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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathan Bruce Bennett was born in Arlington, VA to Dr. Bruce and Karen Bennett and is the oldest of four children. His family moved to California when he was eight. From a young age, Nathan loved school and learning and decided to study chemistry while a student at Moorpark High School.

Nathan attended Brigham Young University (BYU) for his undergraduate education. Following his freshman year, he took a two-year hiatus to volunteer as a full time missionary for his church in Arizona. Upon returning to BYU, he began research in the lab of Profs. Noel Owen and Steven Wood where he isolated bioactive metabolites generated by endophytic fungi and bacteria found in a poisonous plant (Black Henbane). With the retirement of Prof. Owen and the completion of the sophomore organic series, he transitioned to Prof. Steven Fleming's group and investigated a photochemical rearrangement of cinnamyl acetate. This project introduced him to organic synthesis and mechanistic studies as he prepared an isotopically labeled compound that was analyzed by NMR spectroscopy. Together, these research experiences fostered a connection between bioactive natural products and organic synthesis, ultimately directing his graduate emphasis of study. Nathan graduated magna cum laude with a B.S. in Chemistry from BYU in 2008.

Upon completion of his bachelor's degree, Nathan moved to the California Institute of Technology where he pursued his Ph.D. under the guidance of Professor Brian M. Stoltz. His graduate research focused on the development of new palladium-catalyzed allylic alkylation methodology and application of these methods toward various molecular architectures and the total synthesis of several daucane sesquiterpenes. While at Caltech, Nathan met and married his wife, Chanel, and their son Eli was born a few years later. In July 2013, Nathan will begin a postdoctoral position in the laboratories of Prof. Vy Dong at UC Irvine.