

MIDWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CHEMISTRY TEACHERS
IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer
Earlham College
Richmond, Indiana

April 15, 1964

TO: MACTLAC Members in Good Standing

SUBJECT: Report of the Twelfth Annual Meeting, held at Wabash College
on October 18-19, 1963

The twelfth annual meeting set a new record for attendance, with 175 members and guests present. Ed Haenish and his colleagues had done an admirable job of making arrangements for the meeting and, despite the unexpectedly large attendance, everything worked out quite well. The afternoon program consisted, as usual, of discussion groups, brief summaries of which are enclosed for your information.

The banquet on Friday evening was an enjoyable occasion, and was followed by an interesting and provocative talk by Quentin (Pete) Peterson of Wabash College on "Faculty Research in Liberal Arts Colleges." Pete took many of us by surprise with what he had to say, and forced us to re-examine our philosophy toward undergraduate student research. He argued that student participation in research requires a good deal of faculty time in training and supervision and that the student often accomplishes very little. The student may actually benefit to a greater degree by classroom contact with a faculty member who is himself actively pursuing research activities without the involvement with student assistants. After Pete's talk, there were informal tours of the science buildings and opportunities to talk with Wabash faculty in the various sciences about their research activities.

On Saturday morning we had a lively panel discussion on, "The Role of Descriptive Chemistry in the College Curriculum." The panel consisted of three outstanding chemistry teachers from larger institutions -- Harry Sisler, University of Florida; Robert Brasted, University of Minnesota; and M. Kent Wilson, Tufts University. Everyone agreed that descriptive chemistry is still important, but it was difficult to define what is meant by descriptive chemistry or to agree on how best to teach it. We had hoped to have Harry Lewis report on a recent survey of research in MACTLAC colleges but, due to his wife's illness, he was unable to attend. He did prepare a mimeographed report which was distributed, and additional copies may be obtained by writing to him at The Institute of Paper Chemistry, Appleton, Wisconsin.

At the business meeting, the executive council recommended that the time has come to review the organizational structure of MACTLAC. In particular, the increase in attendance at the annual meetings and the increasing number of people applying for associate membership pose some questions about the nature of the organization. A committee consisting of Harry Lewis (Chairman), Dick Ramette, Jack Powers, and Perry Moore was asked to study the matter and report next fall. William Oelke (Grinnell College) presented a report of the MACTLAC Physical Chemistry Lab Manual Project, and urged people to submit experiments for testing and possible inclusion in the manual.

The officers for the current year are:

President: Paul Carnell, Albion College
President-Elect: Martin Allen, College of St. Thomas
Secretary-Treasurer: Wilmer Stratton, Earlham College