Dear Friends,

Joy. The excitement I see on the faces of children during a PlastiVan® experience, the gratitude of the teachers whose classrooms we serve, the "aha" moment of a Girl Scout when she realizes that a science or engineering career is a real possibility – these things bring me great joy.

Belief. Introducing students to positive plastics education, awarding scholarships to deserving students who feel the weight of a high-price education, asking for the necessary resources from plastics-industry stakeholders to change lives – these are the things that require my belief that our work matters.

Gratitude. The way I feel about the mentors who have stepped up to guide students in Detroit, the amazement when our top scholar shares his award with other first-generation college students, the true desire of our funding partners to use their own riches to support the hopes and dreams of children – these are things for which I am grateful.

I know as you review this year’s report you will feel these things, too. The SPE Foundation’s positive plastics education supports workforce development, creates opportunities for children everywhere, and addresses the challenges and the innovation required to create a sustainable future for plastics.

When you support the work of the SPE Foundation, you are making a difference – for children, for communities, and for our world.

All the best,
Eve Vitale
Chief Executive, SPE Foundation

THANK YOU!

Reflecting on my past 18 months as the President of SPE, one thought continues to move me – the SPE Foundation is becoming a critically important part of the face of SPE as we navigate 21st century challenges. SPE has been and will always be dedicated to supporting the development of plastics professionals, and I strongly believe that the Foundation is uniquely positioned to leverage corporate dollars to do so. Whether it be through scholarships, PlastiVan® education, SPE After-School STEM Clubs or Junior Researcher Programs, the sustainability of the plastics industry workforce will be achieved by changing the perception of plastics for our youth while empowering the next generation to lead for a more innovative tomorrow. . . with a world full of plastics.

Dr. Jason Lyons, Global Market Manager – Health, Hygiene & Beauty, Arkema
SPE President, 2022
Thank you for supporting positive plastics education and inspiring future plastics professionals in 2022!

$191,875 in scholarships awarded to 51 Students at 30 Universities

$30,559 raised from SPE membership renewal donations (1,241 individuals)

$618,000 generously given to support the work of the SPE Foundation

70 donors gave more than $31,000 for the SPE Girl Scout Patch Program on Giving Tuesday

450 Girl Scouts earned their Color Your World with Polymer Science! patch

PlastiVan® and PlastiVideo® served over 16,000 students in 13 states and 42 cities

4 After-School SPE STEM Clubs

12 SPE Junior Researchers

For more information on how you can support positive plastics education and workforce development, contact us at foundation@spe.org.
The SPE Foundation offers numerous scholarships each year to talented undergraduate and graduate students seeking careers in the plastics industry.

SPE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPE CHAPTERS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORTED SCHOLARSHIPS IN 2022.

Plastics Pioneers Association
SPE Automotive Division
SPE Blow Molding Division
SPE Cleveland Section
SPE Chicago Section
SPE Chicago SPE Educational Foundation
SPE Composites Division
SPE Detroit Section
SPE Extrusion Division
SPE Flexible Packaging Division
SPE Injection Molding Division
SPE Pittsburgh Section
SPE Polymer Modifier and Additives Division
SPE Product Design and Development Division
SPE Recycling Division
SPE Thermoplastic Elastomers Technical Interest Group
SPE Thermoplastic Materials and Foams Division
Western Plastics Pioneers
Underground Devices, Inc.

$191,875
Total Scholarship Dollars Awarded

$43,625
Foundation Funds Awarded

$148,250
SPE Chapter and other Organization-Sponsored Scholarships

51
Scholarship Recipients at Universities

30
Universities

$23,250
Annual cost of attendance at a public four-year in-state institution

*according to Statista.com
This year, the SPE Foundation developed its first Girl Scout patch in collaboration with the Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas. The Color Your World with Polymer Science! patch teaches girls how scientists and engineers are improving our world with innovative materials and products while learning basic color theory. The curriculum and activities are based on the positive plastics education inherent in the PlastiVan® program.

Data shows that girls who are scouts are more likely than girls who are not scouts to become STEM professionals with leadership aspirations. The plastics industry will greatly benefit from women who understand the benefits we enjoy and challenges we face.

