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Hello from your [Lehigh Materials Science and Engineering \(MSE\) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Committee](#)! We share newsletters throughout the academic year to highlight DEI-related events, resources, and activities in our department, Lehigh community, and beyond.

We are closing out the Fall 2023 semester featuring MSE DEI Committee member Itzel Esparza (she/her/hers), who recently presented her work at the Lehigh MSE Undergraduate Research Symposium last month! Itzel presented her work focused on designing and creating a synthesis apparatus for the growth of larger Cu-BTC crystals. The apparatus will feature a corrosion-compatible autoclave that will withstand the acids essential for Cu-BTC growth, offering a controlled environment for precise pressure and temperature adjustments. The aim is to achieve larger crystals through this controlled growth, which will represent a critical advancement with implications for clean energy storage, efficient gas separation, and sustainable catalysis.



Novel synthesis apparatus for the growth of Cu-BTC, an HKUST-1 Metal-Organic Framework

I.ESPARZA, J.VALENZUELA, N.STODDARD, S.PIMPUTKAR



Itzel Esparza (MSE '24) and the title slide for her talk: "Novel synthesis apparatus for the growth of Cu-BTC, an HKUST-1 Metal-Organic Framework"

Itzel will be cycling off our committee at the end of this semester. We are grateful for her contributions and commitment over the past year and a half! Thank you, Itzel!

This month, our MSE DEI committee met with our department chair Prof. Ricardo Castro to provide guidance for a department equity audit. We developed a framework to evaluate faculty and staff service workloads. We are currently creating a survey to collect data around time dedicated to university, college, and department service. This survey will be distributed to MSE faculty and staff in early January, so please keep an eye out for this. The graduate student representatives are also surveying their peers about their service contributions in and out of the department. This data will be processed in the Spring 2024 semester. We thank everyone who has participated so far!

In December, our entire department is continuing our anti-racist training by participating in a [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion online training course](#) provided by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Health Advancement and Prevention Strategies office at Lehigh. This training complements our in-person Lehigh MSE seminar by [Dr. Robert Robinson](#), Interim Director of the [Office of Multicultural Affairs](#), titled, "Advocating for Diversity: Enhancing Your Cultural Competence" in September 2023.

If you have any questions, please contact mse-dei-committee-list@lehigh.edu and/or feel free to reach out to our committee members for more information.

Sincerely,
The MSE DEI Committee

- Lesley Chow (Faculty), pronouns: she, her, hers*
Casey Dolan (Undergraduate Student), pronouns: she, her, hers
Itzel Esparza (Undergraduate Student), pronouns: she, her, hers
Joel Garcia Jr. (Graduate Student), pronouns: he, him, his
Laura Moyer (Staff), pronouns: she, her, hers
Siddha Pimputkar (Faculty), pronouns: he, him, his
Nicholas Strandwitz (Faculty), pronouns: he, him, his (currently on sabbatical in Fall 2023)
Jonathan Valenzuela (Graduate Student), pronouns: he, him, his

