

North Jersey Section ACS – 2008 Annual Report Narrative

Chair: Michael Miller

A. Major Activities

Activity #1 - Improving Section Finances and Logistics

An important focus this year in the running of the Section was to improve the finances of the Section, replace retiring leaders, and increase communication in general. Though this perfect storm may have placed some Sections on their knees, the commitment and tireless effort of the numerous NJ-ACS volunteers permitted us to successfully navigate these waters and overall improve our already outstanding level of performance.

(1) Finances:

An in depth review of The Indicator finances showed that the Section was paying more to produce and deliver the Indicator than it received in the Section allotment from ACS. Increased printing and postage costs coupled with slowly falling advertising revenue had created a serious and deteriorating situation. An additional concern was that some of these, expensive, magazines were not actually being delivered to our members. After much discussion, and input from our Topical Group leaders, the Executive Committee decided to move to on-line delivery of the Indicator, thus saving the Section thousands of dollars. In an evaluation of the Sections outreach programming and financial situation, we decided to instate a voluntary dues system in order to create a new revenue stream to better serve our members.

(2) Replacing Retiring Volunteers:

After a long period of service, our Treasurer and the Editor of the Indicator had both decided to retire at the end of 2007, therefore a search for the "right" replacements were undertaken and successfully accomplished in order to fill these vital roles in the Section's operation.

In order to continue to maintain a pipeline of talent, the NJ-ACS applied for an LSAC grant for the leadership system course. This will enable us to develop future talent in a more continual manner.

(3) Communication:

One of the major issues that the Section faced was a lack of communication between the various Topical Groups (TGs) and the Executive Committee (EC). This over time created an identity crisis of sorts for the Section, as many volunteers did not know about the numerous volunteer opportunities within the Section. To resolve this, a liaison mechanism was created whereby each TG was match with a leader within the EC in order to educate volunteers of opportunities and values of the Section as a whole. Such a mechanism proved valuable in aligning the Section under one vision, providing a method for a leadership pipeline into the EC, and opening the door for continuous improvement. In addition, the 2008 Chair created a "Topical Group Council" which met to allow the TG Chair a forum to speak and coordinate activities and share ideas. This helped to lay the foundation of the idea of a Section-wide meeting in which each TG will participate and is planned for Fall of 2009.

Activity #2 - Award for Creativity in Molecular Design

In 2006, the Organic Group under the leadership of Dr. Michael Miller founded The Award for Creativity in Molecular Design and Synthesis to augment the Section's Award Programming and furnish the a sister Award

to the long standing Baekeland Award. This year the Section executed the first complete solicitation and selection cycle and it is fair to say that the 2008 award symposium was a resounding success on all levels. We had over 220 attendees primarily from our industrial base and secondarily from academia, including B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. chemists. The second Creativity Award recipient, Dr. Malcolm MacCoss, delivered the award address. He was accompanied by an absolutely outstanding group of fellow speakers, including the VP of Basic Chemistry and Head of the Medicinal Chemistry Department at Merck, Rahway, Dr. Sandy Mills, two members of the National Academy, Professors David Evans and Barry Trost, two young and outstanding members of the community, Professors Dean Toste and David MacMillan. Each of the symposium speakers has had a long relationship with Dr. MacCoss, which is a reflection of Malcolm's role as mentor and colleague and relates directly to the Award. Again, the event took place at The Palace at Somerset, which set a tone of elegance befitting the occasion. Literally every person that the committee met, from Malcolm and the other speakers to student attendees, commented on the excellence of the event. For example, a visiting professor from BYU, the past Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Directors from Merck and Schering, independent pharmaceutical consultants, and many other members of the pharmaceutical industry described the event as a "once in a life-time" opportunity for them to have been able to attend. Taken together, this Award symposium, now in its second cycle, is quickly setting a new standard for excellence.