The SPE Foundation is proud to grow the program in 2023, bringing it to more Girl Scout councils across the country and developing a second patch focused on packaging sustainability.

SPE Color Your World with Polymer Science!

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Giving Tuesday 2022 was one for the record books! With the generous $10,000 matching gift from the SPE Automotive Division, a $5,000 combined gift from the SPE Chicago Section and Chicago SPE Educational Foundation, and more than 70 donors, $31,744 was raised to support the SPE Girl Scout Patch Program.

You can support our ongoing work with the Girl Scouts at give.4spe.org.
To honor Donald McCoy’s numerous contributions to his company and the plastics industry, Underground Devices Incorporated partnered with the SPE Chicago Section and SPE Chicago Educational Foundation to create an endowed scholarship for a student from Illinois who is studying at a midwestern college.

The first recipient of the $10,000 scholarship was Allen Román, a Ph.D. candidate and the Chief Engineer at the Polymer Engineering Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Allen’s research interests focus on merging polymer science with machine learning to predict complex relationships between processing parameters, rheology, viscoelasticity, and material composition. He is actively involved in the community as a mentor for students from historically underrepresented communities and serves as a board member for various student advisory committees in charge of advocating for all students at UW-Madison.

“This award is extremely meaningful to me because it stems from a Chicago-based organization, the city I am originally from. Growing up low-income and as a first-generation kid, I would’ve never imagined to be in the position I am in now. Thank you for this generous scholarship.”

Allen donated $1,000 of his $10,000 award to create a scholarship at UW-Madison for a student who is actively involved in the community and pursuing a STEM career.

An endowed scholarship is a donation that is invested, and the interest is used to fund scholarships each year. By endowing a scholarship, you can make a lasting difference by helping deserving students for years to come – it’s the gift that keeps giving!

Another way to create a legacy is by including the SPE Foundation in your estate plans. Making a planned gift through a bequest, charitable gift annuity, trust, or your retirement plans can support positive plastics education for years to come! For more information about endowments or planned gifts, connect with us at foundation@4spe.org.
A big part of the growth and impact of our programming is due to the support of our amazing partners.

In 2017 Braskem entered a long-term partnership with the SPE Foundation, becoming the first national sponsor of the PlastiVan® program. Braskem’s gift was used to improve and update the curriculum, to hire and train more PlastiVan educators, and to serve communities who wanted a PlastiVan visit but did not have a local sponsor. To recognize the impactful nature of their funding, Braskem’s name became part of the PlastiVan logo, appearing on shirts, lab coats, signage, and promotional materials. We are now in the seventh year of our partnership. “The significance of a repeating annual gift cannot be overstated,” said Dr. Matthew Harthcock, SPE Foundation Chair. “A multi-year commitment helps the Foundation fund its day-to-day operations as we strive to bring positive plastics education to tens of thousands of students every year. Support and trust from the plastics industry inspires us to continuously improve and expand our outreach programs.”

One of Braskem’s values is to support technology and innovation to achieve sustainable development with the purpose of making people’s lives better by creating sustainable solutions through chemicals and plastics. This commitment to sustainability is a shared value between Braskem and the SPE Foundation. The PlastiVan curriculum not only covers the chemistry of polymers and the ubiquity of plastics which support our modern lifestyle, but it touches on how our industry is innovating materials, processes, and end-of-life solutions for plastic products. Thank you, Braskem, for your commitment to us!

SPE CHICAGO and CHICAGO SPE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION donated $6,750 to support the Girl Scout Patch Program and PlastiVan®.

BEKUM AMERICA CORPORATION utilized PlastiVan® to help celebrate Manufacturing Day, serving schools and the community.

The SPE AUTOMOTIVE DIVISION’s $72,000 gift supported the Summer STEM Excel Program, Polymer Science Fairs, a Detroit Teacher In-Service, PlastiVan® Junior Researchers Program, and the SPE Girl Scout Patch Program.

BEKUM AMERICA CORPORATION

The SPE PALISADES-MIDATLANTIC SECTION donated $4,500 in support of PlastiVan® and the Honored Service Member and Fellows of the Society Scholarship Endowment Fund.

The PLASTICS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION supported the Jay Gardiner Memorial Scholarship with a $5,000 donation.

