



DIVISION OF POLYMERIC MATERIALS: SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

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## Chair's Message

### 2020 PMSE Chair

**Eva Harth**

University of Houston



PMSE Colleagues and Friends:

It is my honor to serve as the 2020 Chair of the PMSE Division of the American Chemical Society. As you all know, 2020 has proven to be far from an average year for PMSE or our community as a whole.

For the first time since World War II, the ACS had to cancel a national meeting – the 2020 Spring meeting in Philadelphia. The theme for this meeting was “100 Years of Macromolecular Chemistry” and would have highlighted and exemplified the enormous contributions polymer research has made in science. It was exceptionally hard for the PMSE Division (with over 1200 abstracts) and the POLY Division for the meeting to not come to fruition. ACS kindly agreed to re-instate the theme for the Spring, 2021 ACS National Meeting scheduled to take place in San Antonio, Texas, and we hope to recreate the quality and originality of the events which were planned for Philadelphia.

I am very proud of all the committees of the PMSE Division who worked diligently to address questions, reorganized symposia, and tried to accommodate presenters' and organizers' wishes to transfer the cancelled symposia to the next Spring meeting.

The ACS Fall 2020 “San Francisco” meeting will be the first virtual meeting and has challenged us to think about how to make our symposia as lively and informative as possible as we work within the ACS framework and virtual platform. The pandemic has also challenged us to come up with ways to connect and serve our members and the community by providing a social networking platform in order to recognize individual scientific and educational efforts. With a mixture of pre-recorded and broadcast sessions, there will be numerous opportunities to interact with the speakers as non-embargoed talks will be available on the ACS platform for one week after the meeting. With limited Q&A sessions, we encourage you to contact speakers directly for additional discussions.

I think we can all agree a virtual meeting cannot replace an in-person meeting, but having observed the tremendous logistical demands of bringing all of the symposia together, I would like to take this opportunity



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to thank the ACS and the committees, officers and especially, the PMSE Programming committee and Eileen Ernst, our Administrative Assistant, who made it all happen.

As we prepare for the Fall meeting, I would like to highlight a few events and awardee sessions that will underline the excellence of the research done in academia and industry. These will be outstanding lectures and I encourage you to show your support to make the meeting a success.

List of the awards given out:

- 2019 PMSE Chair - Matt Becker
- 2019 Doolittle Award Winners - Julia Kalow & Jian Qin
- 2019 Eastman Chemical Student Award in Applied Polymer Science - R. Konane Bay
- 2020 PMSE Fellows - Vivek Prabhu, Shanti Swarup, Tao Xie, Ting Xu
- 2020 ACS Award in Applied Polymer Science - Joachim Kohn
- 2020 Bioconjugate Chemistry Lectureship Award - Jason Lewis
- 2020 Chemistry of Materials Lectureship and Best Paper Award - Matthew Panzer & Anthony D'Angelo
- 2020 Henkel Award for Outstanding Research in Polymer Chemistry - Jeffrey Lopez
- 2020 Journal of Polymer Science Innovation Award - Brett Fors
- 2020 Roy W. Tess Award in Coatings - Qinghuang Lin
- 2020 Young Investigators
- 2020 Future Faculty
- 2020 PMSE Best Poster Award

As we move forward, the division is relying on member interaction and community input. With a focus on application-oriented polymer science, our goal is to encompass synthesis and materials science to foster an environment that informs and teaches new accomplishments and connects. We would be grateful for any suggestions on how to create a better exchange of diverse knowledge and support.

PMSE has many volunteer opportunities and you can see these opportunities and volunteer here: <https://pmsedivision.org/volunteer/>. If you are interested in becoming a PMSE member, you can do so here: <https://pmsedivision.org/join/> and the first year is free! We encourage you to have a voice and to encourage your colleagues and students to join our ranks. Additionally, to provide the most relevant research talks on topics that are of high interest, the submission of symposia proposals is most valuable to us and administrative support is provided. If you are interested in organizing a symposium or suggesting a topic, you can do so here: <https://pmsedivision.org/symposiaorg/>.

PMSE will be sponsoring a “Virtual Membership Desk” during the meeting that will have live interaction. All new members will be eligible to win one of three prizes. The Virtual Desk will have award information, PMSE history, and other interesting facts. Information on how to connect to the “Virtual Membership Desk” will be



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sent to members every evening and will also be posted on our website: <https://pmsedivision.org>. You can also get information by following us on Twitter (@acspmse) or on FaceBook (face.com/acspmse).

I got involved with PMSE when I became Secretary in 2016 and then moved through the ranks to Vice Chair, Chair-Elect, and, in 2020, Division Chair. My involvement in these roles, has taught me that personal interactions and seamlessly working committees are the backbone of the ACS and, I am still impressed by the passion and creativity the committee members bring forward to improve the community of which they are a part.

Coming into the US as a postdoctoral researcher after my PhD at the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research, Germany, I greatly benefited from an America that gave me a chance to evolve and gave me the spirit of, "You can do it all when you have the courage." I was able to remain in the country, and after working in a start-up for two years, I joined Vanderbilt University and built a research program based on biomedical drug delivery system and biomaterials. Since my move to the University of Houston in 2017 and becoming a professor, I have learned that people are the ultimate tool to inspire new directions in research and pursue new challenges. With us all working with "plastics" or better polymers, I was fascinated to realize how broad and involved our scientific field is. It touches every aspect of our day-to-day lives and being an active part in creating the next generation of materials is a very exciting pursuit!

I wish you all a great FIRST virtual meeting.

Eva Harth

Professor, University of Houston

2020 PMSE Chair

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