Activity #3 - Chemistry as a Life Science Symposium XIV

Friday, March 21, 2008: The Section is proud of this continuing FREE symposium, which brings together the most well-known chemists in academia to present their work in chemistry that has a profound influence on our health. This symposium, once again, topped 640 registrants! Using the largest auditorium at Rutgers Newark Campus, attendees listened to world class presentations by Carl Djerassi (Nobel Laureate, Stanford), Paul Knochel (Ludwig-Maximilians), Alana Shepartz (Yale), Dirk Trauner (UC, Berkeley), Justin DuBois (Stanford), and Phil Baran (Scripps). The event was followed by a reception, with the total cost of the event being covered by contributions from nearly every major pharmaceutical company and in particular sponsors by 29 companies.

Activity #4 - NJ SEED College Scholars / Project SEED

The NJ-ACS established a new fund and guidelines for a "North Jersey SEED College Scholarship," set up a committee to decide who gets the scholarships, and gave out 4 scholarships totaling more than \$8000.

The students were former SEED students who, for circumstances beyond their control, could not get the usual financial loans and financial aid. Two of the four students had received SEED scholarships from the ACS for the first year of college. The students are attending Middlesex County College, Essex County College, (and then NJIT), Rutgers, and Kean. They are majoring in Chemistry or Engineering. All the money comes from a special fund set up for this purpose, rather than general North Jersey funds. This activity is on top of the outstanding achievements and contributions of our Project SEED Program which supported 98 students from North Jersey and New York by: (a) writing the grants to receive funds for stipends from National ACS, (b) raising matching funds, (c) recruiting the mentors and site coordinators, (d) recruiting, placing, and coaching the students, (e) organizing the North Jersey SEED poster session at a local meeting in September, and (f) taking 44 students and chaperones from North Jersey and NY City to the National ACS meeting in Philadelphia for the 40th anniversary celebration of Project SEED.

Activity #5 - North Jersey Newsletter Renewed

The Newsletter of the North Jersey Section, The Indicator, underwent several significant changes in 2008 to allow it to more effectively serve our members and support Section and ACS goals. The Indicator continues

to be a joint venture between the North Jersey and New York Sections with each Section being responsible for its own editorial pages and distributing the newsletter to their members. The leadership of the North Jersey Section faced three challenges in 2008 with regard to the Indicator; early in the year our long time editor tendered his resignation, it was clear that the quality and quantity of the material in the Indicator was falling and finally increasing costs and falling revenue was dramatically impacting the viability of the publication and even the Section. All three challenges were addressed and successfully resolved. After much discussion the newsletter's layout editor was appointed as editor, the Section first pushed for increased editorial content and has now established an editorial board to enhance and oversee content and finally the Section switched to on-line delivery of the Indicator for most Section members.

Activity #6 - Excellence in Technical Programming

The North Jersey Section is fortunate to have an unprecedented level of commitment from local industrial and academic volunteers who strive to deliver numerous technical programs throughout the year. This year is no exception and in fact one could argue the Topical Group's technical programs are the cornerstone of the Section and have reached a new standard of excellence. Throughout the year, the groups invited world-class scientists, educators and technology-leaders in their respective fields to present their work. Each of these numerous meetings were very well received by the membership; attendance ranging from 200 to 640. Specifically, the Section hosted symposia in Mass Spectrometry (10), Organic Chemistry (2), Drug Metabolism (2), NMR (10), Polymer Science (2), Small Chemical Business (5), Chromatography (7), and many more. Several of these events were in partnership with other scientific organizations, thereby expanding our field of impact and demonstrating an ability to serve a greater audience. A number of these activities were noted by attendees as "once in a lifetime" opportunities.

