



**SCS**  
**Foundation**  
Swiss Chemical  
Society



**ALFRED WERNER SCHOLAR MEET&GREET EVENT**  
**September 8, 2025**  
hosted by  
**Syngenta Switzerland**  
**Research and Development Center Stein**



## A Word of Welcome

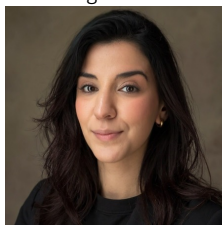
In 2016, Lonza invited the Alfred Werner Scholars for a visit of their Visp site, which marked the beginning of a remarkable series of events. Given the success of this first meeting, Meet & Greet turned into a regular event, followed by meetings at Syngenta (Stein AG), Firmenich (Geneva), Roche (Basel), Givaudan (Kemptthal), Novartis (Basel) and Merck (Corsier-sur-Vevey). During the pandemic, there was an online Meet & Greet event hosted by Novartis.

Thanks to these events, numerous personal and professional interactions were established. Some of the scholars made their first steps into professional life at one of the program-supporting companies.

Over time, a sizeable group of Alfred Werner Scholars emerged who were at an advanced stage of their studies, expressing an interest in a career in industry. It therefore made sense to invite all scholars to the Meet&Greet events, current and alumni. For these scholars, Meet&Greet became more than just a company-visit. It also became an event of inspiration and support in career-decisions.

It is therefore a great privilege for the Swiss Chemical Society, through its Alfred Werner Excellence Program, to bring these talented students to Syngenta for a second time after 2017.

We are delighted to welcome distinguished international students for a day of exchange and discovery at Syngenta. This event offers a unique opportunity to connect on both a personal and professional level, explore our facilities, and gain a glimpse into work life at Syngenta and our mission. We look forward to inspiring conversations and wish you an enriching and memorable visit.



Dr. Ouidad Lahtigui  
Syngenta Crop Protection AG



Dr. Hans Peter Lüthi  
SCS Foundation

## Impressum

Text and Figures: Hans Peter Lüthi,  
Céline Wittwer, Ouidad Lahtigui  
and contributing authors.

© SCS Foundation, 2025



## About the Alfred Werner Excellence Scholarship Program

### Bringing Talent to Switzerland

The program supports talented international students of chemistry to perform their Master of Science (MSc) studies in Switzerland. Nominated by the Swiss partner universities, the scholars are selected by a committee of professors and scientists from industry.

Since 2013, more than 80 students from over 30 countries were granted an Alfred Werner Scholarship in the amount of 30'000 CHF. As of 2023, eight generations of students successfully completed their studies, many with distinction.

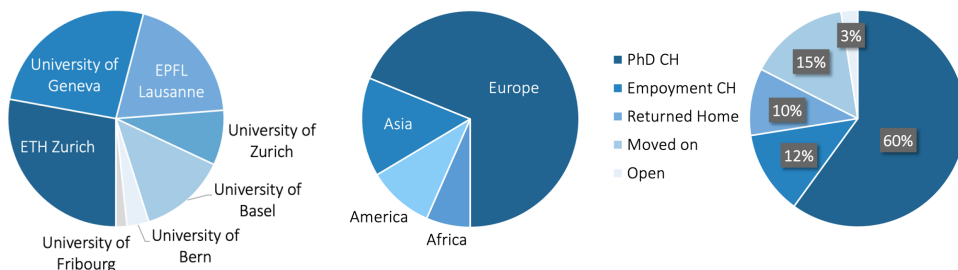
### Well Educated – Well Integrated

Besides getting access to high level education, the scholars also receive support for their integration in our community. Networks such as the young Swiss Chemical Society or Women in Swiss Chemistry invite the scholars to actively participate in their programs.

### Connecting the Talent with Industry

Since the 2016 event, when engineers around Christoph Täschler invited the scholars to a visit of their Visp site, Meet&Greet developed into a very useful platform to connect the scholars with the program supporting companies.

### The Fingerprints of a Successful Program



The universities the scholars joined, the origin of the scholars, and their next career steps. The third figure shows that more than two thirds of the scholars continued their career in Switzerland. Many scholars were awarded prizes for their Masters' theses or won prizes for their research at scientific congresses. The scholars took roles in the leadership teams of local or Swiss national student organizations.



## Meet & Greet Program Overview

### Transfer to Meeting Venue

10:38 Departure Bus 143 to Syngenta from Stein-Säckingen train station.

(With trains arriving from Basel (10:34) and from Zürich (10:24))

### Morning Session

10:45 Arrival and Registration

11:00 Room 810.E16

Welcome and Introduction (Ouidad Lahtigui, Hans Peter Lüthi)

11:15 Presentation of the Werner Scholar Participants (Elevator Pitches)

### Lunchbreak

12:00 Lunch, discussions, socializing and networking

### Afternoon Session

13:00 Introduction to Syngenta

13:30 Interactive sessions with Syngenta community members

15:00 Site Tour

16:00 Closing Remarks, Group Picture and Farewell

### Transfer to Stein-Säckingen train station

16:22 Departure Bus 133 with connection to trains direction of Zürich and Basel

## Werner Scholar Short Communication

### Human gut microbiota-mediated metabolism of the chloroacetamide herbicide metazachlor

Alona Slastennikova, Jacob Folz, Shana J. Sturla

*ETH Zürich, Department of Health Sciences and Technology, Laboratory of Toxicology, Schmelzbergstrasse 9, 8092 Zurich, Switzerland*

