



Andrew Schafer, '09

Ph.D. Student and University Fellowship Recipient

Synthetic Organic Chemistry

The Ohio State University

I am very thankful for the education I received at John Carroll University, but especially for the preparation and intense learning environment afforded by the JCU chemistry faculty. The professors make practical education their top priority. My four years as an undergraduate thoroughly readied me for continued study as a graduate student and my success since graduation is a result of that.

I knew the department focused on preparing its students well when I took general chemistry as a freshman. I won't forget talking to Dr. Waner after class one day when he heard that I was considering a major in chemistry. It surprised me that a professor cared about what a student taking a freshman introductory course "might" do, and that sealed my decision to major in chemistry.

As I continued to take classes in the chemistry curriculum, the professors challenged me in class and opened up opportunities for me to intern over summer breaks at local companies such as Sherwin Williams and MISCO Refractometer. This real industrial experience was critical for my professional development. I worked for both companies through the summers and during the school year as well and received full time employment offers after graduation.

After working at those two companies, I was convinced I was going to enter the workforce. However, after really enjoying my teaching experience as a TA in Dr. Kwan's organic labs, I decided to explore graduate school and consider a career as a professor. The department encouraged me to look into these opportunities, and provided funding to do undergraduate research, attend the 2009 Central Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society, and a graduate school fair at Purdue University.

As of today, I'm a graduate student finishing my Ph.D. as a synthetic organic chemist at Ohio State. Looking back, JCU prepared me very well. I have first author publications in high impact, world class chemistry journals such as *Organic Letters* and *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*. I'm happy to say I was awarded a University Fellowship at OSU, as well as travel awards and I was a finalist for the 2012 Outstanding Graduate Associate Teaching Award, an award given annually by the OSU College of Arts and Sciences to the best graduate teaching associate throughout the college. My success as a graduate student is a testament to the excellent preparation afforded by the JCU chemistry faculty.

I will graduate from OSU in May, 2014, and plan on completing postdoctoral studies before starting my independent career as a professor at a teaching intensive university much like JCU. Without a doubt, the challenging coursework, research opportunities, and industrial internships the department opened for me readied me for graduate study and set the foundation of my success. Graduates of the JCU Chemistry Department are thoroughly prepared for the career choice, whatever it may be, and I'm very grateful for this education.



***Update on Andrew as of March 2016:** He graduated from OSU in May 2014 and began a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at Emory University that same month. He is still there. The Chemistry Department at John Carroll wishes him the best as he continues pursuing his career as a professor.