

From the Editor

The Chemical Educator Chemistry Club Award

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The Board of Editors of *The Chemical Educator* vote annually to determine the winner of a \$1000 award for the best article submitted by a student chemistry club. This year the board voted a tie between two articles. These articles come from two very different institutions, but have remarkable similarities. First, they both describe successful efforts at re-energizing dying chemistry clubs that had once been flourishing organizations. The need to establish camaraderie among and create a support structure for college chemistry and science majors is universally recognized. Second, the role of public service and the sharing of the students' personal enthusiasm for science with others in accomplishing the club's revitalization is stressed by the authors of both manuscripts.

The article "ACS Student Affiliates at University of Michigan Use Their Passion for Chemistry to Inspire the Community and Other Students" authored by Jonathan Irish, Suzanne Blum and Rebecca Ihrle (Volume 2, Issue 4) tells how the U of M Chemistry Club emerged from the ashes to become a very active ACS student affiliate chapter. The authors stress the

importance of both internal activities specific to bonding between students and faculty on the discipline level and external activities that allow them to share their enthusiasm for and knowledge of their chosen discipline with others. They also describe a very innovative leadership concept that allows members to spearhead the projects in which they are most interested. This encourages creativity and innovation among all of the club's members.

The second article "Rural Outreach Chemistry for Kids (R.O.C K.): A Service Project to Involve More than Chemistry Majors in a Chemistry Club" (Volume 2, Issue 3) comes from St. Francis College in Loretto, Pennsylvania. St. Francis College is a small (approximately 1500 students) liberal arts college located in a relatively poor, rural area of southwestern Pennsylvania, certainly a much different institution than the University of Michigan. Still, its chemistry students had the same goal as those at that larger public institution: to create a mechanism for camaraderie, mentoring, and support among students with similar interests and career goals. Although winning ACS Outstanding Student Affiliate awards in the late sixties and early seventies, its chemistry enrollment had declined substantially and the chemistry club, reactivated in 1995, began anew with only nine members. Ryan Howard, Jennifer Roff, Christine Wasil, and faculty-mentor Edward Zovinka tell us in detail how to plan, establish, maintain, and finance a successful student-run outreach program. Of interest to small colleges and/or small chemistry departments may be the methods they used to involve students in other majors that chemistry serves as a core discipline in chemistry club activities.

Congratulations and thank you to the chemistry club members at St. Francis College and The University of Michigan.

This issue contains the first two articles on chemistry club activities for Volume 3 of *The Chemical Educator*. Joyce Higgins, the faculty mentor for the Eastern Illinois University Chemistry Club describes an innovative and fun fund-raising activity that pits club against club (and discipline against discipline), all in the interest of helping the surrounding community in "SAACS Community Service with a Competitive Edge." Phillips and Russell tell us how to set up a mole hunt in "Our Most Unusual Activity: Want to Go on a Mole Hunt?" This article describes just one of the activities participated in by the Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin. Although the university enrollment is only

1400 full-time-equivalent students with 110 enrolled in chemistry courses, this award-winning student club boasts of 68 active members.

Chemistry clubs provide a strong support structure for chemistry students. *The Chemical Educator* welcomes faculty-sponsored articles about successful chemistry clubs or club activities to appear in the "Of Special Interest" section. Articles are intended to provide information and ideas useful in establishing or revitalizing other student chemistry clubs. Submitted manuscripts are not refereed, but their content and adequacy in meeting the goals stated above are determined by the Student Affiliate Section Editor and myself. *The Chemical Educator* provides an annual (per volume) \$1000 award for the best article that is published in this area. The award is determined by majority vote of the Board of Editors and is intended to support future club activities and/or provide support for presentation of the article at the ACS Educational Division's Undergraduate Poster Session.