

Second Debra Dolliver Memorial Lecture

Meet the Speaker: **Prof. Richmond Sarpong**
UC, Berkeley

“A Life in Chemistry Shaped by Diseases and Medicine in Sub-Saharan Africa”



B.A. (Chemistry) Macalester College (1995)
Ph.D. Organic Chemistry, Princeton University (2001)
UNCF-Pfizer Postdoctoral Fellow, Caltech, 2000-2004
Assistant Professor of Chemistry UC, Berkeley (2004–2010)
Associate Professor of Chemistry UC, Berkeley (2010– 2014)
Professor of Chemistry UC, Berkeley (2014–Present)
Executive Associate Dean, College of Chemistry (2018–Present)

Richmond Sarpong is a Professor of Chemistry at the University of California Berkeley where he and his group specializes in synthetic organic chemistry. Richmond became interested in chemistry after seeing, firsthand, the effectiveness of the drug ivermectin in combating river blindness during his childhood in Ghana, West Africa. Richmond described his influences and inspirations in a TEDxBerkeley talk in 2015 ([Face of Disease in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)). Richmond completed his undergraduate studies at Macalester College in St. Paul, MN with Prof. Rebecca C. Hoye and his graduate work was carried out with Prof. Martin Semmelhack at Princeton. He conducted postdoctoral studies at Caltech with Prof. Brian Stoltz.

At Berkeley, Richmond's laboratory focuses on the synthesis of bioactive complex organic molecules, with a particular focus on secondary metabolites that come from marine or terrestrial flora and fauna. These natural products continue to serve as the inspiration for new medicines. It is Richmond's hope that through the work in his laboratory, he and his coworkers will uncover synthesis methods and strategies for may contribute to more efficient ways to prepare bioactive compounds, and eventually inspire new medicines.

Of all his professional accomplishments, Richmond is most proud of the students in his research group and those with whom he has worked in the past that have gone on to their own independent careers. He enjoys teaching and was the recipient of the 2009 UC Berkeley Department of Chemistry teaching award and the 2016 Noyce Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in the Physical Sciences at Berkeley. He is also a recipient of a long list of awards in recognition of his impressive research work, including an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellowship, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Fellowship, Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award, ACS Cope Scholar Award, NSF Career Award, the 2015 Royal Society of Chemistry Synthetic Organic Chemistry Award, a 2017 Guggenheim Fellowship, the ISHC Katritzky Award, and the Society of Synthetic Organic Chemistry Japan Mukaiyama Award for 2019, to name just a few. The full list of award can be found either on the link David set up on the seminar calendar or here <https://sarponggroup.com/richmond-sarpong/>.

Since 2018, Professor Sarpong is also the Executive Associate Dean for the College of Chemistry.