Activity #7 - Outreach: NCW, Street Fairs, Awards

The North Jersey Section's outreach activities have reached a new level of excellence this year. Due to a team of dedicated and energetic volunteers, the NJ-ACS has reached out to the community, demonstrated a passion for chemistry, and positively impacted the lives of young students. Examples of this outreach can be found in the execution of: (1) National Chemistry Week - Chem Expo: In November, 300 teacher, student and industry volunteers provided over 30 tables of hands-on activities for the 3000 visitors to the Liberty Science Museum on Saturday, October 25th, at Chem Expo 2008 to kickoff National Chemistry Week. In addition, 3 members of the local ACS and ACS-TA Board were in attendance with a banner promoting National Chemistry Week live on the ABC's Good Morning America television show broadcast Monday, October 20th. In addition, a National Chemistry Week Poster Contest was conducted in cooperation with the North Jersey Section. The organizer utilizes our teacher group as judges for this event. (2) Several of our members either judged or nominated students to compete in the 2008 Chemistry Olympiad, a multi-tiered chemistry competition that identifies the most talented high school students. Winners went on to compete nationally and subsequently attended a summer study camp and competed internationally. About 20 teachers and 150 students competed in the first screening with about 12 students selected for the next level. Two of those advanced and attended a national training camp with one of them moving on to compete internationally and winning a Bronze medal. (3) The NJ-ACS participated in 4 Street Fairs throughout NJ with amazing success. During these events, a booth was set up and volunteers shared the power of chemistry with children and parents, including demonstrations on photosynthesis, magnetism, and many others. Documentation on the ACS was also made available. (4) The ACS-Teachers Affiliates have been very active this year and their efforts have been very impactful - presenting workshops entitled, "Molemania"; setting up science demonstrations during the New Jersey Super Science Weekend at the NJ State Museum in Trenton; working with Liberty Science Museum to provide hands on activities during the 12 Days of Science event; and participating in Merck State Science

Day, a high school competition where students compete in biology, chemistry, physics and integrated science by taking subject area tests.

(5) Lastly, the NJ-ACS took great effort to organize, draft by-laws, and establish selection criteria for a new outreach Award mechanism, Freddie and Ada Brown Award. This Award recognizes and encourages high achieving middle- and high-school students, of African American and Native American heritage, to further develop their academic skills, with views on careers in the chemical sciences.

Activity #8 - Biomaterials in Medicine / Personal Care

The Polymer Topical Group (PTG) was reconstituted in early 2007 after a 20+ year hiatus. It was an NJ-ACS objective to reconstitute the group due to the opportunity to serve a large number of local members with a polymer interest. PTG is now fully operational. In 2008 it had its first full complement of planning cycles-executing two symposia while starting the planning cycles for two 2009 symposia. The administrative committee and advisory board structure has been implemented and fully staffed, and work processes and roles/responsibilities are set. This specific symposium was held on May 1, 2008 at Traves Hall in the Douglass Campus of Rutgers University. The symposium was organized by Dr. Hongbo Liu (JNJ, Ethicon). Dr. Bin Wei was the poster chair and Dr. Nicole Harris (Sun Chemical) was the exhibits chair. Of the 106 colleagues in attendance, 47 were ACS members, 35 non-ACS, 17 students, and 7 other. There were two presentation sessions consisting of 6 presentations and a poster/mixer session consisting of 17 industrial and academic posters, 2 commercial posters (Chemspeed, QSense) and 2 exhibitors (Dionex, QSense).

Activity #9 - Career Counseling for New and Experienced Chemists

These are difficult economic times, and particularly challenging for our industry. The North Jersey Section goes beyond technical programs and teaching programs to reach out to our members and students when they most need our help. The section holds a monthly resume writing workshop called Careers in Transition for those members seeking or being forced to change employment. This is run by two very experienced ACS Career Consultants, who keep building a list of career opportunity contacts and maintain an employment listing and support on the section's web page. Additionally, they personally attend technical meetings to post and announce employment opportunities to the members. The section actively counsels high school students in how to apply to college chemistry programs and apply for various grants.

