

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY EARL E. WALKER



Earl E. Walker

The SME Education Foundation made significant progress in 1996 with an exciting number of important events that merit attention. For instance, 1996 was the first year that your Foundation:

- Awarded \$16,057,676 in cash and in-kind gifts to 127 institutions (a new record).
- Used its new mission statement, "The Society of Manufacturing Engineers Education

Foundation serves the members of the manufacturing profession by providing support for the advancement of education for manufacturing."

- Received a total of \$78,075 in Chapter and Region * endowment gifts. These gifts were matched by SME. These gifts represent hefty increases over the 1994 total of \$17,719 and 1995's total of \$30,511.
- Received another \$67,008 in individual endowment gifts, which were also matched by SME.
- Closed the year with a record-breaking total of \$16,972,143 in its endowment fund.
- Received \$3 million from SME to support the Manufacturing Education Plan.

Two million dollars of the \$3 million gift bolstered your Foundation's endowment while \$1 million will provide grants to assist colleges and universities in developing curricula to bridge workplace competency gaps. Your Foundation will work hard to match these SME gifts.

The need for your Foundation and SME to work together to bridge workplace competency gaps is enormous. For example, the American Society for Training and Development forecasts that by the year 2000 more than 65% of all jobs will require some education beyond high school, and 23 million people will be employed in professional and technical jobs that require ongoing training. Also, nearly 50 million workers need additional training just to perform their current jobs effectively.

The Manufacturing Education Plan is a three-phased program designed to focus on identifying and closing the competency gaps between manufacturing's workforce needs and what is provided by current educational programs. The first phase targets the identification and subsequent correction of present competency gaps perceived by industry in manufacturing engineers and technologists graduating from colleges and universities. Competency gaps were defined as skills and knowledge desired by industry but missed among the newly hired graduates. Industry input was gathered through a series of workshops conducted from February through May of 1997, concluding with a national congress held in Washington, DC, in June 1997. The plan also includes

starting lifelong learning programs for manufacturing professionals during Phase II, while Phase III focuses on K-12 and vocational education programs.

Beginning in 1998, your Foundation will support the Manufacturing Education Plan with the new grants program funded by SME and interested parties. The grants will assist post-secondary institutions to develop new programs that bridge workplace competency gaps.

To help promote this new grants program, the Foundation worked with officials at The Boeing Company to produce a promotional video tape entitled, "Closing Workforce Competency Gaps." If you would like a copy of this video for presentations, please call the SME Education Foundation office at (313) 271-1500, ext. 511. Here's what two prominent individuals say about the Manufacturing Education Plan as SME and the SME Education Foundation strive to raise funds to support the plan.

"Manufacturing engineers must be the best in relation to their counterparts anywhere in the world. The education base that is being striven for in the SME Education Plan is critical to that competitiveness and our success as a nation seeking to create wealth for the good of all society." — Robert W. Galvin, Chairman, Motorola Inc. executive committee

"The SME Manufacturing Education Plan is absolutely crucial. If the aerospace industry is to continue its dominant position, we need those kinds of talented, capable people." — Phil Condit, President and CEO, The Boeing Company

"An effort such as SME's Manufacturing Education Plan certainly is going to be a very useful element of the cooperative effort that we have to have among SME, our schools and the auto industry." — Donald Petersen, Retired Chairman and CEO, Ford Motor Company

"SME's plan is really a rich one which will yield graduates who are capable of sound engineering design and which shall be able to realize products that are elegant, safe and environmentally sound." — Dr. Joseph Bordogna, Deputy Director, National Science Foundation

"We heard from our manufacturing engineering programs at the schools. They said we're doing the best we can; help us improve the quality, the job competency of our graduates. SME had to do something. This system needs to be improved. The Manufacturing Education Plan is the answer." — Alan T Male, PhD, PE, 1997 SME President

It's going to take a joint effort between industry, education and government to solve these problems to remain globally competitive. With your interest and support, we'll get this important job done. Of course, your tax deductible gift would be appreciated.