

# **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SECTION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS**

Raymond A. Mugele (ca. 1992)

Manesh J. Shah (1999)

Emmett R. Miller (2009)

## **How We Got Started**

In the early 1940's, many chemical engineers were working in the San Francisco Bay area, in research, development, engineering, production, and other activities. To some of these engineers it seemed desirable to communicate with others and to meet new colleagues outside of their own departments and offices. With this in mind, Charles R. Nelson and Mott Souders, Jr. called a meeting to be held on September 29, 1944, to discuss the organization of a local section of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Fifty-one members attended this meeting, drew up by-laws, and appointed a nominating committee. On October 24, 1944, a business meeting was held to organize the Northern California Group of Chemical Engineers by adopting the proposed by-laws and electing as officers:

- Chairman Charles R. Nelson
- Vice-Chairman O.J. Chinnock

- ca. 1949 NorCal joined with other engineering disciplines as a member of a Sacramento based organization called the California Legislative Council for Professional Engineers. CLCPE's mandates include pro-bono support to the Legislature on technical/scientific/engineering matters and overseeing legislation related to the California Engineers Act and the profession.
- 1956 Chernineers (spouses auxiliary) founded. This vibrant support group continued until the early 1980's, when it had become increasingly difficult to distinguish 1980

- 2001 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (Reno) – H. Amin (GAC)
- 2003 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – D.K. Spencer (GAC)
- 2006 99<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – C.L. Murphy (GAC)
- 2013 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – B.V. Yeh (GAC), C. Cooper (co-MPC)
- 2016 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – D. Alkaya (GAC), L. Li (co-MPC)

## **The South Bay Subsection**

During the course of development of NorCal, a number of additions (and one subtraction) have occurred. One of the additions was the South Bay Subsection. In the 1960's, some concentrations of chemical engineers were found outside the San Francisco Bay Area (e.g., in the vicinity of Reno, Davis, San Jose, and Palo Alto). The only area inhabited by enough members to justify a sub-section organization appeared to be the Santa Clara Valley and its environs. Accordingly, a number of NorCal members of this area obtained the support of NorCal to form a Subsection which would have its own members (who would all be members of NorCal) and would be subsidized by NorCal. Professor Allen Smith of San Jose State University spearheaded this effort in 1961. Collaborating with Russell Phillips (chairman of NorCal in

## **The One-Day Symposium**

Although it deserves a better name, the April event held by NorCal each year has always (since 1962) been known as the One-Day Symposium. It does indeed last for a full day, although requiring months of preparation, organizing, cajoling, and soliciting before it flies. To date forty eight one-day symposia have been held. Many themes have been featured by the One-day Symposium including Computer Applications in Chemical Engineering, Challenges of Environmental Conservation, What is Ahead for the Chemical Engineer in the Next Ten Years and among the last few years, New Treatment Technologies in Solving Environmental Problems, Chemical Engineering in the Year 2000 and Beyond, New Challenges and Technologies, Environmental Pollution Control - New Policies, Programs and Technology Developments, Chemical Engineering and the Biotechnology Industry and Sustainability. The event combines talks by eminently qualified speakers with a delicious meal, vendor displays and the opportunity to network.

In addition to the technical program, the Symposium also is the venue for presenting the College Awards and the Chemical Engineering Excellence Awards (see below).

In addition to the resources of NorCal and the participating vendors, generous grants supporting the One-Day Symposium are provided each year by a number of companies that operate in this area and employ chemical engineers.

## **NorCal Awards**

Following the example of the national AIChE, NorCal has established a number of awards to recognize achievements, contributions, abilities, and prospects of people in Northern California involved in activities related or potentially related to chemical engineering. These awards include the following:

- Mott Souders Scholarship. Monetary awards from a special fund, presented to a number of outstanding high school students (each year since 1975). Award winners are from five different high schools in our territory. These awards are a memorial to Mott Souders, one of the founders of NorCal, and active in the Section for many years, giving many of us administrative and technical guidance. Dr. Souders was also active in national AIChE, and served on the Council.
- Section Professional Progress Award. Established in 1982, this award

- Chemical Engineering Excellence Awards: These awards were instituted in 1995. Several awards are