Activity #10 - Member Spotlights

As part of a new initiative to enhance the content of the NJ-ACS newsletter, The Indicator, a popular new feature has been established and has the opportunity to greatly benefit our members and ACS. These "Member Spotlights" each focus on a Section member who is not visibly active within Section leadership but still support ACS, our members, and the chemical enterprise. The objective was to use the column to highlight the support of and participation in ACS that exists at the higher levels of our local organizations and to recognize those who work behind the scenes or continually support ACS in various different but unseen ways. One of the first columns of this type showcased an industrial VP who has chaired two National ACS Divisions, serves on a national committee and supports his employees in their ACS roles (e.g., William Greenlee). These articles promote the values of the ACS through the words of high level industrial and academic figures, permit interview style statements to address general concerns of our membership, and provide a new level of visibility for the Section leaders.

B. Summary - Overall Section Activities

The North Jersey Section is the largest section in the ACS. Being so, we see many of the national challenges of the Society at a local level. Several of the most troublesome issues that the NJ-ACS has faced over the past several years include: the relocation of jobs from layoffs or from outsourcing via off-shoring, state budget decreases and reductions in scientific research grants placing local academic professionals at risk, loss of revenue from longstanding sponsors, and reduced personal connections amongst sub-groups of the Section due to years of delegation. These challenges cannot be addressed with simple monthly section meetings. They require a larger effort and a sustained commitment by hundreds dedicated volunteers in all areas of the section, resulting in 94 section meetings with open attendance and countless hours of work on special projects and focused committee sessions. These efforts spanned the boundaries of academia, industry, government, and the Society. Thus, the goal of 2008 was to tackle the above- outlined challenges head on and positively impact future sustainability of the Section. In a word, the Section's leaders were asked to be "CREATIVE." This call to arms stood for key values for 2008 including: Communication, Responsibility, Energize, Active, Teamwork, Improvement, Value, and Execution.

Communication.

Due to the size and diversity of the North Jersey Section, we encounter unique communication problems due to the numerous and almost independent Topical Groups charged with Technical Programming. To insure that everyone was working together around the common good in 2008, the Section continued to hold regular planning and programming meetings with leaders representing every interest, however to augment this effort and attempt to realign the sub-groups we took additional steps. Indeed a focus of this year's administration was to establish stronger ties amongst the Topical Groups which in turn was accomplished via the creation of Executive Committee to Topical Group liaisons. These assigned individuals partnered with Topical Groups to educate these volunteers about the accomplishments and objectives of the Section as a whole, as well as functioned as an avenue to maintain a leadership pipeline for the sustainability of the Executive Committee.

Responsibility.

The North Jersey Section continues to build upon past achievements and in 2008 we insured we carried out our key responsibilities. We continued to host the "Chemistry As A Life Symposium" which provided free admission to over 640 registrants through the sponsorship of 26 local pharmaceutical companies. The Section worked through the details of the by-laws and selection process of the Award for Creativity in Molecular Design and Synthesis in order to present the honor the second Award recipient during a hugely successful Fall symposium. As in years past we participated in the "Middle Atlantic Regional Meeting" (MARM) and thus collaborated with other local Sections to provide speaking opportunities to our members.

Energize.

A cornerstone of our Section and key to our impact has been the excellent technical programming that our Topical Groups deliver each year. These events serve to energize our membership as they involve top-flight science and world-class speakers from academia and industry, and this year these symposia have reached a new level of excellence. The Small Chemical Business group explored how the current economic climate affected local companies. The Mass Spectrometry, NMR, Organic, and Chromatography Group organized industry leading events in which presentations spanned the gamut from novel approaches to sustainability and from successful case studies to key discoveries.

Active.

Since the success of the field is dependent on capturing the imagination of today's youth and thus attracting bright individuals to the sciences, our volunteers worked tirelessly to stay active in our communities as we continued to promote and expand programs such as Project SEED and National Chemistry Week (NCW). Specifically, our Project SEED Program supported 98 students from NJ and NY, members gave 2 workshops about how to use the research experience to apply to, succeed at, and choose the right colleges for a career in science, and leaders took 44 students and chaperones from North Jersey and NY City to the Philadelphia National ACS meeting so that these students could attend talks, give posters, and participate in the Project SEED 40th anniversary activities.

Teamwork.

