

# PART ONE



Introduction



# ABOUT THE CHEMICAL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## WHAT IS THE CHEMICAL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION?

The Chemical Educational Foundation (CEF) is an internationally recognized, award-winning organization based out of Arlington, VA, with the central mission of promoting the value, importance, and benefits of chemistry and chemicals. CEF believes that investing in science education for the young is vital to the future of the chemical industry, its affiliated organizations, and our communities as a whole.

The Foundation relies on various groups – chemical distributors and manufacturers, allied organizations, educators, local governments, and consumers – to implement CEF's mission nationwide. These groups can participate on many different levels using CEF materials. Whether you would like to conduct an experiment in a classroom, distribute lesson plans to children of company employees, or champion a regional academic competition, CEF is here to help you *improve the chemistry with your community!*

## HOW IS CEF STRUCTURED?

CEF was established in 1989 by the National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD) and is funded by more than two hundred chemical distributors, manufacturers, allied organizations, and individual contributors. The Foundation focuses on educational activities for grades K-8, with programs designed to provide an important link between chemical companies and the communities in which they do business.

CEF is governed by a board of trustees (BOT). The BOT manages all CEF affairs, including program directives, funds and investments, and new business development. The BOT comprises chemical distributors, chemical manufacturers, and members of chemistry-related organizations. The BOT convenes three times a year in conjunction with NACD's Washington Fly-In, OPSEM, and Annual Meeting.

## WHY GET INVOLVED IN CEF?

CEF believes that investing in science education for the young is vital to the future of the chemical industry and its affiliated organizations. Simply put, effecting change in perceptions and knowledge among the young is much simpler and more productive than attempting to alter opinions and beliefs later in life. CEF believes that increased exposure to science education in grades K-8 will improve the understanding of, participation in, and general acceptance of chemistry, chemicals, and the industry itself.

Bridging the chemical industry/community gap through use of CEF programs serves as an effective countermeasure against negative perceptions created by misinterpretation and fear – leading to well-informed decision makers. Use of CEF materials also provides an avenue for constructive dialogue between industry and the community. It's easy. CEF provides the programs and you introduce the programs to your community. These actions, in turn, create a great community outreach opportunity for your company. They also position your company as an engaged community member and assure *you* that students in *your* community are being given an extra boost when it comes to science education.

# WHAT IS COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND WHY DOES YOUR COMPANY NEED IT?

## WHAT ARE COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP?

Community outreach is a general term that encompasses company interaction with facility neighbors, local schools, civic organizations, associations, government officials, and the general public. Outreach often includes an educational component that introduces and engages members of the community with your company or organization's mission.

Product stewardship, as it applies to the chemical industry, is a more specific type of customer outreach that demonstrates the safe handling, use, storage, disposal, and recycling of specific chemical products. Often, when industry members discuss their community outreach efforts, they include their product stewardship efforts.

## WHY DOES MY COMPANY NEED COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS?

Community outreach is a vital part of the chemical industry. In fact, most responsible practice codes, such as the National Association of Chemical Distributors' Responsible Distribution Process<sup>SM</sup>, American Chemistry Council's Responsible Care<sup>®</sup>, and the Synthetic Organic Chemical Manufacturers Association's ChemStewards<sup>®</sup>, all include specific community outreach and product stewardship requirements.

Community outreach can include just about any activity that gives your company a "face" in the community. It's your company's way of personalizing, for different audiences, a largely impersonal business that operates every day in thousands of communities across the country.

Think of community outreach as a way to get your story out and to help form the opinions that your neighbors, customers, suppliers, and local officials have about your operations. In today's competitive environment, keeping in touch with the world beyond your fence is critical to your success. In addition, the chemical industry should stand up and take credit for the good things that it does in communities across the country. Implementing and spreading the good news about the work that is being done in communities across the country will advance the entire industry.

## HOW DO I GET STARTED?

There are many ways that your company can get involved in the community. Reaching out beyond your company walls can take many different forms, depending on how much time, money, and manpower you want to put into your activity. It can be anything from handing out brochures to employees, conducting an experiment in a local classroom, or sponsoring an academic competition. Your community outreach activity is just that – yours! You know your community better than anyone, and you know what projects will work best for your company and your target audience. Most importantly, remember that it's okay to start small!

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Community Outreach and Media Guide is designed to be a quick and easy reference for chemical industry companies interested in starting a community outreach activity or expanding current activities. The guide includes background information on CEF, information about CEF programs, advice on outreach plan development, and suggested initiatives to implement in your community. The Outreach Success Stories section of the guide highlights ways in which chemical industry members have successfully implemented CEF programs in their communities. Finally, the Media Guide portion offers ways to promote and publicize your activity once the planning process is completed.

To use this guide successfully:

- Take a few minutes to read over the suggested outreach activities.
- Pick one that you think will work for your community.
- Follow the planning steps in the Develop a Community Outreach Plan section, found in the Community Outreach Basics.
- Publicize and promote your activity using the information in the Media Guide section.

Keep in mind that the activities in this guide offer just some of the ways to conduct community outreach. There is no right or wrong way to implement chemistry education!

**This guide will serve as your reference as you begin to improve the chemistry with your community!**

**Don't forget to let CEF know what you are doing in your community. Fill out the questionnaire on page 16 or contact the CEF staff. CEF will publicize your event in our newsletter and on our Web site!**

