

Educational Support

The Best Practices noted on this page deal with the area of Education

Educational Support

- A. Student Chapter Support
- B. Division-level Educational Foundation
- C. Knowledge-Based Publications
- D. SPE Foundation
- E. High School Science Fair Participation

A. Student Chapter Support

Several Divisions offer various forms of Student Chapter support. This support can help solidify a college student's desire to remain an SPE member after college graduation. The more the student has been exposed to SPE programs and membership benefits the greater the possibility of retaining the student member after graduation.

- The Thermoforming Division provides travel and expense funds for selected students to attend their annual Thermoforming Conference. (Thermoforming.)
- The Injection Molding Division has established funding for Student Chapter field trips and membership dues "co-pays" in a program tied to year-to-year membership gains within the Chapter. (Injection Molding.)

B. Division-level Educational Foundation

Some Divisions have created educational foundations that award student scholarships. These Divisions have established their own criteria for scholarships and solicit information from eligible students.

- Color & Appearance Division created an Educational Foundation that funds student scholarships from interest earned on an established endowment. (Color & Appearance.)

C. SPE Foundation

Many Divisions choose to support student education through the SPE Foundation, an affiliate of SPE, which was established expressly for the purpose of offering scholarships to students who have demonstrated an interest in the plastics industry. For additional information on the SPE Foundation's many programs, please contact Gail Bristol, Director/SPE Foundation.

- Several Divisions offer scholarships, administered by The SPE Foundation, to graduate or undergraduate students who are pursuing a career in the plastics industry and has experience in the specific segment of the plastics industry, such as courses taken, research conducted or jobs held. (Thermoset, Thermoforming.)
- The Foundation has several general scholarships using either directed or discretionary funds provided by SPE Divisions and Sections.
- At least one on-going scholarship is offered jointly by a Division and Section. (Product Design & Development, in conjunction with Mid-Michigan Section, in honor of Robert E. Cramer)
- Plastics Recycling with American Plastics Council awards an annual scholarship in the name of the corporation cited as the "Recycler of the Year" by the Plastics Recycling Division. This scholarship is given at their annual recycling conference. (Plastics Recycling.)
- Extrusion Division awards one \$2,500 scholarship to support graduate or undergraduate research in the field of polymer extrusion. The recipient furnishes a final research summary report. (Extrusion.)

- Divisions can also invest in SPE Foundation-developed programs. For example, the Foundation produced the "Dr. Polly Polymer" video series, aimed at middle school children. To date, many Divisions have donated funds to produce and distribute this program to schools throughout the country.

D. Knowledge-Based Publications

An excellent resource for archivable educational materials--beyond ANTEC and other formal conferences--can be the Division Newsletter.

- The Extrusion Division has published a compilation of its newsletter's long-running "Consultants Corner" and "Extrusion Hints" columns in an "Extrusion Solutions Handbook". The book has been available for the last 10 years in hard copy form and, more recently, has been introduced in CD-ROM form. (Extrusion.)
- Thermoforming Quarterly offers a practical column called "Forming Tips", providing members with practical ideas in the real world of thermoforming. (Thermoforming.)

E. High School Science Fair Participation

In an effort to encourage junior high and high school students in areas related to plastics, one Division is judging and giving monetary awards for the best science fair project.

- The Medical Plastics Division has an ongoing program at the Illinois State Science Fair. Every year, judges review student projects promoting medical plastics (or polymers, in general) and select the outstanding science fair project. The student winner receives \$200, and the teacher/sponsor receives \$100. (Medical Plastics.)

For further information about this example and how your SPE Division or Section can adapt this Best Practice, contact Tricia McKnight