



FUN IN THE LAB | Senior Michal Ruprecht works on the ligand Chemistry Club created at the University of Detroit Mercy. Ruprecht joined Chemistry Club his sophomore year, and is currently the President. "I actually was not interested in chemistry. I thought it was super boring at first but once I started doing AP chemistry and paired it with Chem Club I got to see how amazing it is and how fun it is," Ruprecht said. "I think it's a really great way to inspire kids."

By Rory Angott & Emily Widgren
PAGE EDITOR & STAFF REPORTER

When senior Michal Ruprecht walked into his Intro to Organic Chemistry class Nov. 10, he expected no more than an average day. Little did he know, he'd leave the room with the American Chemistry Society Ciba Travel Award in Green Chemistry, an award that had never before been given to anyone other than an undergraduate and graduate student.

In recognition of his accomplishment, United States Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder sent Ruprecht a letter commending his work in mid-February and late January, respectively.

"One day Mr. Kosmas stood up, and he was going crazy. He didn't know what was going on, and I was confused," Ruprecht said. "He asked me if I'd seen the email, and I hadn't, so I walked up, and he showed me, and it was an email from the American Chemistry Society. I'd gotten the Ciba award for Green Chemistry Research."

Ruprecht and the rest of the Chem Club team worked together to create a ligand, a molecule

with the potential to remove harmful metals such as lead from water sources. Their research was inspired by the Flint Water Crisis. Ruprecht compared the ligand to a claw machine, its three arms branching out to pick out what's bad.

In the past, Ruprecht didn't express very much interest in chemistry. In fact, he said he found it quite boring in the beginning, and it wasn't until he joined Chem Club and paired it with AP Chemistry that he began to enjoy it.

His mother, Beata Ruprecht, said that growing up, Michal was always a very curious kid. Because of that, she wasn't surprised when he decided to take on the research and was excited to see where it would take him.

"He's been interested in a lot of things before. Whether there's some other science, he's just interested in science in general," Beata said. "He's always been very driven, and I think that chemistry is one of the sciences that has a lot potential in the future. I think it's really a good thing (for him)."

Michal's chemistry teacher, Steven Kosmas, coached him through the award application process. Kosmas's goal was to be sure Michal could

win the award not only for himself, but for the Chem Club as a whole.

"Michal has taken a lot of initiative to move the Chem Club forward," Kosmas said via email. "He won an award that I give out to a student that has done the most to promote science outreach in the community. This is the NEST (Network of Educators in Science and Technology) award that is sponsored by a group out of MIT."

Michal said both of these awards have shown him that chemistry can actually create, change and open new opportunities for society as a whole.

Often times, people are inspired by their parents when choosing their career paths. Michal, while taking some inspiration from his parents, who are both doctors, takes most of his inspiration from his grandmother, Elzbieta Kozłowska-Kikolska.

"She been practicing in the medical field for a long time. She still is. She's inspired me because she had to live through World War II (in communist Poland)," Michal said. "She was sent to a camp because her dad was a teacher. She's a big inspiration to me."

Although he wants to go into the medical field, Michal doesn't want to be a doctor in the traditional sense.

He said that, after conducting the research at the University of Detroit Mercy which led to his award, he realized his interest lies in the application of chemistry to the medical field.

Beata said this award has opened many new horizons for Michal's future not only in his future education but his career and even events that are taking place very soon. He plans on using part of the grant that came with the award to join the American Chemist's Society and present at their National Meeting in Boston this summer.

Michal encourages all people to not only join Chem Club but aim towards STEM activities in general because he believes if people follow what they're passionate about, they can accomplish great things.

"The whole thing was to inspire kids and young high schoolers to join STEM one day," Michal said. "We want to promote more women, more minorities to come to Chem Club and, ultimately, to STEM. Hopefully, we make that accomplishment."



