



R. Sarpong

The author presented on this page has published more than **10 articles** in *Angewandte Chemie* in the last 10 years, most recently: "One-pot Unsymmetrical Ketone Synthesis Employing a Pyrrole-Bearing Formal Carbonyl Dication Linchpin Reagent": S. T. Heller, J. N. Newton, T. Fu, R. Sarpong, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2015**, 54, 9839; *Angew. Chem.* **2015**, 127, 9977.

## Richmond Sarpong

<b>Date of birth:</b>	April 23, 1974
<b>Position:</b>	Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley
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<b>Education:</b>	1995 Bachelor of Arts, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota 2001 PhD supervised by Martin F. Semmelhack, Princeton University 2000–2004 Postdoctoral position with Brian M. Stoltz, California Institute of Technology
<b>Awards:</b>	<b>2009</b> Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award; <b>2009</b> Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellow; <b>2011</b> Society of Synthetic Organic Chemistry Japan Lectureship Award; <b>2015</b> RSC Synthetic Organic Chemistry Award, ACS Cope Scholar Award
<b>Current research interests:</b>	Complex molecule synthesis; applications of transition-metal-catalyzed C–H and C–C activation in complex molecule synthesis
<b>Hobbies:</b>	Running, music, tennis

### If I were not a scientist, I would be depressed.

**My worst nightmare** is losing my sight! Chemistry is such a visual science!

**The most exciting thing about my research** is interacting with such passionate and talented coworkers and colleagues.

**I lose track of time when** I start reading a good book.

**The best advice I have ever been given** is to invest in the potential of others every time I have to make a decision.

**I celebrate success** by toasting to those that deserve the recognition.

**I would have liked to have discovered** an efficient way to harness the energy of the sun and a universal cure for cancer (these have still not been achieved but I am allowed to dream, aren't I?).

**My favorite author (fiction)** is Louis L'Amour ... which corroborates the fact that I haven't read a work of fiction since I was 12! Wilbur Smith is a close second for me.

**My top three films of all time** are *The Conqueror* (starring John Wayne); Bruce Lee's *Enter the Dragon*; *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (Clint Eastwood).

**My favorite song** is anything by Michael Jackson or Stevie Wonder. These guys were/are music geniuses. I also very much like *A Tribe Called Quest*.

**I chose chemistry as a career because** of observing first-hand the huge influence the introduction of ivermectin/avermectin in sub-Saharan Africa had on addressing river blindness.

### My 5 top papers:

1. "Rapid Construction of the Cortistatin Pentacyclic Core": E. M. Simmons, A. R. Hardin, X. Guo, R. Sarpong, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2008**, 47, 6650; *Angew. Chem.* **2008**, 120, 6752. (A different way to construct the core of a popular family of compounds.)
2. "Total Synthesis of (+)-Complanadine A using an Iridium-Catalyzed Pyridine C–H Functionalization": D. F. Fischer, R. Sarpong, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2010**, 132, 5926. (An early example of the application of metal-catalyzed C–H functionalization of heterocycles to natural product synthesis.)
3. "Unified Strategy for the Synthesis of the 'Miscellaneous' *Lycopodium* Alkaloids: Total Synthesis of (±)-Lycanadin A": A. Bisai, S. P. West, R. Sarpong, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2008**, 130, 7222. (This total synthesis forced
4. "Total synthesis and isolation of citrinalin and cyclopamine congeners": E. V. Mercado-Marin et al., *Nature* **2014**, 509, 318. (A unified approach to a family of molecules that set the stage for understanding their biosynthesis.)
5. "Total Synthesis of Alkaloid (±)-G. B. 13 using a Rh(I)-Catalyzed Ketone Hydroarylation and Late-Stage Pyridine Reduction": K. K. Larson, R. Sarpong, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2009**, 131, 13244. (Highlighted the use of methoxypyridines as relatively nonbasic pyridine derivatives and forced us to develop a Rh-catalyzed C–C bond-forming reaction.)

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