

*If you want to see a highly exothermic reaction, bring together these two “reagents”—an ACS Student Affiliates (SAACS) Chapter and National Chemistry Week (NCW). The energy released from this combination has been helping power the NCW program since the very first celebration in 1987.*

At Cameron University in Lawton, OK, the SAACS/NCW reaction can be traced to a bus ride in 1986. Ann Nalley (ACS '72), the SAACS faculty adviser, had learned that ACS was sponsoring a contest for student affiliates to propose a logo and slogan for the new NCW program (it was actually known as “National Chemistry Day” that first year). During a ride back to campus from a SAACS outing, Nalley encouraged the students to brainstorm about images and slogans that could convey the benefits of chemistry to the general public.

One of the group’s suggestions—a logo that merged a globe and a flask, along with the pithy phrase, “Chemistry: The Solution to the Future”—earned first prize in that national contest and inspired the logo eventually developed for the NCW program.

## GROWING TOGETHER

In the 15 years since that first SAACS/NCW collaborative effort, the two programs have helped each other grow in hundreds of locations around the country. SAACS annual reports are filled with details of highly successful NCW programs.

LaTrease Garrison (ACS '99), program manager of ACS Undergraduate Programs, reports that many chapters sponsor campus-based events, including open houses, chemistry demonstrations, and trivia, art, and writing contests. Other chapters reach out into their communities, hosting events at local elementary schools, shopping malls, and science museums.

ACS local sections have learned that involving SAACS chapters can help ensure a successful NCW program. “Student affiliates chapters in your community can serve in a variety of roles,” Kathleen Thompson (ACS '97) advised NCW coordinators. She is the manager of the ACS Office of Community Activities. “They range from being audience members to being event volunteers to being a full-fledged partner organization.” One model that some sections have found especially effective is to first train student affiliates to conduct chemical demonstrations or hands-on activities and then to draw on these student affiliates as volunteers (whether in elementary classrooms, science museums, or university laboratories).

## HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

At Cameron University in recent years, student affiliates have joined with members of the Wichita Falls–Duncan local section and the nearby Midwestern State University SAACS chapter to run an event at the local mall. On their own campus, Cameron student affiliates sponsor ChemQuest, a half-day program for gifted and talented 6th graders. An enthusiastic group of 60–80 students visit the campus and carry out hands-on activities such as making soap, nylon, and dry ice volcanoes. Last year, students celebrated the NCW theme “Kitchen Chemistry” with a hands-on exploration of the chemistry of milk.

Because NCW is celebrated annually in early November, it's often the first big project of the year for a SAACS chapter. "We start gearing up early in the semester, and we use NCW to build momentum for the rest of the year. It's a great way to bring students together," says Nalley.

There's no question that the SAACS/NCW reaction is an exothermic one, releasing a great deal of energy. What are some of the other byproducts of this reaction? According to Garrison, Nalley, and Thompson, the list of benefits includes

- team-building within the chapter,
- networking between college students and chemistry professionals,
- stimulating public interest in chemistry,
- raising the visibility of individuals and institutions within the local community, and
- simply having fun!

## THE WINNING FORMULA

Want to help celebrate NCW 2001? Scheduled for November 4–10, 2001, this year's national theme is "Celebrating Chemistry and Art". The NCW Web site ([chemistry.org/ncw](http://chemistry.org/ncw)) provides a good starting point for getting involved. Contact the **ACS Office of Community Activities** at **1-800-227-5558, ext. 6097**, to find out the NCW coordinator for your local section.

Attention student affiliates: Once again this year, ACS is sponsoring a SAACS contest. The NCW 2001 T-Shirt Design Contest invites students to demonstrate their originality and creativity while incorporating the theme "Chemistry: The Winning Formula". Details about contest rules and prizes are available from the ACS Office of Community Activities. Entries must be received by January 28, 2002.

If you want to see your idea displayed on T-shirts around the country, you'd better start brainstorming now. We understand that Ann Nalley and her Cameron University students might just be chartering another bus.

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*Randy Wedin is a science writer in Wayzata, MN, and founder of Wedin Communications.*

## Top 10 Reasons for SAACS Chapters To Celebrate NCW

10. I'm proud to be a chemist.
9. It lets people know that chemistry is cool.
8. It teaches you more chemistry.
7. It brings new recruits to your chapter.
6. It gives you a chance to share the excitement of our discipline.
5. It gets you involved with your community.
4. It gives you a chance to meet chemistry professionals.
3. It gives you items for your résumé.
2. It increases awareness of your chapter.
1. It is one of the major outreach programs of your professional organization—ACS.

This list was generated by student affiliates attending a workshop at the ACS national meeting in San Francisco, March 2000. It was refined by Dr. Theresa Thewes (ACS '87), NCW Task Force Chair, 1998–2000, and Tom Murosky (ACS '01), Edinboro University of Pennsylvania SAACS.

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