UNIFIED | Junior Darianna Gantt stands in front of the Union with a group of students who participated in the blackout. Gantt started the blackout because she doesn't think Black History Month gets enough recognition at North.. "North doesn't do a good job celebrating Black History. Black History Month isn't even celebrated in the school because they don't want to offend anyone," Gantt said. "I can recall talking about black history month and a caucasian person asked why wasn't there a white history month like how delusional is that. I think that question arose because the teachers don't do enough to teach about the African American history."



Student organizes black out

Junior Darianna Gantt brought students together in her second annual Blackout in support of Black History Month on Feb. 17

By Katie Thomas, Savannah Burguron & Donald Hightower
PAGE EDITOR & STAFF REPORTERS

One day in February 2017, junior Darianna Gantt encouraged her friends to wear all black to school in hopes of doing her part to celebrate Black History Month. A year later, Gantt once again organized her annual "Blackout" Tuesday, Feb. 13. This time however, her initiative had numerous participants throughout the school, showing the impact of student-led events.

"My goal with my Blackout was to be able to get some unity throughout the school," Gantt said. "It's important to celebrate Black History month because it isn't supported like it should be in schools and also worldwide. That's why I really wanted to do at least do something to honor Black history. It may not be much, but it's effective all over the school."

Dan Gilleran, social studies teacher and adviser of the Diversity Club, said the Blackout was an important way of celebrating Black History Month that united the school. While the Diversity Club has been raising awareness of the historic month for 17 years through different displays and events, Gilleran said more could always be done to make Black History Month a more inclusive celebration for the school.

"I liked it because it was very symbolic. It gets the whole school involved," Gilleran said. "I thought it would be cool if we could coordinate

it next year with the Diversity Club and make it more school-wide."

From passing out flyers to posting the event on social media, Gantt was able to network the Blackout to people even beyond her own social circle and grade.

Senior Antonio Spindler saw Gantt's flyer on a friend's Snapchat story, which led to his participation. He took part in the Blackout in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and as an acknowledgement of the hardships African Americans have faced throughout history.

"I participated because it's important to get the message across that Black lives are equally as important, and just to show what we have been through," Spindler said. "Its cool, people are trying to make a change, and that's what we need to see more of."

Gilleran said that while staff members can

**DARIANNA'S ANNUAL
BLACK OUT**

**FEBRUARY 13,
2018
WEAR ALL BLACK
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HONOR TO SUPPORT BLACK HISTORY
MONTH.**

**I WOULD DEEPLY APPRECIATE IF I COULD
GET PICTURES WITH EVERYONE WHO ARE
HERE TO SUPPORT !!**

(THANK YOU SM IN ADVANCE)

DARIANNA GANTT

encourage social awareness, it's ultimately the students who have the most impact, which is why the Blackout had the success that it did. He personally has felt frustrated about how to celebrate Black History Month but said that students have a wider reach when it comes to getting the message across.

"Of course we've got resources and so forth, but it makes so much more of a stronger impact if it comes from

(better) when it comes to the students, is the bottom line."

Gilleran said this should be taught throughout curriculum and in classrooms to recognize the culture all year round, not just during one month. Gilleran does his part and attempts to spread awareness all year through events hosted by the Diversity Club.

"It'll create discussion and generates different ideas going on within the students, of what they can do for the school and to continue it throughout, not just in February," Gilleran said. "The more inclusive you can be, the better for everyone, and it helps every student, and not just black students. It's to help everybody so that they get a full picture of our history and what's going on."

Gantt agrees that black history should be celebrated all year because African Americans haven't received the recognition that they deserve for their accomplishments throughout history. For Gantt, the celebration of black culture never stops.

"I absolutely love being African American because we're always on the forefront of shifting culture, and by that I mean setting trends, creating what's hot, just being dope," Gantt said. "I love being black because we have shown through history that we can overcome so many obstacles and during black history month, I am reminded of those certain things and why I love being the race that I am."

the students and if it's student-led," Gilleran said. "I think everybody in the school has a responsibility, and teachers certainly play a role in that. It helps to facilitate, but it's going to work