



# PLASTICS

## M A G A Z I N E

# CELEBRATING WOMEN

## IN THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY

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Mandates Won't Solve  
Our Plastic Waste  
Problem. Here Are Four  
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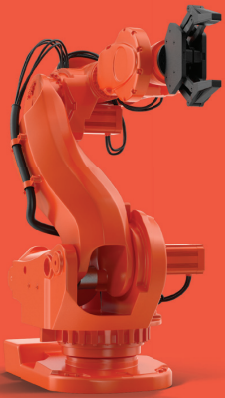
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**NPE2024** | Produced by  
The Plastics Show | **PLASTICS**  
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION



# NPE2024: THE PLASTICS SHOW IS BACK

**REGISTRATION OPENS SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**

With more than 55,000 leaders from 110+ countries representing every industry — from automotive to healthcare, consumer products to construction and more — NPE is the largest plastics trade show in the Americas and one of the most innovative business events in the world.

We can't wait to bring the plastics industry back together in Orlando, May 6–10, 2024.  
Will you be there?



For more information, visit [NPE.org/PLASTICS](https://NPE.org/PLASTICS)

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**Big  
Government  
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Won't Solve  
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Waste  
Problem.  
Here Are Four  
Solutions  
That Will.**



**SEPTEMBER 18 - 21, 2023**

**CHARLESTON MARRIOTT  
CHARLESTON, SC**

A photograph of a street in Charleston, South Carolina, featuring a prominent white church steeple with a clock face, palm trees, and historic buildings under a clear blue sky. A silver pickup truck is parked on the street. The image is partially obscured by a large red hexagon with a dark blue border.

**2023 FALL  
CONFERENCE**

[PLASTICSINDUSTRY.ORG/CALENDAR](https://PLASTICSINDUSTRY.ORG/CALENDAR)

# a letter from our CEO



Dear Members and Colleagues,

As you read this latest edition of *Plastics Magazine*, I believe you'll sense a generally consistent theme across these pages that resonates throughout the Plastics Industry Association: progress. That very forward-moving progress has offered us opportunities to shine, which are revealed in the articles and features ahead.

The biggest news at PLASTICS is our incredible sold-out floorspace for NPE2024—talk about progress! The whole team has dedicated their energy towards making NPE2024 what can only be seen as a truly original experience at one of the most innovative business events in the world. With the opening of registration just around the corner, we fully expect the largest plastics trade show in the Americas to be an unsurpassed exhibition.

At your behest, we have continued to promote the people of our industry, the hard-working professionals behind our member companies who make working in an essential, sustainable field something to be proud of. The month of March, observed as Women's History Month, gave us a great opportunity to highlight individuals from throughout our industry who lead others on a daily basis and have shared the importance of mentorship towards a strong plastics industry workforce. I know you'll find inspiration in their individual stories.

So far this year, our events have given our membership, across the entire plastics industry, a forum in which to convene, including the Fluoropolymers Conference, our Spring Meeting and Fly-In and a successful Relfocus Summit. Particularly, the excitement surrounding our activities this spring in our Nation's Capital was a highlight of 2023 and placed an important spotlight on our industry with decision makers and national leaders. As we see an overall rise in the number of event attendees, the expertise offered at each event expanding in scope and the opportunity for professional socializing and networking increasing, we are thrilled to know that the programming we are bringing to you continues to offer value, benefit and, not least of all, enjoyment.

As you peruse this latest edition, be sure to review the good work being done as PLASTICS member companies—a.k.a. Clean Up Champions—invest in the environmental health of their communities. And, you'll certainly appreciate a short walk down memory lane as we recap the adventure something as simple as a View-Master brought to the world in Classic Plastic.

These glimpses of progress will only reinvigorate your continued engagement with our team, and other professionals in our industry. I hope to see many of you later this year, both virtually and in person, at events and gatherings including our Recycling Open House, the PLASTICS Size and Impact executive briefing, the PLASTICS Vinyl Compounders Conference, and at our Fall Meeting and Conference this September in Charleston, South Carolina.

Until then,

**Matt Seaholm**  
President and CEO



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Have a great story to tell?

Share it with us at

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feature story

# A Look at Our 2023 Fluoropolymers Conference

With fluoropolymers under an unprecedented level of scrutiny, people who manufacture and otherwise deal in these vital materials welcomed an opportunity to gather at the PLASTICS 2023 Fluoropolymers Conference for an overview of the current legislative and regulatory landscape in which they operate.

In addition to updates on federal, state and international approaches to fluoropolymers—from PLASTICS analysts and invited guest speakers—attendees also heard from experts on broad-view market opportunities for fluoropolymers. Topics offered broader understanding of opportunities in various industries, including automotive, a specific session on electric vehicles, sealing devices, and cable & connectivity.

Other presentations focused on innovations in manufacturing, such as efforts to eliminate the intentional use of PFAS, emissions reductions, and how sustainability applies in the world of fluoropolymers.

