

Julie Ealy is an Associate Professor of chemistry at Penn State Lehigh Valley, a small campus in the vicinity of Allentown, Pennsylvania and one of 14 campuses of Penn State University. She presently teaches general and organic chemistry and has also taught a 400-level bioinformatics course, and a Science, Technology, and Society course to freshmen where topics such as SARS and HIV were addressed. Amazingly she is entering her 50th year of teaching. Why amazingly? Because she loves to teach and hopes to teach many more years. Her teaching career began in public school teaching biology and physical science with subsequent middle school earth science, high school physics, biology, and chemistry, and graduate chemical education.

She became interested in teaching at the university level and graduated with a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1998 under Dr. Leonard Fine and O. Roger Anderson. She was inducted into Columbia University's chapter of Sigma Xi in 1998. Though she presently teaches at a small campus of Penn State with only a 2-year program for science majors and very limited research facilities, her desire to give back and pay it forward have resulted in research with undergraduates. With no funding and/or credit to do research the time commitment adds an additional challenge to a busy schedule of teaching, service, and research. Students' thank you have made it well worth the time during the last 15 years. She has managed to conduct computational research with undergraduates, eight of whom were co-authors on an article after five years of research. Five students have worked with her on the binding affinity of four flavins using fluorescence spectrometry, isothermal calorimetry, and computational chemistry. She has also pursued an interest in chemical education research in the assessment of students in organic chemistry and bioinformatics and the development and research associated with undergraduate chemistry labs, drug-like and nondrug-like properties of molecules, kinetics of a glyoxal clock, and two HIV-1 integrase publications from a sabbatical at Hershey Medical Center.

She has given back at the college level as chair of the sabbatical committee and promotion and tenure committee and to the university as a member of the university awards committee. Her service to society has encompassed US president of Graduate Women in Science (GWIS), an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), in conjunction with an International president, as a reviewer of National Science Foundation grants and AAAS symposia, an Advancement Placement (AP) chemistry consultant, and more recently as a science coach to an AP chemistry teacher in the American Association of Chemistry Teachers program, an affiliate of the American Chemical Society.

Outside of work she spends her time in a log cabin home - built by her husband - with her husband and their tan (usually black and tan) Airedale named Copper, whose sense of humor and naughtiness keep them busy. She has two beautiful granddaughters who live many hours away who she wishes were closer.

One of the joys of teaching, I think/question/wonder about, is the need to repeat what I say to the 18-year old first year student in college who only three short months ago was a senior in high school. As I have been heard to say after a number of repeats, "I love getting paid the big bucks to talk to myself". For those students with a sense of humor, they laugh. For the remainder of the students they simply look at me in disbelief and wonder, who is this person teaching me chemistry? Thank goodness for older age and a sense of personal humor.