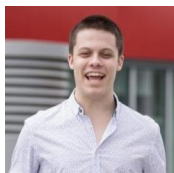
Chloroacetamides are globally used herbicides, and metazachlor, as a representative of this class, is known for its environmental persistence and hydrolytic stability. While metazachlor undergoes biotransformation in soil and aquatic microbiota, its metabolism by the human gut microbiota remains unexplored. We aimed to characterize how metazachlor is metabolized by human gut microbiota and assess potential toxicological risks presented by its metabolites. We exposed human gut microbial communities to metazachlor at concentrations based on the EFSA-derived acceptable daily intake level. Using untargeted LC-MS/MS analysis, we identified 6 known and 18 previously unreported metabolites of metazachlor, which were organized into proposed biotransformation pathways. Overall, a metabolite arising from the reaction between cysteine and metazachlor is formed non-enzymatically, which is different from soil and aquatic microbiota metabolism, where the major metabolism originates from glutathione conjugation. To further support our proposed metabolic pathways, we synthesized several key intermediate metabolites and performed the fermentation experiment with them to track the formation of downstream metabolites. Moreover, metazachlor and selected metabolites were tested for their *in vitro* toxicity in Caco-2 and HCEC cell lines. Among the metabolites examined, two exhibited greater cytotoxicity in human cells compared to metazachlor. One of these metabolites was also assessed in a Caco-2 permeability assay and, like metazachlor, showed high permeability. Our findings reveal that metazachlor is extensively metabolized by the human gut microbiota, with several newly identified metabolites potentially posing toxicological risks, paving the way for further research into their effects on human health.

Keywords: metazachlor, gut microbiota, metabolism, LC-MS/MS

## Alexandru-Tudor, Toderasc

Class of 2022 - 2024

Native of Romania



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: University of Bucharest

Master's degree at: ETH Zürich

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Javier Pérez-Ramírez

Awards/Distinctions: -

### Personal

My name is Tudor Toderasc and I am a Chemistry MSc graduate with a strong interest in Heterogeneous Catalysis and Sustainable Chemistry. Being an Alfred Werner Scholar has enabled me to make the transition to an elite university and top research institution, where I so far had the opportunity to work on some of the most difficult challenges in Heterogeneous Catalysis while making use of world-class facilities. My studies at ETH Zürich also allowed me to expand my knowledge horizon beyond my chemistry training, as I had the opportunity to delve into various chemical engineering courses essential for my research endeavors. I am also very excited to meet and establish connections with leading industrial partners as an Alfred Werner Scholar and thus understand more about the research-and-development sector in the chemical industry.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: Master's graduate in Chemistry at ETH Zürich

Research Interests: Heterogeneous Catalysis, Sustainable Chemistry

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s):

Toderasc, A.-T. *et al.*, *Appl. Catal. A Gen.*, 653 (2023), 119063

Extracurricular activities, projects: Basketball

### Current and Future Plans

I have recently finished my Master's studies in Chemistry at ETH Zürich with a thesis in Chemical Engineering regarding technical catalyst development for  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  synthesis. After the completion of this chapter with the support of an Alfred Werner Scholarship, the invaluable help of the SCS Foundation and its industrial partners being kindly acknowledged, I am looking to continue my development through doctoral studies in the very near future and work on a topic closely related to the fields of Heterogeneous Catalysis and Sustainable Chemistry.

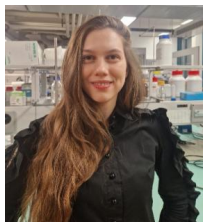
## Alona Slastennikova

Class of 2022 - 2024

Native of Ukraine



Alfred  
Werner Fund  
SCS  
Foundation



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: Chemistry, Institute of High Technologies, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.

Master's degree at: Chemistry, ETH Zurich.

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Shana J. Sturla

Awards/Distinctions: Bachelor's degree with honors.

### Personal

I began my Chemistry studies in Kyiv and, after my first semester, joined Enamine Ltd. as a synthetic chemist, where I gained three years of hands-on experience. I then broadened my professional skills by working as a sales manager at ChemSpace Ltd. for three months, and later as a bioanalytical scientist at Bienta Ltd. for six months.

In 2022, the Alfred Werner Scholarship enabled me to move to Zurich to continue my studies at ETH. Through this experience, I not only expanded my knowledge and scientific skills, but also gained a broader perspective of the scientific community. My Master's thesis focused on developing fluorescence- and LC-MS-based methods for the quantification of  $O^6$ -CMdG adducts in biological samples.

I am currently pursuing my PhD, studying the human gut microbiota-mediated metabolism of xenobiotics. It involves investigating typical biotransformations within human gut microbial communities and assessing the potential toxicities of the resulting metabolites. In my research I employ a range of techniques including anaerobic fecal slurry incubation with compounds of interest, LC-MS/MS analysis, chemical synthesis, and various in vitro assays.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: PhD Student in Toxicology at ETH Zurich.

Research Interests: Bioanalytics, Toxicology, Microbiology, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Biology.

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s): Swiss Society of Toxicology Annual Meeting 2024 Best Poster Award.

Extracurricular activities, projects: travelling, yoga, hiking, baking.

### Current and Future Plans

I have been doing PhD studies at the ETH Zürich since November 2023. After completing my PhD, I will continue building a scientific career in either academia or industry. I'm excited to focus on work that drives innovation and continuous development at the intersection of organic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and biochemistry.