Given the above-mentioned level of scrutiny experienced by the fluoropolymers community, the agenda also highlighted sessions on how to operate within an atmosphere of uncertainty, including in-depth economic insights from Dr. Perc Pineda, PLASTICS Chief Economist.

And of course, as with any PLASTICS conference, there were ample opportunities for attendees to socialize, network, compare notes, and simply unwind.



# FLUOROPOLYMERS CONFERENCE 2024

A three-day event for fluoropolymers professionals to learn about the latest trends and developments in the industry, network with other professionals, and strategize for the road ahead.

**February 5 – 7, 2024**

**Austin, TX**



# Stepping Up to Clean Up Their Communities

Recently, on the PLASTICS Blog, we began profiling the activities of member companies that have stepped up as PLASTICS Clean Up Champions, an initiative of the association's Community Impact Task Force formed by our FLiP Committee (Future Leaders in Plastics).

In case you missed them on the blog, here's a quick recap:



This year, Dart Container is celebrating ten years of DCAT—the Dart Community Action Team—a North American network of employee-led groups dedicated to the environmental health of their local communities, with a focus on marine debris prevention and mitigation. Signing on as Clean Up Champions fit right in with their goals.

"What I love most about this program is that it makes an impact on our families and ourselves as much as it does on the environment," said Libby Rice, Social Responsibility & Sustainability Specialist at Dart. "I'm so proud of the Dart employee family for embracing the DCAT initiative as they have."

Since its founding, DCAT members and even their families have logged more than 13-thousand hours of service and prevented tens of thousands of pounds of litter from settling in the environment.



Braskem, a producer of renewable plastics and chemicals focused on creating sustainable solutions—also has a tradition of environmental service. Their 2023 events include Braskem's first PLASTICS Clean Up Champions effort at East End Lagoon Nature Preserve in Galveston, Texas. This was done in partnership with the Galveston Bay Foundation.

"Braskem is excited about being a PLASTICS Clean Up Champion because we recognize the importance of eliminating plastic waste from the natural environment," said Brittany Darras, a Senior Sustainability Manager at Braskem and manager of the company's Global Volunteer Program for U.S. team members.



*Dart Community Action Teams serve their local communities.*



*The team from Braskem's clean up event in Galveston, Texas.*



*Epsilyte joined a local community team for an Earth Day event.*

Braskem is a strong proponent of the Clean Up Champions model of finding partner groups who can steer them toward opportunities and provide support. For instance, 2023 also includes working with the Pittsburgh Park Conservancy, helping to clean a section of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania's Sheraden Park.



Volunteers from Epsilyte took a break from manufacturing insulative polymers that make buildings energy efficient, help bicycle helmets absorb impact, and protect medicines in transit to join in an Earth Day event. The Perfectly Flawed Foundation, which helps people struggling with addiction, formed

a community team to clean a portion of the I&M Canal connecting the Illinois River with Lake Michigan.

"Epsilyte takes great pride in partnering with the Perfectly Flawed Foundation for the 2023 Earth Day Clean Up," said Mary Steinbach, Innovation and Sustainability Manager. "We can't wait for the opportunity to join forces again in 2024," she added, "further strengthening our collective efforts towards a cleaner, more sustainable future."

This happened in Peru, Illinois. The PLASTICS Clean Up Champions Initiative will soon be added to Epsilyte's community outreach activities in Texas, Ohio, and Quebec, as well.

# Big Government Mandates Won't Solve Our Plastic Waste Problem. Here Are Four Solutions That Will.

**Matt Seaholm**

Originally published in *Real Clear Energy*  
May 31, 2023

This week, government representatives and organizations from all over the globe will arrive in Paris, France for the second of five meetings to establish an international agreement to address the global challenge of plastic waste. The process, established by the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA), was created with an ambition to keep plastic out of our environment; however, some countries and thousands of environmental activists are making the pilgrimage to France to stop plastic production altogether. Not only is this a misguided approach to sustainability, it fails to acknowledge a fundamental truth—plastic is essential to the human health, survival and protection of our society.

So, I would like to offer some suggestions that I believe may help us to reach an actual global agreement. Let's start by concurrently agreeing that we need plastic in our lives and that we all want to keep it from getting into our environment.

A group of us representing the plastics industry will be present at these important talks over the next two years, because we know that every bit of plastic waste that leaves the economy is just that—a waste on every level. Instead, plastic should be viewed as a resource that is too valuable to permit to leak into our environment. Let me be clear, we want to see an agreement that we can carry out, effectively, with a goal of eliminating plastic waste.

