THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Chemistry & Biochemistry

E-Catalyst

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The Victor J. Hruby Symposium
May 21 - 22, 2026

An Academic Symposium Welcoming Invited Speakers, Scholars, and Sponsors

Dear Peptide Enthusiast,

Dr. Victor J. Hruby, Regents' Professor Emeritus at the University of Arizona and founding President of the American Peptide Society, has been at the forefront of peptide chemistry, biology, and drug design for more than half a century. His career spans over a thousand publications and pioneering advances in receptor-specific agonists and antagonists such as Bremelanotide, particularly targeting melanocortin receptors MC1R and MC4R. Hruby's fundamental designs led to clinically successful peptide therapeutics, including FDA-approved NDP-MSH/afamelanotide (Scenesse®, marketed by Clinuvel), a FDA-approved MT-II analog/bremelanotide (Vyleesi®, developed by Palatin Technologies, Inc.) and a cyclo[Cys4,10]-MSH analog/setmelanotide (Imcivree®, developed by Rhythm Pharmaceuticals), and exemplify linear and macrocyclic templates conceived in Professor Hruby's laboratory. He has also shaped the field through the creation of peptide libraries and bioactive analogues that have transformed both academic research and pharmaceutical discovery.

Beyond the laboratory, Victor has been a passionate and tireless advocate for the peptide community, serving as Editor-in-Chief of both the International Journal of Peptide and Protein Research and Peptide Research as well as chairing the 8th American Peptide Symposium, mentoring many generations of scientists who now carry his vision forward worldwide. This inaugural symposium honors not only a pioneering researcher, but also a leader, mentor, and cornerstone of the global peptide community.

We look forward to celebrating Professor Hruby's lasting impact on peptide research and honoring the vibrant community he has fostered, and we hope you can participate as an attendee, a speaker or a donor.

Sponsors will be well-recognized in the symposium program and related materials as well as the Victor J. Hruby Symposium website.

Date: **21-22 May, 2026**

Location: **Health Sciences Innovation Building (HSIB), University of Arizona, Tucson**.

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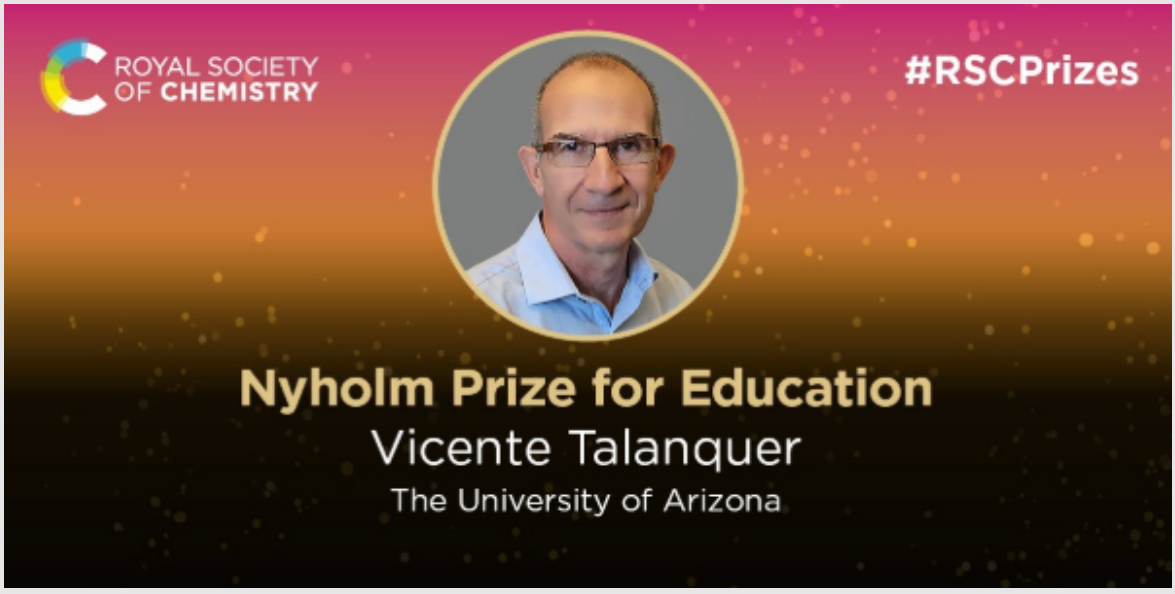