A new level of teamwork was achieved this year as we worked to break through old barriers and partnered with other local sections and scientific societies. The fledgling Polymer Group continued to work with the Polymer Division of the ACS as they formed new ties with other organizations such as the NY chapter of the Society of Cosmetics Chemists, the NJ Section of the Society of Plastics Engineers, and ChemPharma. This effort exemplified by the Polymer Group allowed our Section to serve a broader range of local and regional audiences. In addition, the NJ Executive Committee reached out to the Topical Groups within our Section this year to establish a much closer relationship as we laid the foundations for a combined Section-wide meeting, thereby highlighting the connectivity of our fields in one unified event.

Improvement.

A consistent theme throughout 2008 was the concept of continual improvement. Through a great deal of hard work, we successfully established ways to improve our financial situation, our budget planning process, our leadership pipeline, and our alignment / interaction with local academic institutions and industry. A renewed effort and restructuring of our Long-range Planning (Review) Committee resulted in a concrete plan moving forward with detailed key deliverables. In order to improve our internal leadership, the NJ-ACS applied for an LSAC grant for the leadership system course. We selected a new Section Treasurer and Editor of the Indicator, as well as created an Editorial Board for the Section's publication. Due to these initiatives we are a better run Section which continues to impact the communities within and beyond our boundaries.

Value.

A key driver of our work this year has been to continue to add value for our membership. Due to the current environment within our work force, a great deal of effort was placed into career guidance. The Careers in Transition (CIT) team offered assistance to individuals who were employed and considering changing jobs or those that were unemployed and looking for work. At monthly meeting, the CIT attendees were introduced to hiring managers or key contacts. In addition, workshops on resume writing, networking, and general interviewing skills were provided to members. The Metro Women Chemists Committee sponsored career seminars, which was attended by students and younger chemists. At one of these events, those in attendance enjoyed an informative talk titled "Starting your Career."

Execution.

Understanding that it is not only what one does, but how it is done, the Section successfully concentrated on the execution of its events, presentations, and demonstrations in order to provide a new level of excellence.

The NJ-ACS Topical Groups and Executive Committee met twice in 2008 to share learnings and improvements which were implemented to better execute their technical programming symposia. Based on the Section's impact, a new level of vendor and industrial donations was achieved in 2008 allowing TGs to hold very impressive events which were well received by our members.

Taken as a whole, these accomplishments made 2008 an enormous success and a year of positive change within our Section. This was a year where Topical Group meetings were not considered to be self-contained but part of a greater dialog, and individuals were aligned behind a common vision in order to improve our Section and impact our communities. It is through such continual improvement and the passionate commitment that the NJ-ACS volunteers have demonstrated to the advancement of chemistry and the promotion of chemical research that is paramount for the overall development of the chemical industry and general chemical education in the area and indeed in this country. We are truly at a crossroads within our field and through the continued hard work, combined effort, and partnership with our state and national legislatures we can impact the future success of the chemical enterprise.

C. Local Section and Chair Goals

a) Local Section Goals and Assessment:

Advance Chemistry and Promote Chemical Research.

This was extremely successful via our outstanding Technical Program which is not equaled within the Society. Our numerous Topical Groups have put together top-flight symposia whereby they invited world-class scientists, educators and technology leaders in their respective fields to present their work and discuss key issues to the chemical industry.

Advance the Chemical Enterprise and Chemical Education.

This was successful through the support of the Legislative Action Network where members were encouraged to join and participate in writing letters to congressional leaders and the strength of our Teacher Affiliate Group and outreach activities which actively encouraged the education of science.

Encourage and Support Volunteerism.

This was successful and made possible by our longstanding and committed leaders. The Section continued to encourage the development of the YCC group, the NJ-ACS recognized volunteers at a general interest meeting where we presented awards, the Executive Committee established a mechanism to seek out new volunteers and link them with mentors that could guide them through our leadership pipeline.

b) 2008 Chair's Goals and Assessment:

The 2008 Chair proposed core values to represent his goals. These are combined into a word: CREATIVE. The goals included:

Communication.