Going into this meeting, we'd like to see things happen that can set the stage for real success:

1. Create the framework for ambitious yet achievable goals that produce a final agreement the United States can sign and agree to. While we know that the vast majority of plastic waste entering our world's environment comes from developing nations with limited waste management infrastructure, we also know that America must continue to lead in sustainable solutions through innovation and investment.
2. Sincere and collaborative partnerships that garner real success. Achieving the goal of eliminating plastic waste in the environment can only be achieved through collaboration and support of all aspects of society, including industry, academia, civil society and governments. The final product of these negotiations should be a consensus agreement and not solely a political statement that achieves little.
3. A greater commitment to data and transparency. A free market



with consistent, transparent information allows the most dynamic and efficient means to any outcome. It's a bit embarrassing that here in the United States, the "latest" recycling data published by the EPA is from 2018. We need to do better to make sound public policy; any agreement should include the development of standardized terminology, data and reporting elements.

4. Dedication to fostering circularity, including recycling as a requisite towards the elimination of plastic waste, and not preoccupation on production caps or bans. We must recycle more, period. The plastics industry is committed to increased recycling, but recycling systems haven't evolved with the incredible innovations in materials and products. We must also consider the vast differences between sanitation systems across the globe, especially in developing countries, and remember that national action plans must be the driver of progress. By focusing on increasing global recycling rates, rather than overreaching, one-size-fits-all mandates, we can reach collaborative, impactful outcomes.

Let us not forget that the UN Global Plastics Treaty discussion is modeled off of the UN Climate Change Conference Paris Agreement. Ironically, we can't achieve long-term climate goals without plastic. It's plastic that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by minimizing food waste, makes the efficiency of electric vehicles possible—not to mention EV batteries—enables the function of wind turbines and solar energy farms and offers lightweight properties that conserve energy throughout its lifecycle, especially while being transported. When concepts such as plastic production caps are thrown around during negotiations in the name of achieving our common climate goals, applications such as these must be considered, without fail.

While we'll undoubtedly observe more than a fair share of hyperbole, I am hopeful that treaty discussions will remain focused on reducing plastic waste in the environment, especially marine environments. We can commit to ending plastic waste while acknowledging the essential nature of plastic—we absolutely cannot do one without the other. The Plastics Industry Association looks to partner with our industry colleagues, and support international efforts to promote the elimination of plastic waste from the environment. We welcome the opportunity to participate in the global discussions taking place in Paris, and hope to add to the collaborative spirit of the negotiations.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER >>>>>>>

# PLASTICS Size & Impact 2023

PLASTICS' Chief Economist, Dr. Perc Pineda, will present our annual flagship analysis of the plastics industry's contribution to the U.S. economy during a live, online Executive Briefing.



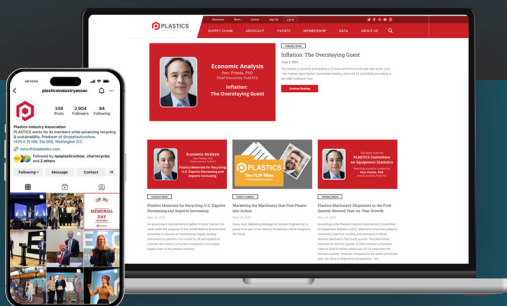
## Size & Impact 2023 Online Executive Briefing

September 7, 2023  
2:00 p.m. Eastern

Dr. Pineda will share an expert economic forecast, as well as exclusive new data on plastics manufacturing and industry employment in the U.S.

**Registration information coming in August, 2023.**

*PLASTICS Size & Impact 2023 will be available to members at no charge.*



Visit the **PLASTICS Blog** and follow us on social media for regular economic updates from Dr. Perc Pineda.

# THE POST-STANDARD

## Plastics industry: Alternatives often are worse for the environment



**Matt Seaholm**

Originally published in *The Post-Standard* and *Syracuse.com* | March 31, 2023

Agree or disagree? The goal of conservation is to reduce the number of resources we use.

It might sound surprising, but plastic is, and always has been, at the heart of conservation. Plastic was created and is preferred because it uses less energy and fewer resources to manufacture and transport than its competing materials. Plastic as a material continues to offer unparalleled safety, protection and efficiency and can be reused and recycled, eventually reducing our overall resource needs.

Do we as a society use too much “stuff?” The answer is yes. Perhaps now is the time to reestablish what conservation is really all about — doing more with less. This is what engineers and innovators in the plastics industry do every single day. They figure out how to make products lighter, thinner and smaller — all while improving performance. Is that not exactly the goal of conservation?

We are now seeing a term included in some supposedly pro-environmental state and federal legislation: “source reduction.” Recently proposed bills in the New York state Senate and Assembly demand that significantly less plastic be used over the next two years or so. These proposals don’t require the reduction in overall material, emissions or energy, but instead mandate the reduction of plastic materials, regardless of the negative environmental impacts of the alternatives. The legislation makes arbitrary demands to “get rid” of a material that is essential in many cases, but doesn’t offer an alternative, when in most cases, any material that could potentially serve as a replacement would cause higher levels of emissions and greater need for resources. The common, laudable goal is to reduce the amount of packaging or products used, but arbitrarily singling out a specific material under the false pretense of a lower environmental impact defies logic and ignores science. This legislation has wrongly defined source reduction as curtailing the use of plastic but should really be focused on resource reduction instead.