Congratulations to Dr. Talanquer who received the 2025 Nyholm Prize for Education

We're excited to share that **Dr. Vicente Talanquer** has been chosen for the highly prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry 2025 Nyholm Prize for Education which was "awarded for his groundbreaking research on student reasoning in chemistry, which has shed light on critical factors that affect student learning and guided the development of innovative chemistry curriculums."

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Talanquer for this well-deserved, highly significant honor!

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Dr. Jeff Pyun named the Homer C. and Emily Davis Weed Endowed Chair in Chemistry

The University of Arizona Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is proud to announce the appointment of Professor **Dr. Jeff Pyun** as the **Homer C. and Emily Davis Weed Endowed Chair in Chemistry and Biochemistry**. This prestigious honor recognizes Dr. Pyun's innovation in advancing the chemical sciences.

Dr. Pyun's highly innovative research has been internationally recognized for groundbreaking sulfur-based polymer technology and global impact on sustainable materials science. Dr. Pyun was the first chemist to create a novel synthetic process that converts elemental sulfur directly into advanced polymers. This innovation has been globally recognized for addressing a critical challenge, as sulfur is an abundant byproduct of oil and gas refining, yet it has had limited industrial applications.

The impact of this discovery has been profound: The significant intellectual property portfolio has secured two commercial licenses and attracted private-sector sponsored research from global leaders such as Raytheon, IBM, Goodyear, Hoya, PPG, LG Chem, ENI, and Kuraray. Professor Pyun's work has elevated the University of Arizona's reputation for innovation for which he has been recognized as the inaugural recipient of the UA University Distinguished Innovation & Entrepreneurship Award in 2022.

This appointment not only celebrates Professor Pyun's extraordinary contributions to chemical research and innovation but also reinforces the position of UA and CBC as leaders in advancing the science of sustainable materials . His work exemplifies

the transformative impact that academic research has on industry, the environment, and society at large.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Pyun on this achievement!

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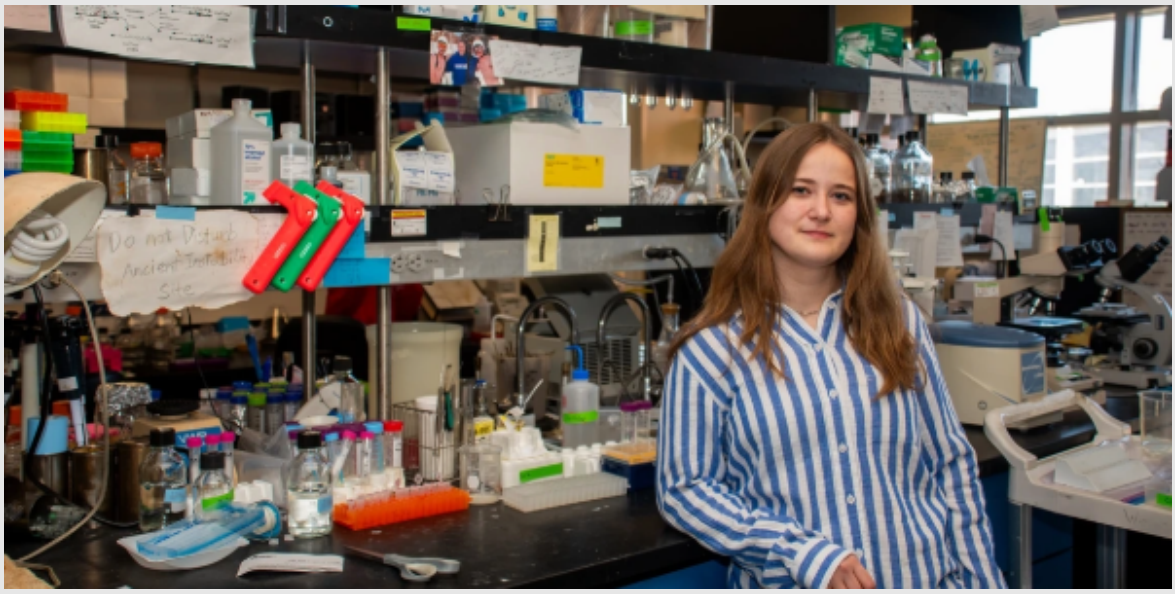

