

# Faculty News

The Faculty of Science, No. 3, 2009



Stockholm  
University

## News at the Faculty

**Our Faculty has been distinguished** in many ways since the summer. Here is some of the news for those who haven't heard them yet:

- Ingmar Borgström at the Department of Physical Geography and Quaternary Geology was awarded *Teacher of the Year* by SU.
- The Department of Physical Geography and Quaternary Geology was awarded the title *Department of the Year* by SU.
- Petter Brändén at the Department of Mathematics and Jorijntje Henderiks at the Department of Geology and Geochemistry received funding as Research Fellows by KVA.
- The Stockholm Centre for Marine Research now has a unique shelf for Guillemots at Stora Karlsö.
- Linda Gerén, scientist and Student Counsellor at the Department of Physics, was selected to the Government's initiative *Styrelsekraft*.
- Örjan Skeppstedt at the Manne Siegbahn Laboratory has received the *Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande* from the President of Germany Horst Köhler.
- Jan-Erling Bäckvall at the Department of Organic Chemistry was awarded a ERC Advanced Grant of 17.5 million SEK.
- Pål Stenmark at the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics was awarded the *Ingvar Carlsson Award* of 3 million SEK.
- Scientists at the Faculty have received funding, a total of 139 million SEK, by VR for research projects and employment in science, technology, medicine and in the area of sustainable development.
- Juni Palmgren, Professor of Biostatistics, was appointed Secretary General for the Council for Research Infrastructures at VR.
- Björn Åkermark, Professor Emeritus, was awarded the *Ulla and Stig Holmquist's Scientific Price in Organic Chemistry*.
- Formas will be funding projects led by Ragnar Elmgren, Department of Systems Ecology, Christoph Humborg, ITM and Baltic Nest Institute, Michael McLachlan, ITM, and Kevin Noone, ITM (total 60 million SEK).
- The Chemists Armando Córdova and Jan-Willem de

Gier at the Faculty have been awarded the *Stockholm City Innovation Award of the Year*.

- Climate scientists at the Faculty have started a collaboration with the Academy of Athens and the Greek company TEMES. This includes the Navarino Environmental Observatory (NEO) in Greece.
- Britt-Marie Sjöberg of the Department of Molecular Biology and Functional Genomics was elected member of the board of VR.
- The School of Computer Sciences and Communication, and thus NADA, was named as a *Centre of Excellence in Higher Education 2009* by HSV.

### Events:

- *The Day of Roses*, Bergius Botanic Garden.
- *RosArt* art exhibition, Bergius Botanic Garden.
- *Living Sculptures of the World of Plants - Charles Darwin 200 Years*, Bergius Botanic Garden.
- *The Day of Geology*, in the House of Geoscience.
- *Physics in Kungälv* with the topic Physics and Astronomy, was arranged by the Department of Physics.
- The public has been able to study the heaven through the large telescope at AlbaNova this autumn.
- *The International Symposium on Relations between Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Catalysis* was held in Aula Magna and arranged by several departments of Chemistry.
- *The Astronomy Days* for the astronomers of Sweden was this year held at AlbaNova.
- *Greek Greenhouse Night*, Bergius Botanic Garden.
- As usual there were many talks by fresh PhDs from the Faculty at *The Days of Science*.
- *BioTech Link 09* with companies, scientists and students from Life Science.
- *The Present and Future of Radiation Protection Research* was arranged by GMT among others.
- *Perspective – Retrospective Views with Images from Cosmos*, an exhibition at the University Library.
- WGI celebrated 70 years with the symposium *Back to the Future*.
- Aula Magna was filled with 12 year olds at the *Live Question Session*. As usual it was preceded by visits to around 25 Schools in the vicinity of Stockholm.
- The Faculty celebrated Darwin 200 years with lectures and debates with over 1000 youths from comprehensive schools during *The Day of Darwin*.