This legislation also includes Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs, which we believe, when well-crafted and successfully implemented, can be beneficial for the modernization and expansion of New York’s recycling infrastructure and that of the

U.S. However, these same bills establish an impractical EPR system that is set up for failure. If New York wants to make a difference in the amount of materials we recycle, then offer legislation that actually does that. Instead of forcing New York citizens and businesses to use materials that studies have shown are worse for the environment, let’s strive to recycle more and use less — regardless of the type of material. Imposing impossible requirements for the use of recycled material while eliminating that material from the economy and failing to modernize the New York recycling system, exemplifies these bills as misguided.

I could tell you the incredible things about plastic, but I don’t have to. We use plastic every day because it serves a purpose in thousands of ways that make our lives better. We all know that, for example, packaging and foodservice products don’t get recycled as much as they should. Let’s then focus on increasing recycling rates and turn away from the ridiculous idea that changing the material in the straw used in a restaurant will dramatically impact our environment — or that substituting paper for plastic food wrap will save our planet when we know that a plastic sandwich bag does a much better job and reduces food waste pollution.

Our industry recycles more plastic and uses more recycled material daily, but the recycling system hasn’t kept up with incredible innovations in packaging over recent decades. We have been on board with resource reduction since day one. Our members are in the problem-solving business and repeatedly deliver on our customers’ top request, “we need to do more with less.”

If lawmakers in Albany, and throughout the U.S., really mean resource reduction, they will be pleased (and potentially surprised) to know that the plastics industry is in full agreement. We stand ready to work together with elected officials on this legislation in an effort to reuse and recycle more, waste less, and use fewer of resources — to conserve. Let’s invest in recycling infrastructure, set reasonable recycled content requirements, and support promising new recycling technologies. Then, we can reset the goal to resource reduction and collaboratively crafting sound public policy that is actually friendly to the environment.



# NPE2024

## The Plastics Show

# MADE FOR YOU

May 6–10, 2024  
Orlando, FL

The most influential plastics trade show  
in the Americas is back.

If you don't already have NPE2024 on your calendar for next May, now is the time to add it! As of May 22, we've sold out every inch of exhibit space and more than 2,000 companies are getting ready to fill 1.1 million net square feet with innovative technologies you don't want to miss.

Join 55,000+ attendees from 110+ countries at the global platform for innovation in the plastics industry. Just five days at NPE2024 helps organizations stay at the forefront of transformation, drive major business growth, and build a more sustainable economy.

PLASTICS is bringing together thousands of industry leaders, experts, innovators and visionaries for an immersive experience that is sure to reshape the future of plastics.

NPE2024 is focused on creating a personalized "Made for You" experience where you can collaborate, do business, make new connections and share insights! We're adding expanded educational sessions, introducing keynote speakers, offering networking opportunities, and so much more.

### Here's what to expect.

NPE2024 will provide the ultimate space for networking and access to the newest innovations in the plastics industry. Our team is gathering experts from every part of the plastics community, including thousands of exhibitors with solutions

designed to solve your toughest challenges.

The show floor will also feature six Technology Zones where you can discover and explore state-of-the-art products and services: Advanced Manufacturing, Bottling, Moldmaking, Recycling & Sustainability, Packaging, and Materials Science.

Plus, the all-new Sustainability and Innovation stages in the exhibit hall will celebrate the creativity of the plastics industry by showcasing groundbreaking advancements and highlighting key partnerships between exhibitors and their customers.

By registering for NPE2024, you'll get exclusive access to global providers across the entire plastics supply chain, including machinery and equipment, raw materials, recycling and sustainability, automation and robotics, additive manufacturing, 3D and 4D printing, inspection, design and more. Our exhibitors service key markets like automotive, consumer products, recycling, packaging, medical, building and construction.

Whether you're returning to the show, or are new to the industry, there's something for everyone at NPE2024. Come network, expand your knowledge and plan your next strategic move. Together, we'll push the boundaries of what's possible in plastics.

**"NPE2024 will be like nothing our attendees have seen before. Far more than a trade show, it will be an experience that informs, educates, and entertains, sending people home energized about the incredible future of our industry. It's very gratifying to see how excited people are about the return of NPE. Our rapid sell-out, an influx of new exhibitors, and incredibly motivated production team have all created an atmosphere of excitement inside our association and throughout the industry."**



Glenn Anderson  
COO

## IMPORTANT DATES & INFO

**Show Dates:** May 6–10, 2024

**Location:** Orange County Convention  
Center in Orlando, Florida

**Attendee registration opens:** Tuesday, September 12, 2023

**Hotel room block registration opens:**  
Tuesday, September 12, 2023

**SAVE THE DATE**

**DECEMBER 4-6, 2023 // AUSTIN, TEXAS**



**VINYL**  
COMPOUNDERS CONFERENCE

POWERED BY  **PLASTICS**  
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

**VINYL**  
SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

PRESENTED BY THE  
**VINYL** SUSTAINABILITY  
COUNCIL

**Join us as we once again partner with the Vinyl Sustainability Council  
on an unparalleled agenda focused on all things plastic.**

Save the date and join us for informative presentations and discussions  
with an incredible array of peers from throughout the industry.

