

## CANDIDATE STATEMENT AND BIO FOR NORTHWEST REGIONAL ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

**Name:**

Allen A. Thomas, PhD

**Current Position:**

Associate Professor of Chemistry

**Organization:**

University of Nebraska at Kearney

**Chapter Affiliation:**

University of Nebraska at Kearney

**Biographical Information:**

After receiving a PhD in organic chemistry under the mentorship of Chemistry Nobel Laureate K. Barry Sharpless at The Scripps Research Institute, I worked in the pharmaceutical industry at Array BioPharma in Boulder, Colorado for 13 years. I have a solid track record of scholarship involving innovative organic synthesis methodology and medicinal chemistry that has resulted in 24 peer-reviewed publications, 7 issued patents, and 8 patent applications. While in industry, I managed multiple junior scientists in lead optimization campaigns. I was part of a collaborative research team between Array and Genentech that was successful in the discovery of a small molecule kinase inhibitor that progressed to human clinical trials for cancer (GDC-0994; ERK inhibitor). In addition to my research background in medicinal chemistry, I have extensive experience collaborating across disciplines and organizations to solve problems. While at Array, I routinely interacted with scientists at companies such as AVEO, ISEC, and Genentech to generate ideas and overcome project challenges.

Since moving to UNK in 2014, I have established myself as an excellent teacher and scholar. My students taking general and organic chemistry have achieved remarkably high scores on their national American Chemical Society (ACS) standardized final exams (60-77% percentile class averages). Furthermore, I have built up a productive undergraduate research group that routinely includes 6-8 students. I have continued to collaborate with scientists from other institutions and disciplines, as my current research project, which involves using the LAT1 membrane transporter protein in drug delivery, includes not only other investigators at UNK, but also at UCSF, Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai, and Northwestern. In 2018, our research team published a full paper in the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*. My research is currently funded by an NIH R15 AREA grant (R15NS099981).

In addition to my service to Sigma Xi as described above, I have also served on multiple college and university level committees including a three year appointment to UNK Faculty Senate (2016-19). For example, I served on the search committee for the inaugural Dean of our new College of Arts and Science as well as a committee to establish structures and policies for committees within our new college. Additionally, I currently serve on the UNK Student Conduct and Appeals Board, and I am a Negotiator and Executive Committee Member in UNK's Faculty Union. I was recently selected to serve on the University of Nebraska President's Faculty Excellence Awards Committee to evaluate and choose

recipients for these prestigious awards. I also serve in my department's outreach and assessment committees.