**Anamarija, Nikoletić**

Class of 2021 - 2023

Native of Serbia



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: University of Belgrade

Master's degree at: University of Basel

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Cornelia Palivan

PhD's degree at: University of Basel and SNI

PhD thesis supervisor: Prof. Oya Tagit and Prof. Cornelia Palivan

Awards/Distinctions: Bronze medal at International Chemistry Olympiad 2017

### **Personal**

I'm coming from Belgrade, Serbia, where I've done my BSc in Chemistry. The Alfred Werner Scholarship gave me an amazing opportunity to move to Basel in 2021 and pursue my MSc in Chemistry. During my studies, I got to learn more about topics that interest me, be a part of exciting research and participate in a lot of networking events and meet inspiring people. As part of my master's I joined Housecroft-Constable and Meier-Palivan research groups and worked with coordination polymers and self-assembly and synthesis of block copolymers. I wish to profoundly thank the Alfred Werner Foundation for the opportunity to do my master's studies in Basel and for connecting me with other chemists in Switzerland.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: (PhD student at, employed by):

Research Interests: Polymer chemistry, Drug delivery

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s):

Nikoletić et al. *Helv. Chim. Acta* 2025, 108(3), e202400193 (DOI: 10.1002/hlca.202400193)

Nikoletić et al. *Adv. Healthc. Mater.* 2025, 2404540 (DOI: 10.1002/adhm.202404540 )

Extracurricular activities, projects: Volunteer at the 55<sup>th</sup> International Chemistry Olympiad in Zurich, Team Leader at the International Chemistry Tournament 2025 in Bucharest

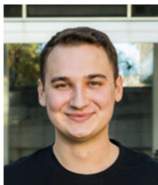
### **Current and Future Plans**

I am currently pursuing my PhD within the SNI PhD school, jointly supervised at the University of Basel and FHNW, where I focus on block copolymer synthesis and self-assembly to develop multi-compartment nanofactories for on-site and on-demand drug synthesis and delivery. After completing my PhD, I aim to transition into the industry through an entry-level or postdoctoral R&D position, building on my expertise in polymer chemistry, materials science and nanotechnology. My long-term goal is to become a leading scientist contributing to the development of innovative chemical solutions that address real-world challenges.

## Andrii Suponytskyi

Class of 20 - 22

Native of Ukraine



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: Warsaw University of Technology

Master's degree at: ETH Zürich

Master thesis supervisor: Moritz Hansen (Carreira Group)

### Personal

At the age of 17 I moved abroad to Poland to pursue higher education in the field of chemical technology. After completing my bachelor's studies with excellence, the strive for new opportunities and challenges led me to apply for Chemistry MSc Programme at ETH Zürich. The invaluable support from Alfred Werner Scholarship Foundation has enabled me to commence my studies in Switzerland. During my time at ETH Zürich, I have focused on deepening my knowledge and improving my skills in organic chemistry and its related disciplines.

I have had the privilege of participating in research projects within the Carreira Group and the Morandi Group, where I gained greater insight into the areas of methodology, ligand design and synthesis. During my master thesis, I had an opportunity to enter the field of total synthesis in the Carreira Group and acquire relevant experience. As of November 2022, I am pursuing my PhD in the group of Professor Morandi.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: 3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD student in the Morandi Group.

Research Interests: Methodology, Organic Synthesis, Organometallics, Catalysis.

Extracurricular activities, projects: sports and languages.

### Current and Future Plans

As of now in my doctoral studies, I have been focusing on developing new single nitrogen atom methods and reagents for applications in organic chemistry. Given my strong belief in the significance of utility and cost-efficiency in organic chemistry methodology, I am keenly interested in conducting research and development in an industrial setting in the future.

**Arjun, Shah**  
Class of 19 - 21  
Native of India



#### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Institute of Chemical Technology, India  
Master's degree at: ETH Zürich  
Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Javier Pérez-Ramírez  
Awards: J.N. Tata Scholar, Narotam Sekhsaria Scholar



#### **Personal**

The Alfred Werner scholarship was instrumental in paving the path for me in Switzerland after my Bachelor's in Mumbai, India. It enabled me to focus on a variety of research topics during my Master's and smoothly transition into the life-science industry post graduation. Through its various events, I was able to learn from my peers and those in industry alike. Having a predisposition to catalysis, engineering and scaling up chemistry, I was able to meet professionals working and researching the same through the scholarship network for which I am truly grateful.

#### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: Employed by BakerHicks AG, Basel  
Research Interests: Catalysis & Engineering  
Most relevant Publication: Impact of hybrid CO<sub>2</sub>-CO feeds on methanol synthesis over In<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-based catalysts, *Applied Catalysis B: Environmental*, 2021  
Extracurricular activities: Chosen out of 345 students for DSM Match! week, a technical business course. Participated in ETH Week 2019 (Rethinking mobility).

#### **Current and Future Plans**

My professional interests lie in solving real-world problems having sustainability rooted in its core. Currently, I work as a senior process engineer at BakerHicks AG, Basel which has enabled me to work on a multitude of life-science projects. While I have a preference for catalysis, engineering and scaling-up chemistry, I find myself extremely interested in learning more about the life-science industry.

**Den, Martymianov**  
Class of 2023 – 2025  
Native of Ukraine



#### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine

Master's degree at: ETH Zurich, Switzerland

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Erick M. Carreira

#### **Personal**

My journey in chemistry began in high school, where I won national and international Olympiads, culminating in a bronze medal at the 53rd International Mendeleev Chemistry Olympiad in 2019.

In October 2022, I joined Prof. Erick M. Carreira's lab at ETH Zurich, and in 2023 I continued there for my Master's with the Alfred Werner Scholarship. I am deeply grateful to the Foundation for this life-changing support, which allowed me to study at ETH Zurich, and to engage in ambitious total synthesis projects alongside leading experts.

As a Werner Scholar, I tackled the synthesis of several bioactive molecules—from a caged sesquiterpenoid of unprecedented architecture to a highly oxidized meroterpenoid. These projects sharpened my skills, fueled my creativity, and underscored the importance of rigorous methodology and innovative thinking in advancing organic chemistry.

#### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: PhD student at University of Geneva, Prof. Nicolas Winssinger group

Research Interests: total synthesis of natural products, synthetic methodology, chemical biology, encoded library technologies,

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s): JACS **2024** *146* (7), 4301-4308

#### **Current and Future Plans**

In September 2025, I'll join Prof. Winssinger's group as a PhD candidate to deepen my expertise in chemical biology while advancing novel synthetic methodologies. Long term, I aspire to mentor the next generation of scientists and lead an independent research team in Switzerland that bridges total synthesis and chemical biology, driving both fundamental insights and translational innovations for human health.

**Denys Kvasha**  
Class of 2022-2024  
Native of Ukraine



### Education / Training

**Bachelor's degree at:** Chemistry, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.

**Master's degree at:** Chemistry, ETH Zurich.

**Master thesis supervisor:** Prof. Dr. Jeffrey W. Bode

**Awards/Distinctions:** 3<sup>rd</sup> grade diploma of All-Ukrainian Student's Olympiad in Chemistry (2019). Lecturer and instructor of Organic Synthesis practicum of IChO's participants from Ukraine(2018-2019).

### Personal

I started my studies of Chemistry in Kyiv and after the first semester began to work as a synthetic chemist on Enamine Ltd, where I had been for 4 years. During my Bachelor's studies, I was developing synthetic landscape and tools for difluorocarbene incorporation using Ruppert-Prakash reagent (TMSCF<sub>3</sub>).

Thanks to the Alfred Werner Scholarship, I was able to pursue my Master's studies at ETH. I began my work in Prof. Dr. Shana J. Sturla's lab, focusing on the synthesis of irofulven analogs. For my Master's thesis, I joined Prof. Dr. Jeffrey W. Bode's group, where I explored the potential of C-terminal peptide modifications with various nucleophiles. The scholarship provided me with unique opportunities to contribute to diverse projects, develop valuable skills, and translate research outcomes into practical applications.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

**Current status:** PhD Student in Chemistry at ETH Zurich

**Research Interests:** Medicinal Chemistry, Chemical Biology, Organic Chemistry, TM Catalysis, Bioanalytics.

**Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s):** *Eur. J. Org. Chem.* **2021**, 2021, 6604;

*The Journal of Organic Chemistry* **2023** 88 (1), 163-171, *ChemRxiv*. **2025**; doi:

10.26434/chemrxiv-2025-9s63f.

**Extracurricular activities, projects:** travelling, hiking, basketball, cooking.

### Current and Future Plans

I am currently pursuing my PhD in the field of Chemical Biology as a member of Prof. Dr. Kathrin Lang's research group. My projects are centered around proteomics and protein engineering using genetic code expansion for incorporation of unnatural amino acids in bacterial and mammalian cell lines. Ultimately, these studies may help us to find previously unexplored targets for drug discovery.

I aim to continue advancing in this field, with a particular focus on expanding my practical expertise in Biology and Biochemistry. Upon completing my doctoral studies, I intend to pursue a scientific career in industry.

**Derek Boon Hong, Ong**

Class of 2024 - 2026

Native of Malaysia



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: National University of Singapore

Master's degree at: ETH Zürich

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Tae Lim Choi

### **Personal**

The Alfred Werner Scholarship has allowed me to study at one of the most prestigious universities in the world. At ETH Zurich, I tailored my curriculum to broaden my horizons in various fields of chemistry, including molecular dynamics, molecular imaging, and polymer synthesis. Being part of this programme strongly motivated me to maintain academic excellence while gaining valuable hands-on experience in both academic and industrial laboratories.

In my Master's studies, I am focused on applied organic chemistry. I am currently interning at Syngenta Crop Protection, where I have gained practical experience and insights into the challenges of organic synthesis in an agrochemical context. Starting in September, I will begin my Master's thesis on developing new methods for the preparation of renewable polymeric materials.

Another highlight that helped shape my development as a young scientist was the SCS Mentoring Programme. Through regular exchanges with industrial partners and mentors, I gained valuable perspectives on navigating a scientific career, learning from those who generously shared their experiences and guidance.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: Internship at Syngenta Crop Protection in Organic Synthesis

Research Interests: Polymer Chemistry, Organic Synthesis, Organometallics

### **Current and Future Plans**

After my Master's studies, I hope to pursue a PhD in polymer or organic chemistry, with the long-term goal of contributing to innovation as an R&D scientist in the chemical industry.

## Dragan Miladinov, PhD

Class of 2017 - 2019

Native of Serbia



Alfred  
Werner Fund  
SCS  
Foundation



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: University of Novi Sad

Master's degree at: University of Basel Department of Organic Chemistry

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Christof Sparr

Awards/Distinctions: 4 Patents and a publication with DSM

PhD studies in Sparr research group on an NCCR Molecular Systems Engineering project with IBM Research

Automation Chemist at Chemspeed Technologies AG

### Personal

As part of my Master's research, we were able to show that for the synthesis of vitamins and their precursors, a scheme based on green resources such as air and visible light may replace the traditional process, which involves large quantities of metal-oxides. These findings might lead to a drastic reduction in toxic industrial waste. I am very grateful to have been part of this "brighter chemistry for a greener future" venture. Next to the exciting scientific collaborations with industry and the Alfred Werner Fund Meet & Greet events, another activity that broadened my interests, network, and career perspectives was my involvement with the youngSCS. As a youngSCS Senate member, I participated in organizing different events such as the Saas Fee Snow Symposium or (virtual) company visits.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: Business Manager Life Sciences – Chemspeed Technologies AG (a Bruker company since 2024)

Research Interests: Automation, Digitalization, Chemical Process Development, Formulation, Self-driving-labs, AI Agents, Bayesian optimization, NMR analysis

Extracurricular activities: recent highlights include padel, (molecular) mixology, 2 cats...