The Thompson Austin Hotel puts you at the center of all the incredible  
live music, local arts and fine dining Austin has to offer.

# Viva, Nevada!

## ENTEK shares big news at its new plant in the Las Vegas metro.

**O**n Friday, February 10th, PLASTICS member ENTEK—the leading U.S.-based producer of battery-separator films—held a press event at its new manufacturing facility in Henderson, Nevada. Numerous members of the plastics industry press and local Las Vegas media attended, as did guests including Glenn Anderson, COO of PLASTICS.

In addition to showing off their new 98,000-square-foot Henderson plant, ENTEK made several announcements, including, a major expansion of their wear parts business, development of the company's largest-ever twin-screw extruder, and plans for two U.S.-based battery separator plants funded in part by a \$200 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy.

### Expansion, Growth, and Capacity Increase

Since announcing the Henderson plant in October 2021, ENTEK has invested over \$15 million in the facility. Temperature-controlled for both its precision machining equipment and the comfort of employees, the plant houses a machine shop with CNC machinery and equipment, as well as in-house heat-treating capabilities to help reduce lead times and provide more control over parts processing. The Henderson operation also features fabrication and assembly, controls engineering and mechanical engineering departments.

ENTEK plans on using the new plant to support both its current customer base, and a new wear parts division that will serve the twin-screw extrusion/materials



compounding industry. The company builds and supplies replacement wear parts, including screws and barrels, for both ENTEK and non-ENTEK twin-screw extruders.

The new facility will also support the continued growth of ENTEK Adaptive, the company's material handling business formed with the January 2022 acquisition of Adaptive Engineering & Fabrication. ENTEK Adaptive specializes in producing material handling systems for difficult-to-convey materials.

The Henderson plant will also be used to support the growth of the fast-growing lithium battery separator side of ENTEK's business, which includes twin-screw extrusion machinery and material handling components.

### Mining a rich labor market

The decision to expand by opening a new plant in Nevada was driven by numerous

factors, including the availability of skilled labor in the greater Las Vegas metropolitan area. "We can purchase all the CNC machines money can buy, but if there are no machinists to run them, it won't make any difference," said Tim Glover, ENTEK's Vice President of Machining.

The decision to locate in Henderson has already proved beneficial, as ENTEK has been able to aggressively recruit and hire over 50 employees and plans on hiring at least another 50 in 2023.

"ENTEK chose Nevada for the new facility because it is a growing area of the country with a strong labor market," said ENTEK President, Kim Medford. "We used an outside firm to do a multi-city survey, and the greater Las Vegas metro area came out first when it came to the availability of skilled labor such as machinists and engineers," she said. "It's a good location for us, and not far from our headquarters in Oregon."



## When PLASTICS Members Unite

ENTEK and Brückner Group USA, both members of PLASTICS, have signed agreements for 18 battery separator film production lines.

Rick Pekala, ENTEK CTO, shared, "We will create American jobs producing lithium battery components, using the most advanced technologies, and meeting the cleanest environmental standards in the world. Brückner's newest generation biaxial stretching film equipment together with ENTEK's material science, coating, recycling, and separator production expertise fulfills this mission."

Karl Zimmerman, Brückner Director of Sales & Marketing added, "This extraordinary partnership fills us with great pride. As two pioneers join forces, we know we will build something outstanding together to create innovative, sustainable, and reliable plants for battery separator films in America."

Linda Campbell, Vice President of Extrusion Sales for ENTEK Manufacturing, said the new Henderson facility is well on its way to supporting the company's record growth. "Increasing our manufacturing capabilities is important for us; we needed more space, and more workers, to keep up with our growth, including the growth of our wear parts business," she said. "This expansion will help us meet our aggressive forecast for new business in the coming years."

### Extending their extruder reach

ENTEK also announced that it is developing its newest and largest twin-screw extruder to date: a 160mm machine. Although ENTEK produces replacement parts up to 250mm, the largest extruder they previously offered was its 133mm model. The 160mm machine will be used for high-output applications including masterbatch compounding.

The new machine is being designed by a team of ENTEK engineers in Oregon, Nevada and California with the first 160mm extruder scheduled to ship in Q4 2024.

"We have been making replacement wear parts for this size of machine for almost 20 years, for other brands of twin-screw extruders," said Linda Campbell. "We have seen the market demand for this size and recognized the gap in our ENTEK machine lineup."

### More expansion in the U.S.A.

ENTEK CEO Larry Keith briefed the press on the company's latest plans for building two new battery-separator production plants in the U.S. These plants will produce battery-separator films for lithium-ion batteries, to support the fast-growing electric-vehicle (EV) and energy storage markets.