TIMBERTECH AZEK supported PlastiVan® sustainability activities at a community-wide celebration of Earth Day in Wilmington, OH.

After seeing Ecotek Lab students present at an SPE conference BASF committed $2,500 to sponsor four SPE Junior Researchers.

The SPE DETROIT SECTION donated $53,550 to support positive plastics education in Michigan.

The SPE BLOW MOLDING DIVISION gave $7,750 to support SPE After-School STEM Clubs, PlastiVan® visits, and a Community Center STEM Day.

ARKEMA committed to $10,000 a year for four years to support Arkema Junior Researchers and Scholars.

CELLANSE AND CELANESE FOUNDATION donated $80,000 to support Ecotek Lab in Detroit and ongoing positive plastics education in Northeast Texas.

COLORTECH INC. supported 6 PlastiVan® visits in Morristown, TN.

The SPE DETROIT SECTION donated $53,550 to support positive plastics education in Michigan.

The SPE MILWAUKEE SECTION donated $8,750 for PlastiVan® visits in Wisconsin.

The SPE BLOW MOLDING DIVISION gave $7,750 to support SPE After-School STEM Clubs, PlastiVan® visits, and a Community Center STEM Day.

ARKEMA committed to $10,000 a year for four years to support Arkema Junior Researchers and Scholars.

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Inspired by PlastiVan’s outreach to students in Detroit, the Automotive Division’s Councilor, Jeffrey Helms, brought his team from Celanese to a Polymer Science Fair at Detroit Edison Public School Academy during the height of the pandemic. Over two hundred students participated in the program. “It was a great experience for our team and I’m grateful for the opportunity. We’re looking forward to continuing our engagement and bringing industry and career experiences to the kids downtown,” said Helms.

Many of the students who took part in the program are members of the Ecotek Science at Work! Lab, a program which engages students in science-based research. Celanese of Auburn Hills donated $30,000 to support the students in the program, knowing they would receive multiple touches of STEM education related to the plastics industry.

“Our partnership with Celanese and SPE has created measurable outcomes for students in Detroit. Learning how chemistry affects products they use every day has created interest in the students for careers and opportunities in the plastics industry.”

- Keith Young, CEO, Ecotek

The Celanese team visited Detroit Edison high school and took the students through the design process from ideation to actual car part. To create further understanding, the students visited the Celanese facility and got short lessons in design and manufacturing as well as a demonstration of injection molding.

Impressed with opportunities for employee volunteers to engage with students the Celanese Foundation in Dallas granted $50,000 to support the work in Detroit and in Dallas where the PlastiVan team is supporting an SPE After-School STEM Club in McKinney and is working with the Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas on two scout patches related to polymer science, packaging, and sustainability.
PLASTICS EDUCATION ONE CLASSROOM AT A TIME

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2022 PLASTIVAN® AND PLASTIVIDEO® SPONSORS:

Bekum America Corporation
Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, LLC
Colortech Inc.
Plastics Industry Association
Plastics Pioneers Association
Plastrac Inc.
Shell USA, Inc.
SPE Additives and Color Europe Division
SPE Automotive Division
SPE Blow Molding Division
SPE Color & Appearance Division
SPE Detroit Section
SPE Milwaukee Section
SPE Northwestern Pennsylvania Section
SPE Palisades-MidAtlantic Section
SPE Thermoplastic Materials & Foams Division
Stephen J. Sweig PlastiVan Fund
Timbertech AZEK Exteriors

16,000 students served

“All my students loved the presentation and were amazed. They were very interactive, and we cannot wait until next time!!”
- Handy Middle School Teacher

“That was so cool!” “Can they come every day?” “Can we do this again?”
- Clare Middle School Student

For more information visit www.PlastiVan.org.

PLASTIVAN

13 STATES VISITED
42 CITIES
111 TOTAL VISITS

For more information visit www.PlastiVan.org.
Jeremy Berger is a 2013 graduate of Heritage High School in Saginaw, MI and now works as an application development engineer for Asahi Kasei Plastics North America in Fowlerville, MI. He experienced a PlastiVan® visit sponsored by the SPE Detroit Section in his chemistry class. That’s where he learned what a polymer was and that by cross-linking polymers, he could make a non-Newtonian fluid – or slime.

