completed at the University of Nebraska College of Dentistry. Upon earning his dental degree, he enjoyed three years as an associate in Roseburg, OR. He and his family returned to Laramie and started up his Laramie dental office in the spring of 2004. Dr McPherson is a member of the American Dental Association, Wyoming Dental Association, and Wyoming's South Central District. He served as a board of director for the Wyoming Dental Association, and is the past president of the South Central District. He currently is a board member for the State of Wyoming Board of Pharmacy, and adjunct faculty member for the University of Nebraska College of Dentistry. He and his wife are blessed with two wonderful children that keep them busy. When he is not on the go with kids, he enjoys outdoor activities such as skiing, golf, camping, fishing, and pursuing elk with a bow.

Karen Mruk is an assistant professor of Pharmaceutical Science at UW. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology at UMass Medical School. She was a Craig H. Neilsen postdoctoral fellow with Professor James Chen at Stanford University. Her past research focused on using chemical tools to probe nervous system function including understanding how potassium channels in the nervous system play a role in various afflictions such as epilepsy and developing optogenetic models to model spinal cord injury in

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zebrafish. Currently, her lab focuses on nervous system injury, degeneration and regeneration using zebrafish as a model. Zebrafish have a remarkable regenerative capacity, and the lab is interested in understand the role bioelectricity plays in this process and genetic factors that govern this process.

Otto Novota is a medical laboratory scientist at the Cheyenne Regional Medical Center. He earned BS degrees in Microbiology and Medical Laboratory Science from UW.

Andy Ommen is currently the quality control manager for the MilliporeSigma site in Laramie. He graduated from UW in 2003 with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry and went on to get a master's degree in synthetic organic chemistry from the University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill. Prior to his current position with MilliporeSigma he worked in research and development at three different biotech companies in North Carolina focusing on the synthesis of new cancer drugs.

Lorna Pehl is director of systems engineering at Metrohm Raman (previously Snowy Range Instruments) in Laramie. Metrohm Raman designs handheld Raman spectrometers that are used for chemical identification in defense, security, and pharmaceutical applications around the world. Dr. Pehl oversees qualifying operating systems and software for the spectrometers as well desktop software applications. She has a team of interns that are students at UW. Prior to this position, Dr. Pehl was a faculty member at Eastern Wyoming College in Torrington, WY where she taught General Chemistry, Introductory Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, and Biochemistry. She holds a PhD in Chemistry from UW.

Diem Pham is a biometrician with Western EcoSystems Technology (WEST), and is based in Cheyenne, WY. She received her BS in Chemical Engineering at UW and then pursued her MS in Zoology and Physiology with a double major in Environmental and Natural Resources at UW as well. Her master's thesis focused on the study of risk factors associated with 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin exposure in Vietnamese residents who are living on or near former U.S. air bases in Vietnam. While doing the research projects for this degree, she gained a great interest in statistics, which led to her next degree in Master's of Applied Statistics at Colorado State University.

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Erin Phillips is a geologist at the Center for Economic Geology Research at the University of Wyoming's School of Energy Resources, where she works on projects dealing with critical materials and carbon capture and storage. Erin obtained her PhD in geology from UW, where she investigated the geochemistry of young volcanoes. She has wide-ranging experience in science teaching, laboratory methods, and disseminating research findings to the academic community and to the public.

Tammy Reed received her bachelor's and master's degrees in Civil Engineering at the University of Wyoming. She serves as Trihydro Corporation's business unit manager for the Infrastructure and Water/Wastewater department based in Laramie. During her 27 year tenure as an engineering consultant, Tammy has worked on various infrastructure projects including water master planning, water transmission, storage and distribution, sanitary sewer collection, site development, and roadway design. She served as Trihydro's project director for the recently opened Harney Street Viaduct project that Trihydro contracted to the Wyoming Department of Transportation to perform professional engineering design. Tammy has been in Laramie since 1987, is married, and has three sons.

Rhiannan Rubino is a physical therapist at Premier Bone and Joint Centers in Laramie. She provides physical therapy care to patients with varied diagnoses including orthopedic, post-operative, sports related, neurological and auto or work injuries. Prior to beginning her current position in Laramie, she completed multiple clinical rotations at inpatient and outpatient facilities where she treated patients with a wide variety of diagnoses. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish Language and Linguistics from the University of Wyoming as well as a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Montana. Rhiannan is a native of Laramie, WY.

