

# friends

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report of the SME Education Foundation for 2003. It has been an eventful and gratifying year notable for a number of significant "firsts":

- The first Science, Technology & Engineering Preview Summer Camp (STEPS) to be held in Illinois took place at Bradley University's Peoria campus. This expansion of the STEPS program was made possible by a grant from Caterpillar, Inc.
- The first Future Leaders of Manufacturing Scholarships were awarded. Created in partnership with SME, these scholarships and the application process for them were designed to strengthen ties with SME's student chapters. Students can not apply directly for the scholarships, but must be nominated by their chapter's faculty adviser.
- Our National Youth Program Council selected the Careers in Engineering for Women (CEW) Program at the University of Texas at Austin as the first winner of its Building the Future Award. This Award recognizes excellence in programs that engage middle school students and/or educators in an effort to increase the number of young people, particularly women and minorities, choosing careers in the fields of manufacturing, engineering, science, and technology.

On a sadder note, I must mark the passing of one of the Foundation's first leaders, Ralph Cross. Mr. Cross was a charter member of the SME Education Foundation Board of Directors, and in 1982 he contributed \$50,000 to help start the Foundation's endowment fund. We are still reaping the benefits of his vision and generosity.

In reviewing 2003, I must also comment on a striking addition to the national agenda. The state of manufacturing, manufacturing education, and the manufacturing workforce have received attention from all levels of government and all types of news media. The prominence given these issues is certainly a validation of the Foundation's work, but I cannot help but feel that it is also a call to action. We can and must do much more, both through our own programs and in alliance with other organizations.

This expanded effort will, of course, require a greater level of commitment from our leadership, our volunteers, and our donors; but with this commitment I believe the Foundation can make a signal contribution to the advancement of manufacturing and manufacturing education.

It is a worthy goal, and as a continuing member of the board, I look forward to working with you to achieve it.



Saul K. Fenster  
2003 SME Education Foundation President

