Committee on Project SEED

San Francisco, CA, August 13, 2014

Mr. President, Members of the Board, and Fellow Councilors,

Project SEED is celebrating its 46th year. The number of high school students impacted by this program is approaching 10,000. At this time many of these economically disadvantaged students are completing summer research experiences that can alter their lives in positive ways. The research experiences with volunteer mentors provide training in chemical sciences and serve as an introduction to the chemical professions and career paths. This summer more than 400 students are performing research in chemistry and related fields with research mentors in academic, governmental, and industrial laboratories in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

This year, the Committee awarded 28 Project SEED College Scholarships to17 female and 11 male alumni students. The awardees hail from 16 states and Puerto Rico. These scholarships are awarded to freshman students majoring in chemistry or chemically-related fields.

The Committee hosted three events celebrating Project SEED at this meeting. On Sunday afternoon, a reception and poster presentations were held to honor Project SEED students, donors, and volunteers. At Sci-Mix, 22 Project SEED students from the California, Pittsburgh, Portland, and Snake River Local Sections and from Clark Atlanta, Stanford, and Western Kentucky Universities presented posters. At the ChemLuminary Awards, the finalists for Outstanding Project SEED program were California, the Chemical Society of Washington, and New York. The award went to the Chemical Society of Washington section.

At this meeting, the Committee reviewed key issues that impact Project SEED. These issues pertain to the project selection, college scholarship applications, and geographic distribution of the program. The Committee proposed to modify the current process for the selection of research projects. The modification seeks to enhance the selection process by asking mentors to more fully describe the proposed research projects. To increase the quality of scholarship applications, the Committee reviewed and approved changes to the Scholarship application. To expand the presence of Project SEED to all 50 states, the Committee established and approved a Geographic Expansion Subcommittee. This group will promote Project SEED at local and regional meetings and PacifiChem. To improve the professional education of Project SEED students, the Committee established an Ethics Task Force and discussed implementation of ethics guidelines for Project SEED students as a requirement for all programs.

As I close my term as Chair of Project SEED, I would like to thank the ACS, the staff, donors and volunteers for your support during exciting and challenging times. As a Project SEED mentor for four years, I have found the experience to be incredibly reinvigorating as both the students and I discover and re-discover the beauty and the joy of learning chemistry. I leave you with two questions. Wouldn’t you like to be part of Project SEED? And how can you contribute to Project SEED?

Mr. President this concludes my report.

Sandra Bonetti, Chair