1977-78 J.M. Dotson	1978-79 R.D. Sheeline
1979-80 S.D. Bagg	1980-81 G.W. Roy
1981-82 N. Van Klavern	1982-83 S.R. Wilson
1983-84 C.L. Horine	1984-85 J.W. Bagg
1985-86 M.K. Buchanan	1986-87 T.T. Cheung
1987-88 I. Holtzberg	1988-89 R.S. Upadhye
1989-90 B. Cruz	1990-91 H. Levine
1991-92 J.K. Tuck	1992-93 M.J. Shah
1993-94 H. Amin	1994-95 E.E. Enssani
1995-96 R.A. Katin	1996-97 R.A. Katin
1997-98 C.L. Murphy	1998-99 T.E. Karis
1999-00 J.P. Murphy	2000-01 D.K. Spencer
2001-02 M.R. Qadir	2002-03 A. DaCosta
2003-04 T. McVey	2004-05 J. Lange
2005-06 W.J. Smith	2006-07 V. Basaran
2007-08 R.J. Eisele	2008-09 B.V. Yeh
2009-10 J.L. Bender	2010-11 J.L. Bender
2011-12 H. Lin	2012-13 (vacant)
2013-14 L. Li	2014-15 D. Alkaya
2015-16 M. Bazargani	2016-17 T.W. Fogwell
2017-18 A. Narani	

## **NorCal Members who have been Officers and Directors of National AIChE**

### **Presidents**

H.D. Guthrie (1969), Irving Leibson (1974), W.K. Davis (1981), R.R. Hughes (1982).

### **Vice Presidents**

H.D.Guthrie (1968), Irving Leibson (1973), W.K. Davis (1980), R.R. Hughes (1981).

### **Treasurer**

Andre DaCosta (2011-13)

### **Directors**

E.B. Chiswell, Jr. (1955-57), Charles R. Wilke (1960-62), W.C. Edmister (1962-64), Mott Souders (1964-66), J.R. Fair, Jr. (1965-67), H.D.Guthrie (1965-67), R.L Pigford (1965-67), Irving Leibson (1967-69), R.R. Hughes (1969-71), E.L. Ekholm (1970-72), W.K. Davis (1972-74), A.V. Caselli (1975-77), J.M. Fox III (1976-78), H.M. Rodekahr (1979-81), Ann Ruebush (1987-89), C. Judson King (1987-89), J.M. Braus (1988-90), A.T. Bell (1991-93), Andre DaCosta (2005-07), Diane K. Spencer (2014-16)

Note: Officers and Directors of the AIChE are elected by the entire international membership. Thus you can see that NorCal, through the years, has contributed substantially to leadership of the AIChE.

## **NorCal Members who have Chaired National AIChE Committees and Divisions**

### **Awards Committee**

Alexis T. Bell (1990)

### **Professional Legislation Committee (now part of Licensure and Professional Development Committee)**

Joseph M. Fox III (1988-89), Emmett R. Miller (1990-92).

### **Women's Initiative Committee**

Teresa T. Cheung (Chaired the Women and Minorities Subcommittee (1994-96) followed by the ad hoc Gender Equity Task Force (1995-97). Those activities culminated in the formation of the Women's Initiative Committee in 1997).

### **Separations Division**

Andre DaCosta (2007).

## **National AIChE Awards Received by NorCal Members**

**William H. Walker Award for Excellence in Contributions to Chemical Engineering Literature** (Given to encourage excellence in contributions to chemical engineering literature).

Robert L. Pigford (1958), Charles R. Wilke (1965), John M. Prausnitz (1967), Theodore Vermeulen (1971), James R. Fair, Jr. (1973), C.Judson King (1976), L.E. Scriven (1977), Morton M. Denn (1984), Alexis T. Bell (2005)



**Heat Transfer and Energy Conversion Division (cosponsored with ASME Heat Transfer Division) – Max Jakob Memorial Award**

Alexander L. London (1984)

**George Lappin Technical Programming Service Award**

Andre DaCosta (2016)

**John M. Prausnitz Institute Lecturer Award (renamed for JMP in 2015)**

**Listing in “100 Chemical Engineers of the Modern Era”**

Andreas Acrivos, Alexis T. Bell, Harvey W. Blanch, Ed Ekholm, James R. Fair, C. Judson King, Chaiton Khosla, John M. Prausnitz, James R. Swartz

**Members of the National Academy of Engineers**

Andreas Acrivos, Thomas Baron, Alexis T. Bell, Michael Boudart, Arup K. Chakraborty, W. Kenneth Davis, Morton M. Denn, James R. Fair, Jr., Alice P. Gast, George E. Keller, Chaiton Khosla, C. Judson King, Alan S. Michaels, John S. Newman, Robert L. Pigford, John M. Prausnitz, L.E. Scriven, Monroe E. Spaght, Charles V. Sternling, James R. Swartz, Charles W. Tobias, Charles R. Wilke.

**Where**