The plan, aided by a recent \$200 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, calls for building two new plants, one in Terre Haute, Indiana and the other in Alabama (exact location TBD). The Indiana plant will come first, and will create up to 642 new, high-wage jobs by 2027. ENTEK will invest over \$1.5 billion in the plant, to establish operations on a 340-acre greenfield site. The company plans to initially construct four new buildings covering approximately 1.4 million square feet, equipped with machinery built at current ENTEK manufacturing facilities in Oregon and Nevada.

ENTEK says these new plants represent a major effort by the Biden administration to increase U.S.-based manufacturing for the production of EVs. In October 2022, the administration awarded over \$2.8 billion in grants to boost domestic manufacturing of batteries.

*This article was written in collaboration with Greg Hanoosh of Next Step Communications.*

feature story

# Purpose, Productivity... and a Pleasure Cruise

## Scenes from the 2023 Spring Meeting and Plastics Industry Fly-In



**A**pril 18th through the 21st, PLASTICS members came to Washington, D.C. from around the U.S. and Canada to participate in our 2023 Spring Meeting and Plastics Industry Fly-In. The events included a lively four days of informative presentations, productive meetings and opportunities for colleagues from across the industry to personally and professionally connect, share information, and discuss the future of PLASTICS.

### Day One

Members hit the ground running upon their arrival in Washington. C-Suiters headed just off of Capitol Hill for a PLASTICS Roundtable at legendary D.C. restaurant The Monocle, just across the street from the U.S. Senate.

Eighteen key executives from PLASTICS member companies joined CEO Matt Seaholm for several hours of in-depth discussions. The agenda included sessions with Senator Shelly Moore Capito of West Virginia and Senator Pete Ricketts of Nebraska. Also on the agenda were Monica Medina, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, and Larke Williams, the State Department's lead plastic pollution negotiator.

Meanwhile, PLASTICS' EHS+ Committee met for the first day of events at PLASTICS' D.C. headquarters. Chaired by Terry Connell of Teknor Apex, the EHS+ Committee met over two days, covering a wide range of subjects including, air permitting, environmental justice, risk assessment, regulatory roundtables, lockout/tagout standards, and PFAS considerations.



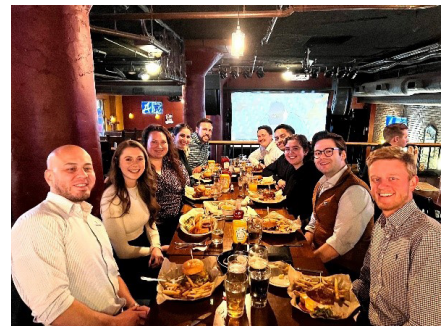
# Day Two

After an early morning briefing from members of the PLASTICS Government Affairs team, attendees made their way to Capitol Hill for several hours of informative, productive meetings with U.S. Senators, Representatives, and key Capitol Hill staffers. Members were able to express concern over legislation that could threaten our industry while also showing elected officials and their staff members how important plastics are to constituents back home.

Patrick Krieger, VP of Sustainability, led a wide-ranging discussion with the Sustainability Advisory Board and Public Policy Committee.

Some members of our FLiP (Future Leaders in Plastics) got together for a fun meal after an informative day that included a professional development presentation on communication styles for the larger group from Kristin Kelley, Vice President of Corporate Communications and External Affairs at Amcor Rigid Packaging.

Attendees capped off the Wednesday sessions by enjoying a fabulous view of D.C. during a delightful cruise along the Potomac River.



# Day Three

Thursday began with an entertaining and informative keynote address from veteran D.C. journalist Major Garrett, Chief White House Correspondent for CBS News, followed by a discussion between Garrett and PLASTICS CEO, Matt Seaholm.

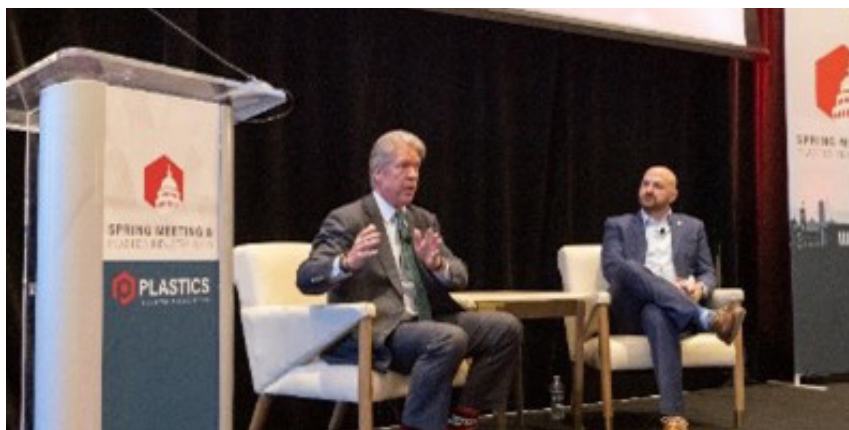
Matt Seaholm and members of the PLASTICS Executive Leadership Team provided an update and answered questions about ongoing and upcoming initiatives at the association.

