

Council Oral Report

ACS President-Elect (Dallas, TX)

Mr. President and my Fellow Councilors,

It is an honor to be standing here today as President-Elect of the American Chemical Society. Thank you for entrusting me with these three years. There are many things that the President of the ACS is called upon to do: speak at local sections, interact with our sister societies in the U.S. and abroad, and be a spokesperson for chemistry with the media, to the public, and in testifying before Congress. I pledge to you that I will execute these responsibilities in a way that brings additional luster to the world's largest scientific society.

In addition, I have three major areas that I intend to focus on while I am in the Presidential Succession. These are areas where my industrial career of 30+ years enables me to make a unique contribution.

The first area is helping to change the conversation in the media and the public around chemicals and the chemical industry. All too often, when something bad happens—like the egregious chemical spill in West Virginia—the only message that gets out is that the chemical industry is a bad player. In fact, this kind of event is rare. I would like to focus during my tenure in the Presidential Succession on the positive role that chemistry and the various industries that are built on chemistry play in our daily lives. I will work with ACS committees and staff to ensure that I personally deliver that message in a variety of forms. We will work to ensure that our chemistry experts and Chemistry Ambassadors have the tools they need to convey that message.

The second area is related to education of our youth. Everyone talks about the need to attract young people into careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (what we call STEM), but I believe there is more that we can do. We need to provide teachers of chemistry with more information about how what they are teaching relates to the chemical, pharmaceutical, biotech, and other industries whose very success depends on chemistry. One way in which we can do that is through our new American Association of Chemistry Teachers, which ACS is launching later this year. I plan to highlight the importance of education at multiple levels - formal, informal, and international - during a Presidential symposium at the Boston National Meeting in 2015. I will work with American Association of Chemistry Teachers to see how the online resources it plans to deliver to chemistry teachers could incorporate more of the exciting work that the chemical industry does to “improve people’s lives through the transforming power of chemistry”—the ACS Vision.

And finally, I plan to work with the ACS Committees, local sections, and technical divisions along with ACS staff from the Membership & Scientific Advancement Division to help increase awareness of the value of ACS to industrial scientists. My goal is to increase the number of ACS members from industry, here in the U.S. and around the world.

(SLIDE 1)

I am looking for your input and welcome your ideas. Please send them to me at either address shown on the slide (d.schmidt@acs.org and president@acs.org).

Mister President, this concludes my report.