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RECYCLE!

Reed

continued from page 1

structional manual, prepared for undergraduates at the University. Green chemistry methods are designed to reduce potential hazards in chemistry by minimizing environmental and human impact.

"This award is another confirmation that what we're doing at the UO is leading the nation in green chemistry education," said Jim Hutchinson, Reed's advisor. Presented in conjunction with the President's Green Chemistry Challenge, the award was created five years ago by President Clinton.

In 1998, Reed helped create the University's pilot-green chemistry lab, called the Green Organic Chemistry Lab. It is the first instructional laboratory to experiment with green chemistry.

Prior to the development of the lab, green chemistry principles were only taught in organic chemistry classrooms. The lab is part of a movement to clean up chemistry.

"Winning the Hancock Award adds legitimacy to the project," Reed said. "They (ACS) appreciate that one of the best ways to make a conceptual change in chemistry is to change the way we educate people."

Hutchinson began researching green chemistry as a way to reduce reliance on the limited lab safety equipment, which is necessary to protect students from the toxic chemicals used in traditional organic labs.

Hutchinson, who is an assistant professor of chemistry, solicited the help of fellow chemistry professor Ken Doxide to help design the ground-breaking curriculum.

Hutchinson's research interested Reed, who applied for and was awarded a special fellowship through the U.S. Department of Education, providing him funding to focus on designing new experiments. Receiving the fellowship was a feat in itself because it's un-

usual for graduate students to be involved in curriculum development.

"Anyone who's doing chemistry is pulling chemicals off the shelf, and anyone can use the concepts of green chemistry in deciding what they pull off the shelf," Reed said.

By substituting less toxic solvents and other substances, as well as minimizing waste by recycling products for future experiments, students significantly reduce the hazards of experiments, one of the objectives of green chemistry.

One experiment, which will be published in the Journal of Chemical Education, teaches students how to synthesize adipic acid, a chemical used in producing nylon. Nitric acid, typically used as the oxidant in the experiment, creates nitrous oxide as a byproduct, a dangerous chemical that contributes to ozone depletion and global warming.

Under the green chemistry process, students substitute hydrogen peroxide and a simple catalyst, significantly reducing the hazard.

"Green chemistry ideas are coming of age," University science writer Ross West said. "We have people here, such as Scott, who are making things happen on the educational side of things and are really making waves."

Reed received the award June 26, during the annual ACS Green Chemistry and Engineering Conference in Washington, D.C. The award, which serves as a memorial for Dr. Kenneth G. Hancock — former director of the National Science Foundation's Division of Chemistry and one of the first advocates of green chemistry — included a plaque and cash award.

Now back in Eugene, Reed will continue work on his doctoral project, which was put on the back burner while he worked in the area of green chemistry.

"In the long term, green chemistry will probably be an area I will continue in," Reed said. "In the meantime, I have a thesis to finish."

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