PLASTICS COO, Glenn Anderson, provided an update on progress toward NPE2024, including record-breaking numbers for Space Draw and a likely sell-out of all available space at the show, a scenario that came to be with the May 22 announcement of a total sell-out. Glenn is drawing on his many years of industry experience and his role as chair for NPE2018 to lead the PLASTICS staff team focused on supporting NPE2024 Chair, Steve London and his various member-led NPE2024 committees.

PLASTICS Chief Economist, Dr. Perc Pineda, shared financial trends in an update on economics and the plastics industry.

After a series of closed-session Council and Committee meetings, attendees gathered for a final presentation featuring a Q&A with industry executives, moderated by Matt Seaholm. The panel featured John Thayer/NOVA Chemicals, Brad Crocker/Epsilyte, John Galt/Husky Technologies, Vanessa Malena/ENGEL, Jamie Clark/Printpack, Eric Roegner/Amcor Rigid Packaging.

After the final session, attendees adjourned to the nearby Tiki TNT restaurant and bar to unwind and discuss an information-packed day.



# Day Four

As the week winded down, members of the PLASTICS Board of Directors remained in D.C. for high-level discussions of PLASTICS business, and to focus on future planning.





PLASTICS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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cover story

# Celebrating Women in the Plastics Industry

March is Women's History Month, and PLASTICS celebrated with a social media campaign honoring a small sampling of the many, many talented women among our member companies. In case you missed it (#ICYMI, as they say in social media), we'd like to introduce our honorees right here. We asked each of them to share some thoughts on building and forming the next generation of plastics professionals.



**Holli Alexander**

Strategic Initiatives Manager, Sustainability | Eastman

Holli was working as a high school English teacher when her master's degree studies led her into the world of corporate learning, eventually bringing her to human resources and sales support roles at Eastman. Along the way, she became a market researcher in Eastman's specialty plastics business and never looked back. Today, Holli focuses on identifying challenging problems and using innovation & technology to deliver impactful & sustainable results for our industry.

#### On the importance of mentorship:

"There are unwritten rules that can complicate someone's ability to get things done. Seek out mentors who can help you navigate complex environments, understand how to work with different generations, and even recognize your blind spots. I try to imagine what it would be like to do the jobs I had early in my career, knowing what I know now—to be able to avoid unnecessary mistakes, move decisions along more quickly, successfully navigate politics and the dynamics of people. In my mind, this is why we need to volunteer to be mentors. Helping people be more successful is good for a company and the industry."

#### On workforce development:

"We will always need the traditional roles that make the plastic industry successful, but we also need people with strong systems views to better understand the challenges our industry is facing. We must understand where plastics fit within the broader system of materials to be able to develop options for improvement. Generally, if someone believes the solution is easy, there's a high likelihood they don't understand the complexity of the system and the potential tradeoffs of making those changes. We need to understand the big picture to enact positive changes, and people will be at the heart of that."



## Brenda Clark

Engineering Manager | HASCO America & Canada

Brenda got an early start on her career when, while drafting in high school, she was given the opportunity to work for a mold builder who wanted to mentor a student in mold design and building. The particular company's small size allowed Brenda to explore all aspects of the business, preparing her for a lifetime career. A member of the Plastics Pioneers Association, Brenda is dedicated to both driving innovation in the plastics industry and cultivating the next generation of talent.

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Especially important is seeking out an individual you can relate to; having a kindred spirit so to speak is very important for growth and can reduce job stress. And when you offer to lend assistance as a mentor you open yourself up to understand the upcoming generations better and vice versa. It allows for a deeper form of networking within the industry. You're also helping to pass on valuable information you have picked up, sometimes the hard way. We are losing many to retirement or early retirement and the next generation needs mentors so our industry will not lose valuable information."

### On workforce development:

"Catch them when they are looking for their future careers! Go to a drafting class at your local high school, or shop class if they are offering one. Go to your local community college, many now have specific career programs in plastics with graduates needing somewhere to fit in. If your community college does not have something, then work with them to help in creating a program. It takes a little thought and time but is worth it in the long run. You will find educated, eager employees trained and ready to start learning more at your company."



## Kerry Coy

Senior Product Regulatory Specialist | BASF Performance Materials

Arriving in the plastics space through assignments in which she supported the new chemical manufacturing of raw materials, scientist Kerry Coy now serves as a product regulation specialist at BASF where she works to develop and implement compliance initiatives that ensure innovative new products meet the highest standards. Kerry is also an active member of PLASTICS' EHS+ Committee.

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Identifying a mentor and establishing that relationship helped me form my career path. I have had several mentors in my career, all at different points of my career, and each of these individuals helped me make a major career decision."



