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Chemical Educational Foundation Names Dow Retiree Larry Sernyk First-Ever *You Be The Chemist* Community Champion of the Year

Dr. Larry Sernyk Recognized as Community Champion for Devotion to Chemistry Education

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Chemical Educational Foundation (CEF) today announced its first-ever Community Champion of the Year, former Dow AgroSciences Canola Breeder and Project Manager, Dr. Larry Sernyk. Dr. Sernyk is one of 14 Community Champions recognized this year for their contributions to volunteerism and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education in communities across the nation. Since connecting with *You Be The Chemist* in 2010, Sernyk has led almost 40 hands-on workshops as an instructor certified through CEF, in addition to organizing and expanding the *You Be The Chemist* Challenge in Indiana.

New in 2018, CEF's Community Champion Program celebrates the ongoing support that the chemical industry provides to elevate the role of science and chemistry in learning and life. *You Be The Chemist* relies on program sponsors and their employees to implement programs in local communities nationwide. CEF is proud to spotlight individuals like Dr. Sernyk who have shown their commitment to students, educators, communities, and chemistry.

Dr. Sernyk shares a lifetime's knowledge of chemistry with his community through his involvement with *You Be The Chemist*. His passion for education and community outreach emerged during his role as a project leader for Dow AgroSciences and his volunteerism originally took form judging state and international science fairs; it then evolved to bringing STEM activities to public schools and events. He went on to organize Dow AgroSciences' Science Ambassador group to increase the impact of the company in local communities before joining *You Be The Chemist*. Building on Indiana's State Challenge, Dr. Sernyk was instrumental in adding eight Local Challenges across the state.

"CEF is thrilled to name Dr. Larry Sernyk our 2018 Community Champion. We are very fortunate to have Larry bringing chemistry to life for students in his community – not every middle schooler gets the chance to perform hands-on experiments during class or have an educator with such extensive background in chemistry," said CEF Executive Director Dwayne Sattler. "Larry and all of our Community Champions have inspired countless students through *You Be The Chemist*, and our 42 National Challenge Participants are living proof of their impact."

In both his professional and volunteer roles, Dr. Sernyk has contributed to the greater good. Dr. Sernyk's discovery and patent of omega-9 canola oil reduced unhealthy trans-fats in food products, and his subsequent development of insect-resistance in cotton meant the crop needs less insecticide. Knowing that a curious mind is a tool that lasts throughout a career and into



retirement, Dr. Sernyk instills the same curiosity in his students as his mentors did for him. Through his involvement in *You Be The Chemist* and avid volunteerism, Sernyk has given students the same opportunity and encouragement for learning he experienced. It's that inspiration through hands-on exploration that Sernyk hopes to introduce to help develop the STEM workforce of tomorrow.

The Chemical Educational Foundation strives to improve the overall understanding and appreciation of chemistry and inspire future leaders to pursue science-related careers. Last year, CEF's *You Be The Chemist* programs reached more than 650,000 students nationwide. For more information, please visit www.chemed.org.

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