### Current and Future Plans

I plan to further enhance my knowledge and network related to Laboratory automation and digitalization while developing a consulting and business-related skillset. It is very exciting to be at the cutting edge of innovation working with academic and industrial leaders in their respective fields. I am grateful for the relationships, experiences and expertise I gained via the Alfred Werner Scholarship and subsequently my PhD, all of which have been invaluable for my current role.

## Krikor Eblighatian

Class of 2019 - 2021

Native of Syria (Armenian origin)



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: University of Geneva

Master's degree at: University of Geneva and EPFL

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Stefan Matile & Prof. Thierry Soldati

Awards/Distinctions: Best Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry 2019 at University of Geneva

### Personal

The Alfred Werner scholarship allowed me to follow the Master's program at the NCCR in Chemical Biology at the University of Geneva and EPFL. This scholarship provided the best possible conditions to fully focus on my studies and to be able to perform high level of research in world-renowned Universities and research groups. The interdisciplinary master's project allowed me to deepen my knowledge both in Organic synthesis and in Biochemistry. My contribution helped to synthesize and characterize novel molecular probes used to study mechanical forces in cellular membranes. These valuable studies opened the opportunity to do an internship at Roche.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: employed by Roche Diagnostics International, R&D BGE department

Research Interests: Chemical Biology, Organic Synthesis, Biochemistry, Analytical Chemistry

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s): "Photocleavable Fluorescent Membrane Tension Probes: Fast Release with Spatiotemporal Control in Inner Leaflets of Plasma Membrane, Nuclear Envelope, and Secretory Pathway" [Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 2022, 61, e202113163](#)

### Current and Future Plans

Currently, I occupy a development Engineer position at Roche Diagnostics International in R&D, BGE department. My work is focused on developing state-of-the-art and automated analytical methods for quantification of critical parameters in the reagents used for Blood Gas Electrolytes diagnostics instruments.

I enjoy working in research, developing myself by constantly learning and gaining experience. My long-term plan is to broaden my knowledge and gain experiences in different fields of Chemistry and Biochemistry to be able to contribute and conduct interdisciplinary and innovative research.

## Mykola Avramenko

Class of 2022 - 2023

Native of Ukraine



Alfred  
Werner Fund  
SCS  
Foundation



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Master's degree at: ETH Zürich

Master thesis supervisor: Dr. Stefan Gruber

Awards/Distinctions: Best Bachelor thesis in Chemistry (IHT KNU), IChO 2017 (silver medal)

### Personal

I was born in Zaporizhzhia in Ukraine. There, I went to school and, starting from 7th grade, I have been interested in chemistry. In addition to this subject, I spent a lot of time studying close disciplines: mathematics, physics, and programming.

After graduation, I was accepted to the Institute of High Technologies of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. At the same time, I was working at Enamine Ltd. My Bachelor thesis was based on studying the Castagnoli-Cushman reaction using imine derivatives of fluoral hydrate.

Thanks to the Alfred Werner scholarship, after becoming a student at ETH Zurich I have finished several projects in Prof. Dr. Jeffrey W. Bode's and Prof. Dr. Yoko Yamakoshi's groups dedicated to the studying of KAT-ligation and fullerene as a photosensitizer.

I did my master's thesis in Prof Dr. R. Schibli's group under Dr. Stefan Gruber's supervision, where I studied Ni-catalyzed Suzuki-type  $sp^2$ - $sp^3$  coupling.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: PhD student in the group of Prof. Dr. Bill Morandi

Research Interests: Organic synthesis, Organometallic chemistry, Catalysis, Mechanistic studies, Methodology, DFT calculations, NMR Spectroscopy.

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s): Adamovskyi, M.I., Avramenko, M.M., Volochnyuk, D.M. and Ryabukhin, S.V., 2020. Fluoral Hydrate: A Perspective Substrate for the Castagnoli–Cushman Reaction. ACS omega, 5(33), pp.20932-20942, Extracurricular activities, projects: jury member of Ukrainian Chemistry Olympiad.

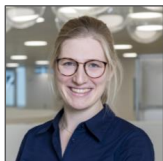
### Current and Future Plans

Currently, I am mostly interested in developing new methodologies and the studying of reaction mechanisms, what I am currently doing in the group of Prof. Dr. Bill Morandi.

**Patricia Brandl**

Class of 2020 - 2022

Native of Austria

**Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Technical University Vienna

Master's degree at: Ecole Polytechnique de Lausanne (EPFL)

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Sereina Riniker/Prof. Ursula Roethlisberger

**Personal**

While I initially planned to attend EPFL for an exchange semester to polish my French, I fell in love with the vibrant scientific community and the strive for academic excellence I encountered there. I am therefore very thankful for the Alfred Werner Scholarship which allowed me to return for my full Master's degree. Being part of the scholarship program also greatly simplified connecting with passionate students and great people from other Swiss universities. Academically, it also gave me the freedom to explore many areas of chemistry which were entirely new to me, and it set me up on my current path as a PhD student in computational chemistry and drug discovery.

**Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: PhD student at ETH Zürich (Riniker lab)

Research Interests: Medicinal Chemistry (Cyclic Peptides), Computer Modeling and Simulation

Extracurricular activities, projects: Chemistry representative for Association "Women in Natural Sciences at ETH" – participation in outreach programs, fostering interdisciplinary community among female scientists, organizing and overseeing events

**Current and Future Plans**

I currently fully enjoy my time as PhD student and love the mix of learning, exploring and creating it offers. I am lucky to do research in a field where I could pursue a research career both in industry and academia. But the experience I am currently gaining in science communication, public outreach and event coordination also puts other career options in science-related ecosystems on the table that I could thoroughly enjoy as well.