Justin Schaefer graduated from UW in December 2003 with a B.S in Physics and a B.S in Astronomy followed in 2006 with an M.S in Astronomy from the University of Florida. In 2007 Justin joined the Aerospace field with a position at SEAKR Engineering in Centennial, CO where he focused on radiation effects in electronics and system survivability for satellite subsystems. His work includes satellite subsystem analysis as well as satellite electronics radiation testing at a number of cyclotron and synchrotron machines as well as gamma-ray (Co 60) and neutron radiation sources. His education at UW provided the background needed to enable him

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to move into this role and provide support for space programs. He is currently a co-owner and senior analyst for Troxel Aerospace which performs contract/consulting, analysis, and radiation test services, as well as providing support for multiple research and development projects to NASA as well as other commercial and other government customers.

Christy Schultz is the field operations manager for the Observatory Operations Group in the NOAA Earth System Research Laboratory's Global Monitoring Division (GMD) and is part of a team that oversees the day-to-day operations, facility management, and logistics for NOAA's four Atmospheric Baseline Observatories. Prior to joining GMD, Ms. Schultz served as a NOAA Commissioned Corps officer for over eight years. She had the opportunity to develop data acquisition, technical, collaboration, and administrative skills during her tours of duty as a junior officer on the NOAA Ship Rainier in Alaska, NOAA station chief at South Pole Atmospheric Baseline Observatory, and as the technical operations coordinator at the National Weather Service's Ocean Prediction Center. Ms. Schultz has a Bachelor's Degree in Meteorology from Penn State and a Master's Degree in Geographic Information Science and Technology from the University of Southern California.

Kelsie Speiser grew up in Casper, WY and earned both her B.S. in Animal Science and M.S. in Virology from the University of Wyoming. Even though she bleeds brown and gold, her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine is from Colorado State University. Kelsie's professional career has included private practice and work for federal and state governments. In her free time, Kelsie enjoys spending time exploring the outdoors skiing, hiking, rafting, and camping.

Jim Stafford is a geohydrologist for the Wyoming State Geological Survey. Jim was born and raised in southeast Wyoming, earned a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from University of Colorado Boulder and a Master's degree in Water Resources and Geospatial Science from UW. Jim has worked on a variety of energy resource, water, and geology topics, and specializes in spatial analysis and GIS.

Dale Strickland is President and senior ecologist at Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc (WEST). He received a B.S. in Zoology in 1969 and an M.S. in Wildlife

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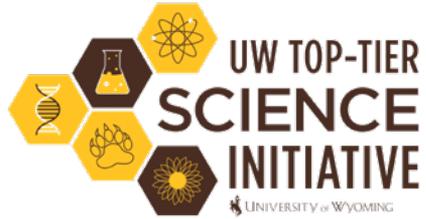
Management in 1972 from the University of Tennessee and a PhD in Zoology from the University of Wyoming in 1975. Prior to his employment with WEST he served as a scientist and administrator with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and served on the faculty of the Department of Statistics at the University of Wyoming. He also taught courses in wildlife management and statistics as a visiting instructor at the University of Wyoming. He has over forty years of experience in ecological research and wildlife management.

Nikalous Tolman is an optometrist at Albany Eye Care in Laramie. He earned his BS from UW, and his OD degree from Southern California College of Optometry. He was born and raised in Riverton, WY and loves the Wyoming outdoors, camping and four-wheeling with his family in his spare time.

Jim Vandyke is a network engineer with the NCAR-Wyoming Supercomputing Center in Cheyenne, WY.

Mark Wefel is a board certified Family Medicine Physician practicing at Family Physicians of Laramie. He graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine (WWAMI Program) and completed his residency at the University of Wyoming Family Medicine Residency in Cheyenne. Dr. Wefel enjoys skiing, climbing, hiking, hunting, camping, and spending time with his wife and young son.

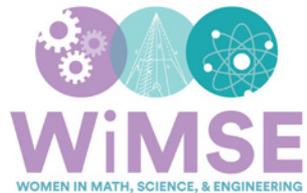
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