This was successful as we increased the communication amongst the numerous leaders of the Section through new liaison mechanisms and swat teams which concentrated on breaking down barriers as we realigned the groups under one vision.

Responsibility.

This was successful as the Section continued to deliver the value-added programs such as the extremely successful "Chemistry As A Life Symposium." The NJ-ACS worked through the details of the new Creativity Award to select the second Award recipient. We continued our participation in MARM and found ways to continue to provide an active voice to our members through a NJ-ACS newsletter, *The Indicator*.

Energize.

The NJ-ACS successfully energized our members through the numerous technical sessions put on via our Topical Groups. We provided a new and improved level of educational programs to energize young people about the transforming power of chemistry.

Active.

The Section maintained an active role in the community and participated in numerous outreach programs to elicit excitement about science and provide assistance to underrepresented individuals. Examples of this value reside in our successful Project SEED program where we supported 98 students from NJ and NY, our involvement in street fairs and Earth Day celebrations, and our Legislative Action Network participation where we actively worked to sort ACS values and science initiatives.

Teamwork.

The Section successfully improved our teamwork throughout 2008, as new mechanisms were put in place to encourage collaboration between the numerous Topical Groups and with the Executive Committee. Due to a new practice of TG liaisons, we are better situated to find and advance new leaders into other areas of need within the Local Section. Grassroots leaders were identified and encouraged to become involved in more section responsibilities.

Improvement.

A consistent theme throughout 2008 was the concept of continual improvement. Through a great deal of hard work, we successfully established ways to improve our financial situation, our budget planning process, our leadership pipeline, and our alignment / interaction with local academic institutions and industry. A renewed effort and restructuring of our Long-range Planning (Review) Committee resulted in a concrete plan moving forward with detailed key deliverables. In order to improve our internal leadership, the NJ-ACS applied for an LSAC grant for the leadership system course. Due to these initiatives we are a better run Section which continues to impact the communities within and beyond our boundaries.

Value.

We very successfully brought value to our members throughout 2008. We focused efforts on sustainability, education, and career support. Due to the current economic climate, some of our members have been affected by company relocation, out sourcing, and mergers. Our Careers in Transition program is a valuable resource to these members. The program teaches resume writing techniques, improves interviewing skills, and provides current career opportunities.

Execution.

Understanding that it is not only what one does, but how one does it, the Section successfully concentrated on the execution of its events, presentations, and demonstrations in order to provide a new level of excellence.

The NJ-ACS Topical Groups and Executive Committee met twice in 2008 to share learnings and improvements which were implemented to better execute their technical programming symposia. Based on the Section's impact, a new level of vendor and industrial donations was achieved in 2008 allowing TGs to hold very impressive events which were well received by our members.

D. 2009 Goals

a) 2009 Local Section Goals:

- Increase membership
- Continue to plan and execute a Section Meeting
- Continue to develop closer ties with local colleges and universities
- Continue to form stronger links between the Executive Committee and the topical groups.

b) 2009 Chair's Goals:

- Improve K-8 education in chemistry.
- Redirect productivity, focusing on careers in transition
- Continue the transformation of the Indicator to an on-line entity.
- Continue to form an Indicator Editorial board
- Consider forming additional topical groups.
- Develop a teleconferencing option for Executive Committee meetings.

The North Jersey ACS Section is a community of volunteers dedicated to advancing and perpetuating the chemical sciences through education, research and development, community outreach, and legislative action. We believe that "Chemistry is at the Crossroads of Science" and that our members are making a difference by "improving lives through the transforming power of chemistry." I have been truly impressed by the ability, dedication, and accomplishments of my colleagues in providing opportunities for disadvantaged students, by sharing with the general public the uses and excitement of chemistry as in their volunteer work, and by advancing the research and development component of our mission through numerous topical groups. But these are challenging times, and challenging times breed problems in need of creative solutions. Particularly in this climate, education and career development must prepare us for the future. I suggest that we focus first on the two broad areas outlined below, K-8 science education and redirecting productivity.