For more information see [www.science.su.se](http://www.science.su.se) and [www.su.se](http://www.su.se)

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Faculty News is also available in Swedish

- *The Labour Market Day* for the students of the Faculty was this year held at Aula Magna. Around 40 companies were present.
- A day of information was held for the Student Counsellors of primary and secondary school.
- *Christmas exhibition*, Bergius Botanic Garden.

#### Some noted research results:

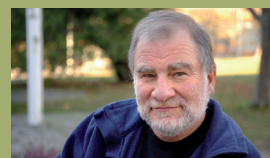
- Stefan Åström, WGI, has shown that cells can do repairs of the double helix more efficiently than previously thought.
- Scientists at ITM have shown that the decrease in bird populations may be explained by a lack of Thiamin.
- Water consists of two types of molecules with different structures. This discovery was made by scientists at the Department of Physics in an international collaboration.
- Scientists at the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics/CBR have shown that proteins in membrane are very important as they raise the capability to dissolve other proteins.
- A collaboration including scientist at the Department of Astronomy has been able to show that the speed of light is the same at both low and high energy levels. Einstein's laws still rules.

#### Good to know:

- A Committee for Bio-safety has been initiated.
- The university has become member of the Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship, SSES.
- The Department of Physical, Inorganic and Structural Chemistry and the Department of Environmental Chemistry will be joined together to the Department of Materials and Environmental Chemistry, MMK, on the 1st of January.
- The Unit of Medical Radiation Physics will be a part of the Department of Physics from the 1st of January.
- The university has gathered all 75 Master's programmes given in English in a catalogue.
- There is a call for projects for the research observatory NEO (mentioned above). Please contact Dag Broman, ITM.
- Hans Adolfsson at the Department of Organic Chemistry will be Dean of the Chemistry Section from the 1st of January
- Gunnar Svensson, MMK, is a new member of the Faculty Board from the 1st of January.
- The Faculty Office has two new members: Carina Nymark (Executing Officer) and Karin Jonsell (Information Officer). Birgitta Eriksson is on sick leave and Åsa Borin is appointed Head of the Science Faculty Office until 30th June 2010. There is a vacant position as Director of Studies to be filled immediately. The application deadline is 7th of January.

***MERRY CHRISTMAS &  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR!***

## Stefan's Column



Another year has passed and it has been another good year for the Faculty. 2009 was the first year for the new Faculty Board as well as of my second period as dean. My own feeling is that the work with the Board has been very stimulating and considerably contributed to positive development of our Faculty. Among other things we have established a new system for distributing resources that is in effect from 2010. We have also allocated grants to young scientists who should contribute to maintain research at a high international level, even when the most successful scientists of today retire.

A week ago we decided on the budget for 2010, which shows some increase for research and the PhD program. There will not be any special programs for 2010. I hope however that the Departments will support our young scientists as much as possible. Unfortunately the resources for undergraduate programs are still much too low and I am deeply concerned about the inability of the government to understand that modern university level education in science requires new equipment to keep up with the rapid development in science.

During 2009 many of the scientists have been very successful in attracting funding from external sources. Three out of four of our "Strategic areas" applications were supported, nationally the highest success rate. Four scientists were funded in the call "Strategic areas" by Formas, another scientist was awarded a ERC Advanced Grant, and finally a good number of scientists were funded by VR and other agencies. It is very satisfactory that the successful research at the Faculty is given this recognition.

2010 will to a large extent be characterized by the development of the new teacher training programs. I hope that collaboration between all our departments, in the work to establish and implement the new programs, will increase. Well trained and enthusiastic school teachers is an important prerequisite for high quality in our undergraduate programs, which of course is very dependent on the knowledge and attitude of the students.

Finally I want call the attention to our fantastic Faculty Office. The positive, engaged atmosphere and the professional attitude clearly contribute to the success of the Faculty.

My warmest thanks to the people at the Faculty Office and to all other coworkers. A special greeting to Sven Lidin for his devoted work for the Faculty, unfortunately Sven leaves us to strengthen Chemistry at Lund University.

Wishing you all a enjoyable and relaxing holiday!

Stefan Nordlund