

Foreword

This special issue of the *Journal of Hazardous Materials* contains 27 papers presented at the 2003 Annual Symposium of the Mary Kay O'Connor Process Safety Center. This event, which was held during 28–29 October 2003 in the Texas A&M University campus at College Station, Texas, focused on research, education, training, and service issues that impact safety.

The Center was established in 1995 through the generosity of Houston businessman T. Michael O'Connor. His vision and mission of the Center is to improve safety in the chemical process industry. The Center conducts programs and research activities that enhance safety in the chemical process industries. The Center's educational activities promote safety as second nature to everyone in the industry. In addition, the Center develops safer processes, equipment, procedures, and management strategies to minimize losses within the processing industry.

The objectives for holding this Symposium are three-fold. First, this annual event provides the stakeholders with research reports and updates on the activities and programs of the Center. Second, we strongly believe that the Center can help solve the complex and intriguing problems faced by the industry. Having identified these problems in discussions and forum activities at the Symposium, the tremendous expertise and resources available at the Center can be brought

to bear through research and educational programs to solve the problems. Finally, we believe this Symposium provides an independent and unbiased forum for exchange of ideas and discussion among academia, industry, regulators, and the general public.

The papers compiled here have been through a comprehensive peer-review process. Each paper was evaluated by two to three relevant experts for technical content, intellectual merit, and overall quality, and then revised as necessary, based on reviewer comments. These papers cover many aspects of process safety including regulatory issues, hazard assessment and risk management, process management, inherent safety, reactive chemicals, plant security, and others.

We hope you receive maximum benefit from this special issue, and that together, we can fulfill the vision of making safety second nature.

M. Sam Mannan
Chemical Engineering Department
Mary Kay O'Connor Process Safety Center
Texas A&M University, College Station
TX 77843-3122, USA
Tel.: +1 979 862 3985; fax: +1 979 458 1493
E-mail address: mannan@tamu.edu
Available online 25 September 2004