## Patrick Domke

Class of 2022-2024

Native of Germany



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: Friedrich-Alexander-University, Erlangen, DE

Master's degree at: EPF Lausanne

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Bill Morandi (ETH Zürich)

Awards: ETH Spark Award Top 5 Finalist (2025)

### Personal

Following a summer internship at EPFL in 2021, which first introduced me to Switzerland and its scientific landscape, I was delighted to return to Lausanne for my Master's degree with the support of the Alfred Werner Scholarship.

At EPFL, I pursued my passion for synthetic research while strengthening both my theoretical knowledge and practical laboratory skills. A highlight of my first year in Lausanne was contributing to the total synthesis of the terpenoid (–)-Artatrovireno A in Prof. Jieping Zhu's group.

The scholarship also offered me a unique chance to form invaluable connections with the Swiss chemical industry: in the second year of my Master's studies, I spent six months in the Process Chemistry group at Syngenta in Stein and later undertook a six-month internship at Novartis (Global Discovery Chemistry), where I deepened my understanding of medicinal chemistry and drug discovery. Those experiences also reaffirmed my ambition to pursue a career in industrial research.

I then joined Prof. Bill Morandi's group at ETH Zürich for my Master's thesis, developing a process for revalorizing persistent organic pollutants such as lindane and DDT, which is currently being patented and has been nominated for the ETH Spark Award.

In July 2025, I returned to the Morandi group to begin my Ph.D. in synthetic method development.

### Further Education / Achievements

Current status: PhD student under the supervision of Prof. Bill Morandi at ETH Zürich

Research interests: Synthetic Method Development, Organic Electrosynthesis, Process Chemistry

Publication: Lavernhe, R., Domke, P., Wang, Q., Zhu, J. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2023**, 145, 44, 24408–24415.

Awards: Fellow of German Academic Scholarship Foundation (*Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes*), ETH Spark Award Top 5 Finalist

### Current and Future Plans

In my doctorate, I'm focusing on developing novel electrochemical methodologies for organic synthesis. After finishing my Ph.D., I intend to pursue a career in process chemistry.

## Seyedmohamad javad (MJ) Chabok

Class of 2021-2023

Native of Iran



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: Sharif University of Technology (SUT),  
Tehran, Iran

Master's degree at: EPFL

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Kevin Sivula

Awards/Distinctions:

1. Outstanding Student, (SUT), **2021, 2018**
2. Bachelor's study grant from Iran's National Elites Foundation, **2017-2021**

### Personal

Thanks to the Alfred Werner Scholarship, I had the opportunity to continue my studies in Switzerland at EPFL to continuously reshape my scientific interests. Throughout my studies, I worked on various projects related to green energy, including perovskite solar cells and the electrochemical reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> to fuels. These projects deepened my understanding of the role of chemistry in green energy and made me aware of numerous emerging technologies.

Additionally, engaging networking sessions, such as Meet & Greet events, connected me with the innovative and scientifically rich community of Switzerland.

Yet career advancement was not the only aspect of my life in Switzerland. Looking back, the breathtaking natural scenery and mountain activities made for an unforgettable personal experience.

It is no exaggeration to call receiving the Alfred Werner Scholarship a life-changing experience. It exposed me to cutting-edge research in Switzerland, broadened my scientific perspectives, and provided me with invaluable skills to advance my career. I am truly grateful for the incredible support of the Alfred Werner Scholarship.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: PhD student at LNCE led by Prof. Raffaella Buonsanti, EPFL Valais

Research Interests: Electrocatalysis, Liquid metals, Semiconductors, Organic catalysis

Extracurricular activities, projects: Bouldering, Hiking, Woodcarving, Snowboarding

### Current and Future Plans

Currently, I am 2nd year PhD student working on liquid metal alloy nanoparticles for catalytic applications (CO<sub>2</sub>RR, organic, NO<sub>3</sub>RR, etc.). After completing my PhD, I look forward to continuing my career in industry as a research and development chemist.

## Tudor, Lile

Class of 2024 - 2026

Native of Romania



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: RWTH Aachen University

Master's degree at: ETH Zurich

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mark Tibbitt

Awards/Distinctions: Schöneborn-Preis RWTH

### Personal

I am currently pursuing a Master's in chemistry at ETH Zurich. I grew up in a small city in Western Romania. During high school, I had the privilege of representing Romania at the International Chemistry Olympiad. After high school, I moved to Germany to complete my Bachelor's in chemistry at RWTH Aachen. There, I developed a strong interest in biocompatible materials for applications in tissue engineering and drug delivery. The Alfred Werner Scholarship allows me to fully focus on my studies, where I aim to explore the interface of chemistry, biology, and engineering, harnessing their synergies for biomedical applications. Next to my studies, I am actively involved in teaching activities, as I deeply value the role of science communication in inspiring others.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: MSc. student at ETH Zurich

Research Interests: Biocompatible Materials, Biomedical Applications

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s):

Gold Medal IChO 2021, Mentoring Prize 2023.

Microgels with Immobilized Glycosyltransferases for Enzymatic Glycan Synthesis.

I. K. Sommerfeld, P. Palm, K. P. Hussnaetter, M. I. Pieper, S. Bulut, **T. Lile**, R. Wagner, J.

J. Walkowiak, L. Elling\*, and A. Pich\*. *Biomacromolecules* 2024, 25, 6, 3807-3822.

Compartmentalization of dextran microgels via oxygen-inhibition in single-emulsion microfluidics for 3D printing applications.