Natalie Rawlings' Wildcat Journey

Fourth-year Wildcat Natalie Rawlings has built an extraordinary undergraduate legacy at the University of Arizona.

Natalie, a double major in Biochemistry and Molecular & Cellular biology, conducts research in the Capaldi Lab, studying TORC1/mTOR signaling to help advance future drug targets and deepen understanding of cell growth. Her passion for science extends beyond the lab: she founded the MCB Undergraduate Journal Club in 2024 to help fellow students build confidence in research and scientific literacy.

Natalie has served as a WellCats ambassador, a CAPS peer counselor, and the lead developer of The Recharge Room, an evidence-based wellness space funded through a Franke Honors College Exploratory Mini Grant.

As she prepares for graduation and sets her sights on an MD-PhD and a future as a physician-scientist, Rawlings reflects on her growing sense of leadership.

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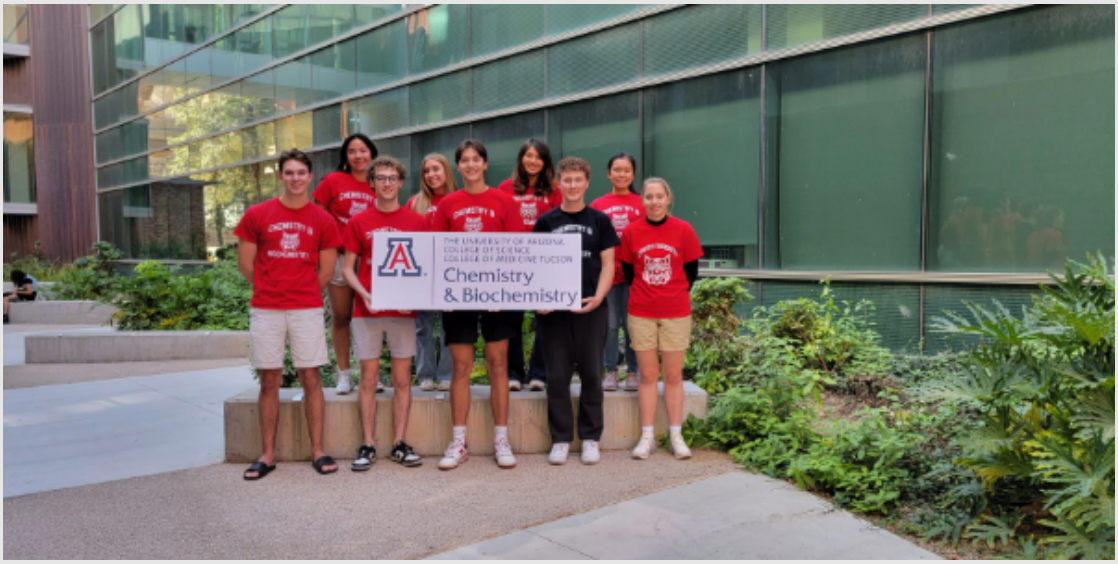
The Fall 2025 Catalyst is available now!

Fall 2025 Catalyst Magazine is available online.



Help Build the Future

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At the University of Arizona, we're changing lives and enriching the world through education, research and creative inquiry. Join us as we Fuel Wonder.

FUEL WONDER

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Land Acknowledgment