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Editorial



## Celebrate Engineering

This year, as AIChE celebrates its 100th birthday, we salute the many contributions of chemical engineers to improving the world. This month, we also celebrate National Engineers Week, Feb. 17–23. One of America's oldest professional outreach efforts (founded in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers), it aims to increase interest in engineering careers among students and raise public understanding and appreciation of engineers' contributions to society, as reflected in this year's theme — Engineers Make a World of Difference.

Each year, thousands of engineers across the country mark National Engineers Week in various ways, both collectively and individually. For example, the New York Local Section joins with other technical societies for a networking dinner and a presentation by a distinguished engineer on a topic of general interest. This year's speaker, Leslie E. Robertson, P.E., will talk on "Tall Buildings: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow — Technical Limits on How High We Can Build Tall Buildings." Many other local sections of AIChE and the other engineering societies hold similar events. There might be an interesting one near you.

Since its inception in 1992, the Engineers Week Future City Competition has introduced hundreds of thousands of young people to engineering. Teams of middle school students work with teachers and volunteer engineer-mentors to create cities of tomorrow through research, software design (using SimCity 3000 software), and model building, and then present their cities through written essays and oral presentations. Winners of the regional contests move on to the national finals, held in Washington, DC, during Engineers Week, where the grand prize is a trip to Space Camp in Huntsville, AL. More than 30,000 students from 1,111 schools (a record number) are participating in this year's event, the theme of which is "Keeping Our City Infrastructure Healthy: Using Nanotechnology to Monitor City Structures and Systems." With so many children and teachers eager to learn first-hand about engineering and have fun along the way, the engineers who serve as mentors truly do make a difference.

You can find dozens of other ways to celebrate and promote engineering on the National Engineers Week Foundation's website, [www.eweek.org](http://www.eweek.org). For instance: Design Squad, a reality show featuring real high school students who compete to design, construct and test functional, whimsical machines; Cyberchase, an action-packed animated math adventure series on public television; Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day (Feb. 21), during which girls in grades K-12 experience engineering in the workplace firsthand; a list of "50 Ways One Engineer Can Make a Difference" ([www.eweek.org/site/engineers/50ways.shtml](http://www.eweek.org/site/engineers/50ways.shtml)); and more.

The New Faces of Engineering program celebrates the accomplishments of young engineers who have been in the workforce five years or less by highlighting their contributions and the resulting impacts on society. The top individuals from the sponsoring societies will be featured in a full-page ad in USA TODAY during Engineers Week and profiled online at [www.eweek.org](http://www.eweek.org) and [www.discoverengineering.org](http://www.discoverengineering.org). AIChE's New Face will appear in next month's issue of CEP.

How are you celebrating engineering this month? Share your experiences with us, and we will publish the best stories in a future issue.

Cynthia Mascone  
Editor-in-Chief