Northwestern | McCORMICK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Chemical and Biological Engineering

FROM THE CHAIR / Spring 2026

Dear colleagues, alumni, and friends,

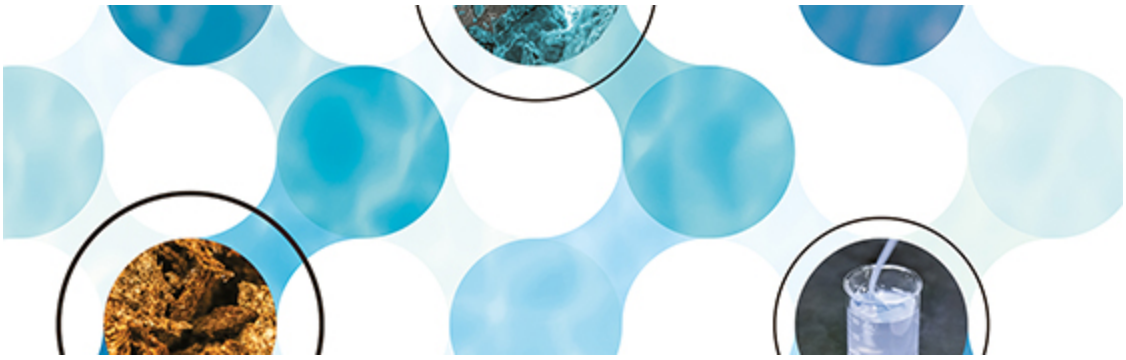
Spring brings momentum, and for me, this moment also brings transition. As I prepare to **take on a new role** as McCormick's associate dean for research and doctoral education, I've been reflecting on the collaboration, creativity, and curiosity that define our community and make progress possible.

In this newsletter, we highlight that shared work. These efforts are the foundation of what comes next, and they speak to the strength of the department and the people who sustain it.

Whether you're on campus every day or engaging with us from afar, I hope this update leaves you feeling informed, inspired, and proud of what we're building together. Thank you for all the ways you **contribute to our community**.



Justin Notestein
Professor and Chair
Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering
McCormick School of Engineering



From Our Magazine: Turning the Tide

Northwestern Engineering researchers, including Professors **Jennifer Dunn**, **Julius Lucks**, and **Linsey Seitz**, are developing technologies to protect, manage, and recover resources from our water supply, and finding efficient ways to use water for energy while devising methods to combat water's destructive power.

From Our Magazine: From Atoms to Innovation

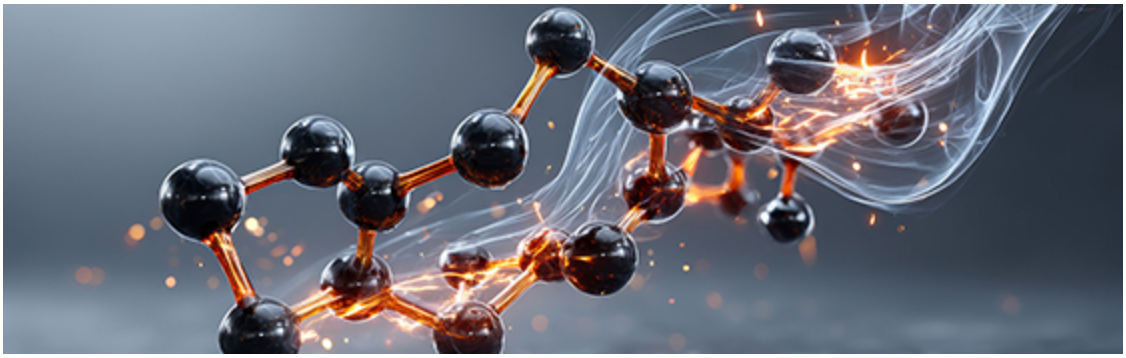
Northwestern engineers, including Professors **Jeffrey Lopez** and **Jeffrey Richards**, are leading the way in applying predictive, data-driven methods to reshape materials design and manufacturing.





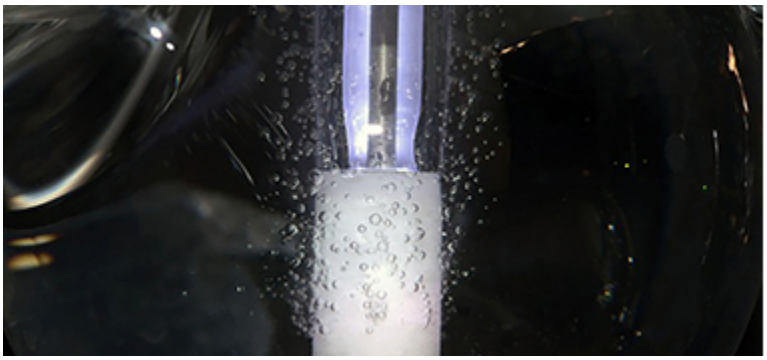
Studying Nanoparticle Shedding to Improve Targeted Therapies

Professor **Lisa Volpatti** studied how surface chemistry shapes delivery, stability, and targeting in experimental medicines, with implications for safer and more effective cancer and genetic therapies.



Artificial Metabolism Turns Waste CO2 Into Useful Chemicals

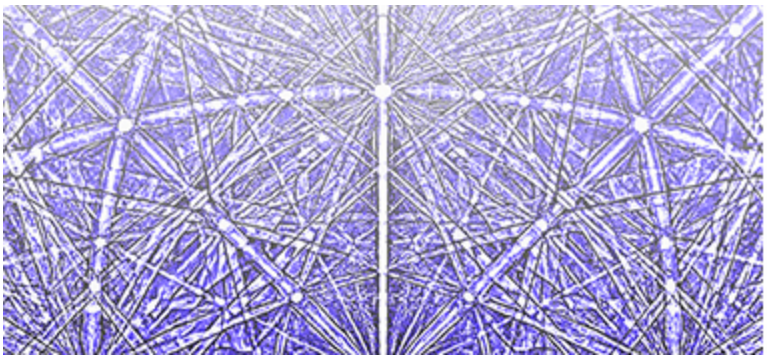
Engineered enzymes developed by Professor **Ashty Karim** and adjunct professor Michael Jewett perform metabolic reactions that do not exist in nature.





Bottled Lightning Makes a Cleaner Fuel

Professor **Dayne Swearer** found that bursts of plasma convert methane into methanol without high heat and pressures.





New Electron Microscopy Technique Reveals Zeolite Structure to Enhance Function

Researchers from the lab of Professor **Omar Farha** developed a high-resolution approach to map beam-sensitive crystals at the nanoscale.

Department News

Professors **Linda Broadbelt**, **Jennifer Dunn**, and **Linsey Seitz** were **featured at the Women in Energy pop-up exhibit** at the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago for Women's History Month.

Professor **Omar Farha** was **named to the National Academy of Inventors**.

Professor **Randall Snurr** **received the Humboldt Research Award**.

Alex Kanu was one of **10 McCormick students selected** for the Apple Next-Gen Innovators Mentorship Program.

Willow Kowalik was **the inaugural winner** of the CHEMCAD Student Competition sponsored by Datacor, and held in conjunction with the AIChE Midwest Regional Conference.

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Northwestern ChBE Hosts Undergraduate Expo

On April 6, the department hosted its inaugural expo. This new annual event highlights undergraduate student projects and activities and provides undergraduates with an opportunity to meet and network with alumni and regional affiliates of the Northwestern ChBE community.

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