



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 2, 2021

Contact: Gordon Ellis

Email: gorde@aiche.org

American Institute of Chemical Engineers Celebrates the Extraordinary Societal Contributions of Organizations and Leaders

Gala honors Moderna for its response to COVID-19; leaders of American Chemistry Council, Chemours, and HBCU Week Foundation for establishing Future of STEM Scholars Initiative

NEW YORK, NY — The American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) celebrated the contributions of the company Moderna, and showcased the good works of chemical engineers and their employers, at the 2021 AIChE Gala, held December 1 at The Metropolitan Club in New York City. A livestream of the gala program was available for those who could not attend the in-person event.

Moderna was recognized “for leadership in the discovery and development of innovative solutions that have saved and improved lives through healthcare” — in particular, for its work with messenger RNA (mRNA) and the related development of the company’s vaccine for COVID-19. The honor for Moderna was accepted by Stéphane Bancel, the company’s Chief Executive Officer.

In accepting the recognition, Bancel said “The past twenty months have been both historic and life changing — as we have come together across business, education, and government to make what is proving to be a profound impact. At Moderna, we feel a deep sense of responsibility and pride in being part of a solution.” He added: “As we near the end of 2021, I continue to be humbled by the role our team has played to serve humanity.”

The gala also featured the presentation of AIChE’s Doing a World of Good Medal to the leaders of three organizations that partnered with AIChE to establish and launch the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (FOSSI).

A collaboration of AIChE, the American Chemistry Council, Chemours Company, and HBCU Week Foundation, FOSSI provides scholarships of \$40K over four years, along with mentorship leadership training, and internship opportunities with sponsoring companies, to students majoring in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Receiving the Doing a World of Medal were Ashley Christopher, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of HBCU Week Foundation; Chris Jahn, President and Chief Executive Officer of the

American Chemistry Council; and Mark Vergnano, Chairman of the Board of the Chemours Company. Vergnano also serves as the founding chair of the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative.

In his reflections on the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative, Vergnano noted that — more than a philanthropic endeavor — FOSSI is a talent acquisition initiative. “U.S. industry will need more than one-million STEM-educated graduates over the next decade to fuel our future and create a better world. There are just not enough of these STEM graduates coming out of school and into our industry. Tapping into underrepresented, smart, motivated, and talented scholars is a fantastic way to bridge this talent gap,” said Vergnano.

In its inaugural year of 2021, FOSSI provided funding to 151 STEM scholars, pursuing 17 majors at 26 different HBCUs. To date, more than \$15 million has been raised from 45 organizations to underwrite FOSSI scholars — with a goal of supporting 1,000 scholars by 2025.

In her remarks during the gala, AIChE’s Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer June C. Wispelwey lauded the founding partners of FOSSI. “Since its launch last year, the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative has been important for improving diversity throughout the STEM workforce. It points to a brighter future for those within the engineering profession — not just for the FOSSI scholars but also for our companies and the STEM professions overall,” said Wispelwey. She added, “FOSSI is something that all of its supporters can take pride in — and we thank you for being a part of it.”

The 2021 AIChE Gala raised more than \$530,000 to underwrite programs to attract and retain students from underrepresented groups to the STEM professions; to foster a more equitable and inclusive workforce; and to improve the general public’s understanding of the importance of science and technology in modern life.

The annual gala supports these and other transformative priorities of the AIChE Foundation and its Doing a World of Good campaign, which focus on advancing chemical engineering and bringing that expertise to bear for the good of society. To date, the campaign has raised more than \$30 million toward those objectives.

The 2021 Gala’s dinner chairs were Bruce Chinn, Chief Executive Officer, Chevron Phillips Chemical; Jim Fitterling, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Dow; Karen McKee, President, ExxonMobil Chemical Company; Lori J. Ryerkerk, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and President, Celanese Corporation; John Y. Televantos, Senior Partner, Arsenal Capital Partners; and Michael Thien, Senior Vice President, Merck and Company, Inc.

For more information about AIChE’s 2021 Gala, including a photo gallery and details about its honorees and supporters, visit www.aiche.org/gala.

###

About AIChE:

AIChE is a professional society of more than 60,000 chemical engineers in 110 countries. Its members work in corporations, universities and government using their knowledge of chemical processes to develop safe and useful products for the benefit of society. Through its varied programs, AIChE continues to be a focal point for information exchange on the frontiers of chemical engineering research in such areas as energy, sustainability, biological and environmental engineering, nanotechnology, and chemical plant safety and security. More information about AIChE is available at www.aiche.org.

###