

Kalamazoo Section American Chemical Society – IPG
Elements of Dance
6:30-9:30 PM, Wednesday, November 9, 2012
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Elements of Dance



For the first time KACS has offered a social event that included dancing. Everybody was invited to partake in the three-hour program, at no charge. Other than the long-standing “Chemistry Day of the Museum” event, which has attracted 400-1000 people 26 times over the last 25 years, this event attracted an unprecedented 179 people at a new venue, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. The audience consisted of ca. 70 chemists and 100 people from the general public; many of them local ballroom dancers. The program included showcase dances, a dance lesson, a Zumba demo, open dances, dance cards, a puzzle about the elements in the periodic table and free snacks and drinks. In sum the mixing of chemists and dancers created a “fun reaction”.

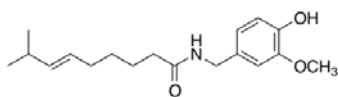
Humor was used in the announcement flyers, for example by using images of Lavoisier (chemist) + Pavlova (dancer) to show a “FUN reaction”. Tongue-in-cheek humor was also employed to advertise the dance lesson given by two chemistry instructors (see below).

WMU Chemistry Instructors Teach New Steps At The KIA

October 26, 2012



Two WMU chemistry instructors will trade in their laboratory gear for elegant ballroom attire to teach a free dance lesson during “Elements of Dance” which will take place 6:30-9:30 PM on Friday, November 9, 2012 at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. Dr. James Guzinski will bring his expertise about capsaicin in spicy foods to the heat in Salsa, a Latin dance. He is a retired chemist from Kalsec® (Kalamazoo Spice and Extraction Company) and now teaches at Western Michigan University (WMU). He will be joined by Dr. Elke Schoffers who is a tenured chemistry professor at WMU. She specializes in catalysts and looks to ignite a new reaction on the dance floor. This event is organized by the Kalamazoo American Chemical Society (KACS, <http://www.wmich.edu/acs/>).



Capsaicin - the active component of chili peppers

Culture & Chemistry: Elements of Dance

Report by Elke Schoffers with Photos by Denis Billen (DB) and Melissa Basileo (MB)

KACS launched its new “Chemistry & Culture” initiative with a big success by attracting 179 participants to the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts on November 9, 2012, for the first event titled “Elements of Dance”. The lively evening began with open dances at 6:30 PM followed by a brief program and more open dances until 9:45 PM. The event was overseen by Joseph Reish (WMU Dean of Libraries) as the Master of Ceremonies. Chemist and KACS member Denis Billen (Pfizer) provided music in Ballroom, Latin and Swing. He played some disco songs with special light and smoke effects. The lineup included showcase performances by dancing chemists James Guzinski (ret. Kalsec) and Elke Schoffers (WMU) in the Fox Trot and Argentine Tango with their respective partners. The program and open dances took place in the KIA auditorium while the lobby was set up with display and handout tables (including from student clubs) to encourage informal interactions over wine and snacks. Two large periodic tables were made available to help attendees win the “Chemistry of Dance” competition, which required the matching of elemental symbols to dance names. Attendees also won prizes by filling out a dance card. Among others, prizes included Au-, K-, and Zn-elemental pins, Meg-A-Moles, and custom-made lime green T-shirts with blue print of the winning design submitted by Evan Dalke, a WMU Graphic & Printing Science major. The competition was announced several weeks prior to the event. The audience was invited to join the Cupid Shuffle, which was started by chemistry students. Participation was also encouraged for the Zumba performance by the “Xtreme Z Team” and for the Salsa dance lesson given by Guzinski and Schoffers.



Joe Reish was the Master of Ceremonies (DB).



Open dance at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts auditorium (DB).



Showcases performers, from left: Guzinski and dance partner Jenny Grunberg, a Kalamazoo dentist, and Schoffers with Art Downey, a professional dance instructor (DB).



Doug Williams (Kalsec) dancing with his wife, Karen (DB).



Guzinski and Grunberg during open dancing (DB).



From left: Hilary Leaf, Heather Christy, Sara Burnhans, and Melissa Leach from the Xtreme Z Team performed a Zumba dance (DB).

Culture & Chemistry: Elements of Dance

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This event was made possible through an "ACS Innovative Project Grant" (submitted by KACS Chair Schoffers) and through generous donations by AAAS, Kalsec, Aldrich-Chemistry, VWR, and the WMU Business Technology Research Park. Special thanks also go to co-sponsors Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, the Southwest Michigan Ballroom Dance (SWMBD) and the Kalamazoo chapter of USA Dance.



Downey and Schoffers concluded the Argentine tango (MB).



WMU chemistry majors Sarah Ellison (left) and Ashley Mead (DB).



WMU chemist Patricia Holten (Environmental Safety and Emergency Management) with David Pease (MB).



WMU chemistry instructors Guzinski and Schoffers taught new steps during the Salsa lesson (DB).



Attendees practiced Salsa dancing at the KIA (DB).



Evan Dalke's T-shirt design (front), note "K" for KACS.



The dance floor was full of eager participants! (DB)



The event attracted young and old. (DB)