S. Bulut, T. Bissing, **T. Lile**, D. Günther, C. Bergerbit, L. De Laporte, D. E. Demco, A. Pich\*. *Manuscript submitted*.

Extracurricular activities, projects: IDEA League Challenge Programme

### Current and Future Plans

I am looking forward to starting my Master thesis working on a microgel-based wound dressing for the healing of chronic wounds. After the completion of my Master's I plan on pursuing a PhD at ETH Zurich.

**Jelena Gajić**

Class of 2019 - 2021

Native of Serbia



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Faculty of Chemistry, University of Belgrade, Serbia

Master's degree at: Faculty of Science, University of Geneva, Switzerland

Master thesis supervisor: Profs. Robbie Loewith, Nicolas Winssinger and Anne-Claude Gavin

### **Personal**

I pursued studies in chemistry with a strong inclination toward biology, which led me to complete a BSc thesis in bioorganic chemistry and a Master's degree in chemical biology – a discipline dedicated to applying chemical approaches to understand biology at its core. This field continues to fuel my curiosity and motivation to this day, and it has shaped my long-term scientific interests.

The Alfred Werner Scholarship marked a decisive turning point in my academic journey. It enabled me to study in Switzerland, immerse myself in a world-class scientific environment, and develop my interests at the highest level. Beyond access to cutting-edge research and a supportive academic community, the scholarship also offered unique opportunities to learn from peers and mentors of diverse backgrounds. These experiences provided me with a strong foundation in interdisciplinary science and broadened my perspective through international collaborations and cultural exchanges.

Alongside my studies, I actively contributed to the PhD student association at the University of Geneva, where I gained valuable skills in communication, networking, and event organization. In my role as communication manager and content creator, I had the opportunity to organize seminars and guest lectures, further strengthening my leadership and organizational abilities.

I wish to express my gratitude and sincere appreciation to the SCS Foundation for recognizing the importance of supporting young and enthusiastic researchers. This commitment is invaluable not only to individual scholars but also to the advancement of science as a whole.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: PhD candidate at the University of Geneva under the supervision of Prof. Robbie Loewith and Prof. Nicolas Winssinger

Research Interests: Chemical Biology, Drug Discovery, Diagnostics, Applied Science

**Sofiia, Butenko**

Class of 2022 - 2024

Native of Ukraine



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Kharkiv National University, Kharkiv, Ukraine

Master's degree at: ETH, Zurich, Switzerland

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Tae-Lim Choi

PhD thesis supervisor: Prof. Josie Hughes

### *Do not dream, act*

I am incredibly grateful to the Alfred Werner Scholarship for providing the financial support that allowed me to come to Switzerland and pursue my Master's degree at ETH Zurich. This scholarship not only alleviated financial burdens but also gave me the opportunity to fully immerse myself in my studies and take advantage of the world-class education and research facilities at ETH.

During my Master's program, I focused on polymer chemistry for my thesis. I had the chance to develop the synthesis of a novel semiconducting material, which has significant potential applications in the field of electronics. This research experience was invaluable, providing me with hands-on skills and deepening my understanding of polymer chemistry.

In addition to my thesis, I also completed a semester project where I worked on improving the performance of LLZO-based solid-state batteries. During this project, I explored the cutting-edge field of energy storage and contributed to advancements in battery technology.

Looking ahead, I am excited to continue my studies and further my research in material science. The foundation I built during my time at ETH, supported by the Alfred Werner Scholarship, has prepared me well for the next steps in my academic and professional journey.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: a PhD student at EMPA/EPFL in material science

Research Interests: Polymers, Ceramic, Electrocatalysis, renewable energy technology, Material Science

Most relevant Publication: *ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces*, 2024, 16 (10), 12353-12362

**Oleksandra Ortikova**

Class of 2022-2024

Native of Ukraine



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Master's degree at: ETH Zürich

Master thesis supervisor: Dr. Marta D Rossell, Prof. Dr. Maksym Kovalenko

### **Personal**

My path in chemistry began in the Chemistry Olympiads in Ukraine. There, I learned about the power of a community of like-minded people who are passionate about science. Not only did I learn chemistry beyond the school programme, but I also became a part of an active scientific society of fellow chemists. It is a great honour and a privilege to continue to be a part of the prestigious academic community of Alfred Werner scholars as a Master's graduate from ETH Zürich.

Apart from being an important study milestone, the Alfred Werner Fund offered tremendous support for my studies. The vibrant community of scholars also helped me adapt to a new country and reality. These contributions allowed me to continue exploring the chemistry of materials in my Master's thesis, where I focused on electron tomography of beam-sensitive lead halide perovskite nanocrystals. These exciting materials continue to be the main topic of my research today: I study the chemistry of the nanocrystal surface to explore better ways to handle these sensitive, yet effective light sources.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: PhD student at Functional Inorganic Materials Group, ETH Zürich

Research Interests: Materials Chemistry, Nanocrystals, Surface Chemistry

Extracurricular activities, projects: Design&Communications Manager at Ukrainian Association of Students and Academics in Zürich

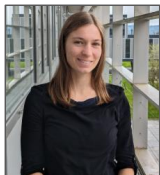
### **Current and Future Plans**

I will continue with my PhD, researching the chemistry of materials. In the future, I would like to explore novel approaches to rational material design in a research setting.

## Nathalie, Rowlinson

Class of 22 - 24

Native of Canada



### Education / Training

Bachelor's degree at: University of Ottawa, Canada

Master's degree at: Universität Bern

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Martin Albrecht

Internship at Syngenta Crop Protection AG

### Personal

I have long been interested in sustainable chemistry, particularly in the development of catalytic systems and new synthetic tools that reduce the environmental impact of chemical synthesis.