“The timing was perfect,” he said. “Having someone visit our class and talk about the plastics industry and it’s far reach into our everyday lives inspired me.” He had taken online quizzes as a freshman that were supposed to point him in the right career direction. “Those suggestions were so far removed from my real life. The PlastiVan opened my eyes to careers out there for a kid like me – one who was interested in math and science but didn’t really want to become an astronaut.”

At the same time his cousin was at Michigan Technological University studying chemical engineering. Jeremy visited the university for a STEM weekend. “I was excited. Everything came together at the right moment, and I knew that chemical engineers make and improve the things we use every day.”

He graduated from Michigan Tech with a degree in chemical engineering in 2017. Mr. Berger credits his chemistry teacher, Bill Erickson, for bringing real life examples of the STEM life into the classroom. PlastiVan being the most influential. When asked about Jeremy, Mr. Erickson remarked, “I’m glad to hear Jeremy is doing well! He was one of those students who makes teaching a fulfilling occupation.”

After meeting Jeremy at the Detroit SPE Automotive TPO Conference and becoming inspired by his story, PlastiVan educator Elizabeth Egan made another visit to Heritage High School in January in hopes of inspiring more students to become plastics professionals.

“PlastiVan opened my eyes to careers out there for a kid like me – one who was interested in math and science but didn’t really want to become an astronaut.”

Jeremy Berger,
Application Development Engineer
Asahi Kasei Plastics North America
The work of the SPE Foundation continues to focus on providing quality educational programs and opportunities to inspire young people to envision future careers in plastics/polymer-related industries. In our efforts to target untapped markets for workforce development, the Foundation and its partners are building strong programs in Detroit and Dallas. This includes our SPE Junior Researcher and Mentoring Program and our SPE After-School STEM Clubs.

In 2022, student researchers from Ecotek Lab in Detroit and awards $500 research stipends to students in 8th through 12th grade who are doing applied research or investigation in polymer science or plastics engineering at the lab. Our SPE Junior Researcher program grew from two to twelve students in 2022 with the help of our sponsors – Arkema, the SPE Automotive Division, and BASF.

How did the SPE Junior Researcher Program get started?
This competitive program is a collaboration between the SPE Foundation and Ecotek Science at Work! Lab in Detroit and awards $500 research stipends to students in 8th through 12th grade who are doing applied research or investigation in polymer science or plastics engineering at the lab. Our SPE Junior Researcher program grew from two to twelve students in 2022 with the help of our sponsors – Arkema, the SPE Automotive Division, and BASF.

Why is this important to students?
This program is designed to prepare students with high STEM aspirations for success as undergraduate researchers and interns in the plastics industry. Each research stipend requires that students learn to manage their own project, including budgeting, reports, and partnerships. They may use their stipend for books, software, equipment, supplies, or travel. They must also present their work in poster format at an SPE conference, a local, regional, or national science fair, or other relevant conference.

SPE After-School STEM Clubs
Our STEM clubs focus on polymers and plastics, providing hands-on education for students at all grade levels. Clubs take place during the school day, as summer programs, or after school to meet the specific needs of the school we are serving.

How did we get more sponsors in 2022?
In 2022, student researchers from Ecotek Lab presented their relevant work at the SPE Automotive’s Plastics in Electric & Autonomous Vehicle conference. Their presence and impressive posters created a buzz among attendees and exhibitors. Susan Jackson, BASF Head of Communications - Performance Materials, on why they sponsored four students. “BASF is passionate about chemistry and science education. The opportunity to work with the SPE Foundation and set up the BASF Jr. Researchers program was something we could not pass up. These students are future scientists and innovators, and we are excited to see what they do next.” The SPE Automotive Division also jumped on board by sponsoring six more students.

What outcomes are we seeing and expecting for the SPE Junior Researchers?
Students in the program become confident that the plastics industry is a viable career path. This is accomplished through the welcoming nature of industry professionals at conferences and plant tours, and the caring relationships being developed through mentoring and networking opportunities. “You can’t be what you can’t see,” said Allison Collins, mentor and materials engineer at Ford. “Students get to see real life engineers and scientists from their local area, illuminating a career possibility.”