After first coming to Switzerland during my bachelor's studies for a research internship with Prof. Dr. Martin Albrecht, I returned for my master's degree, supported by the Alfred Werner Scholarship. I completed my master's thesis in the Albrecht group and have since begun my PhD in the group of Prof. Dr. Bill Morandi at ETH Zurich. My doctoral research focuses on catalytic C–N bond formation, where I explore the reactivity of Earth-abundant metal complexes in challenging transformations.

Over the past year, I have worked both on my independent project and in collaboration with other students, expanding my skills across synthesis, mechanistic studies, and catalysis. I remain grateful for the role the Alfred Werner Scholarship played in enabling my studies in Switzerland. I also continue to value the connections it fosters—particularly with industry partners aligned with my interests—as I begin to look toward the next steps in my career.

### Further Education / Employment / Achievements

Current status: PhD student in Morandi group

Research Interests: Catalysis, Organic Synthesis, Green & Sustainable Chemistry

Achievements/Awards/Most relevant Publication(s):

N. A. V. Rowlinson, W. Stroek *et al.*, *Organometallics*, **2024**, 43, 12, 1386–1392.

W. Stroek, N. A. V. Rowlinson *et al.*, *Inorg. Chem.* **2024**, 63, 37, 17134–17140.

Extracurricular activities, projects: Swiss Women in Chemistry Mentorship program

### Current and Future Plans

I plan to tailor my PhD studies to focus on catalytic chemistry relevant for industry and work towards a career in process chemistry.

## **Liliana, Galvez-Vazquez**

Class of 2021-2023

Native of Mexico



### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Puebla, México.

Master's degree at: University of Bern. Bern, Switzerland.

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Peter Broekmann

Awards/Distinctions: Alfred Werner Scholarship (Switzerland, 2021-2023), Young Researchers Program Scholarship (Mexico, Jun 2019-Oct 2019), Scholarship for "Academic Excellence" (Mexico, 2017).

### **Personal**

Thanks to the Alfred Werner Scholarship, I was able to pursue my master's studies at the University of Bern in Switzerland. With this experience, I broadened not only my knowledge, expertise, and capabilities in science but also had the chance to enrich my global perspective.

During my master's studies, I worked on three different projects. One of them allowed me to have a closer view of the research that is being carried out by the industry (BASF) by joining the corrosion project for semiconductor applications, a collaboration with BASF and the University of Bern. The second project I was involved, consisted in a collaboration with the University of Mainz in Germany and it comprised the preparation of metal foams for organic electrosynthesis. The last project was about the development of a unique approach based on the preparation of nano-mask by electron beam lithography and its use to investigate corrosion inhibition. This last project was the main topic of my master thesis.

On the other hand, living in Switzerland brought me unique experiences by doing indoor and outdoor sports in their beautiful mountains, rivers, and lakes. Moreover, I could meet extraordinary people worldwide due to this beautiful adventure and get familiar with other languages and cultures.

This scholarship is an excellent opportunity to grow not only as a scientist but also as a person. Living abroad has given me one of the most valuable experiences in my life.

### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current status: PhD student at University of Bern at the Interfacial Electrochemistry Group

Research Interests: Catalysis and Electrosynthesis.

Extracurricular activities, projects: dancing, cooking, outdoor sports.

**Claire J. Benedict**

Class of 2025-2027

Native of The United States of America



#### **Education / Training**

Bachelor's degree at: Hope College, Michigan

Master's degree at: University of Bern

Master thesis supervisor: Prof. Dr. Martin Albrecht

#### **Personal**

The generous support of the Alfred Werner Scholarship has allowed to return to Switzerland and pursue my master's studies at the University of Bern with Prof. Martin Albrecht. I previously worked with Prof. Albrecht for a year-long Fulbright grant centered around low valent iron catalysis, a project that I will continue in my master's thesis.

I am eager to continue my learning and training in organometallic chemistry, inorganic synthesis and characterization, and catalysis during my master's thesis. I am grateful to be at an institution like Bern, where scientific freedom and creativity are valued and cultivated. I also appreciate the life surrounding the laboratory as well. This includes the beautiful scenery, challenging sporting adventures, and enriching cultural experiences that Switzerland has to offer, among other things.

#### **Further Education / Employment / Achievements**

Current Position: Master's student at the University of Bern

Research Interests: Organometallics, Catalysis, Inorganic Chemistry

#### **Future Plans**

I plan to pursue a PhD in organometallic chemistry and hopefully start a career in the realm of scientific policy. I have become interested in this aim due to the current environment in the United States surrounding scientific funding and the public understanding of science.

## Supporters of the Alfred Werner Excellence Scholarship Program



Givaudan



## Academic Partners



Universität  
Basel



UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN



UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG  
UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG



UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE



unine



University of  
Zurich <sup>UZH</sup>

## Previous Supporters



## Contact

### SCS Foundation

c/o Swiss Chemical Society  
Haus der Akademien  
Laupenstrasse 7  
3008 Bern  
Switzerland

[info@scs-foundation.ch](mailto:info@scs-foundation.ch)  
[www.scs-foundation.ch](http://www.scs-foundation.ch)

## Donations

### Bank Account

SCS Foundation, 3008 Bern  
Privatbank Von Graffenried AG  
Spitalgasse 3, 3011 Bern  
Clearing: 8564  
IBAN: CH60 0856 4002 0669 7010 1

### Online Donations

[www.foundation.scg.ch/donate](http://www.foundation.scg.ch/donate)



SCS  
Foundation  
Swiss Chemical  
Society