Each student’s hard work, based on plastics-related projects and experiences, is helping earn scholarships, paving the way for a college career with less debt and anxiety (besides those calculus exams!). As part of the requirements for the award, students are learning hard and soft presentation skills. And the benefits go both ways. Mentor Raymond Kalisz, Eissmann Group Automotive, commented on why he’s committing so much time and effort to the program. “For me it’s about legacy. I’ve had a great journey and learned so much. The opportunity to share some of this knowledge with the next generation is a chance I couldn’t pass up and mentoring is so much fun. It’s the best feeling when I see the sparkle of “I got it!” when students figure things out.”

It is our hope and expectation that these students are our future leaders, both in industry and in the Society of Plastics Engineers.

In 2022 the SPE Foundation supported a new podcast hosted by Lilian Judy. Curated to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion in the manufacturing industry, Plastics & Beyond is designed to provide in-depth conversations around inclusion in the plastics industry, while exploring the trials and discrimination underrepresented groups must overcome.

Lilian Judy has a Bachelor of Science degree in polymer/plastics engineering from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and works as an applications engineer in life science at Entegris. She is a plastics engineer, member of the SPE DEI Advisory Board, and a proud advocate for women in STEM.

“My passion has always been to help create visibility for underrepresented groups in STEM. Being a part of the Plastics & Beyond Podcast presented me with a unique opportunity to have these important dialogues. I walked away from every conversation truly inspired and motivated.” - Lilian Agyemang-Yeboah

Listen on your favorite platform and look for more episodes in 2023.
SPE CHAPTERS GIVE GENEROUSLY

Look at the impact our shared work has made for our future plastics professionals in 2022. Together, the SPE Foundation and numerous SPE Sections, Divisions, and Technical Interest Groups support plastics education with generous scholarships and grants each year, assisting hundreds of students pursuing an education beneficial to the plastics industry.

$435,000+
total scholarships and grant dollars given by SPE Chapters in 2022

Thank you to our SPE Sections, Divisions, and Technical Interest Groups that awarded scholarships or grants in 2022.

Akron Section
Applied Rheology Division
Australia-New Zealand Section
Automotive Division
Bioplastics and Renewable Technologies Division
Blow Molding Division
Central Indiana Section
Chicago Section
Cleveland Section
Color and Appearance Division
Composites Division
Connecticut Section
Decorating and Coatings Division
Detroit Section
Eastern New England Section
Extrusion Division
Flexible Packaging Division
Golden Gate Section
Injection Molding Division
Milwaukee Section
Northwestern Pennsylvania Section
Oklahoma Section
Palisades-MidAtlantic Section
Piedmont Coastal Section
Pittsburgh Section
Polymer Modifiers and Additives Division
Product Design and Development Division
Quebec Section
Recycling Division
Rotational Molding Division
South Texas Section
Thermoplastic Elastomers Technical Interest Group
Thermoplastic Materials and Foams Division
Tri-State Section
Upper Midwest Section
Vinyl Plastics Division

MEET THE SPE FOUNDATION TEAM WORKING TO PROVIDE POSITIVE PLASTICS EDUCATION EVERYWHERE

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It's clear the societal benefits of plastics and polymers far outweigh the challenges. Therefore, it is imperative all generations are educated to understand and promote the benefits and work to solve the challenges of plastics. After 40 years in our industry, I am honored to be the SPE Foundation Board Chair. The Foundation’s support of positive plastics education through its initiatives – PlastiVan™ education, scholarships, grants, and Girl Scout patches – are building a strong and innovative future. I encourage you to search your heart to find a passion for our industry and commit to the Foundation’s cause. We need individuals and companies to get involved and support a material that makes the world a much better place!

- Matthew Harthcock, Ph.D., SPE Foundation Chair

Deborah Reisner, 2021 Scholar, Plastics Professional
MISSION

The SPE Foundation supports the development of plastics professionals by funding quality educational programs, grants, and scholarships emphasizing science, engineering, sustainability, and manufacturing while working to create inclusive opportunities for students around the world.

THANK YOU - SPE is a champion of positive plastics education. You can support this work by making a gift at give.4spe.org.