## Brittany Darras

Senior Sustainability Manager | Braskem

**As a senior sustainability manager with Braskem, Brittany collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to advance a more circular economy for plastics. Her passion for sustainability is helping drive positive change across the industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Throughout your career, you will constantly be navigating how to overcome problems and obstacles, as well as how to make the right decisions for yourself, for others, and for the company as a whole. Having someone to talk to about this will often lead to better outcomes because you can hear someone else's perspectives, consider their thoughts and opinions, and get guidance on different ways to navigate the situation. It can make you feel calmer and more confident as you move forward, and this is good for your overall well-being."

### On workforce development:

"The plastics industry should be seeking its workforce from a diverse talent pool that has a passion and drive to make our industry more sustainable. Our industry is underrepresented when it comes to women, people of color, and the LGBTQIA+ community, especially at leadership levels. We need people with diverse backgrounds and experiences to help solve the complex and global challenges that exist with discarded plastics and climate change. The industry should be strategic and thoughtful on how to attract and retain diverse talent that can lead our sustainable transformation."



## Monica Filyaw

Director of Quality, Safety, & Regulatory Affairs | PolyQuest

**After graduating college with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, Monica interviewed with a few industries, settled on plastics and has never looked back. An especially active PLASTICS member, Monica has served in numerous committee roles, including Chair of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Packaging Materials Executive Board. On our EHS+ Committee, she is especially focused on advancing the quality & safety of the plastics industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"As a woman in a STEM field, I know how much I would have appreciated someone that had my perspective. My mentors were all men. They were great but some things they just didn't understand. I was at my first company 20 years, so it was easier to identify mentors, but none were like me, a woman engineer. Unlike me, today's young plastics professionals may not be in the same company for their entire career or even 5 years. If you identify a mentor that is not at your same company, it allows you to keep that relationship growing for many years."

### On workforce development:

"The industry needs to be offering more internships, and also educating the next generation about the awesomeness of plastics, using resources such as the PlastiVan®."



## Tiffany Fisher

Americas Sustainability Advisor | Chevron Phillips Chemical

Introduced by a professor to the concept of sustainability while studying chemical engineering in college, Tiffany went on to work with a college chapter of Engineers Without Borders, where she learned how an engineering career could contribute to making positive changes in communities around the world. After graduation, she joined CPChem, where she has been able to incorporate her dual passions of sustainability and tackling technical challenges.

### On the importance of mentorship:

"I find that it is important to identify a mentor that has a different perspective. Such a mentor can act as a sounding board for new ideas and can help navigate career and professional challenges. Similarly, offering to be a mentor can have a profound impact on a mentor's personal and career development as well as sustaining knowledge and fostering a culture of dialogue and collaboration for the company."

### On workforce development:

"The industry's stakeholders come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, therefore I think it is important for the plastics industry to recruit in a way that broadens our ability to attract diverse talent. Seeking this talent includes conducting outreach and recruiting into new areas and engaging in early-years STEM programs to encourage our youth to pursue a career in the industry. The future generation will shape our planet, and I believe it is important to provide them with the tools and knowledge to be successful, as well as highlight the societal benefits the plastics industry has to offer."



## Mollie Hoffman

Senior Process Engineer | Placon

Mollie's work at Placon is essential to the development of new products and ensuring the safety & quality of the products we use every day. She arrived in the plastics industry as she found plastics far more interesting to work with than other materials and was drawn to the importance of plastics to everyday life. Working in thermoform packaging, Mollie has had the opportunity to continuously improve the manufacturing process of plastic packaging and strive to make it as sustainable as possible. As an active member of PLASTICS' Future Leaders in Plastics (FLiP) Committee, Mollie is also passionate about fostering young talent in the industry.

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Mentors have been very important to my professional development. Why struggle to figure things out on your own when you can get advice from someone who has gone through the same situations already? I was paired with another woman in engineering through the FLiP mentorship program and it was great to be able to ask about her professional career and how she would handle different issues at work. Mentees learn a lot, but mentors also learn too. I've mentored a few interns and college students and the more I explain plastics manufacturing and my experiences the more it improves my knowledge and reinforces my values in my work."

### On workforce development:

"I think it will be important to create a diverse workforce and continuously include the younger generations. The best solutions come when all voices are heard."



## Vanessa Malena

President, North America | Engel

**Vanessa began her career as a design engineer in the plastics industry through a college internship, and made her mark in numerous roles at various companies before rising to her current position. A member of PLASTICS' Sustainability Advisory Board, she works tirelessly to promote & grow the plastics industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Good mentors take you outside of your comfort zone. They teach you how to challenge yourself. They work through the pros and cons of various situations and give the guidance to tackle difficult things. Life and work experience teach you lessons that you can use to help less experienced people. You guide them into not making the same mistakes you may have made. Being a mentor is a rewarding experience!"

### On workforce development:

"We should teach grade school children that plastics are good and plastic waste is bad! It is just that simple. We need plastics in our daily lives; we must use and dispose of them responsibly. This will promote more interest in plastic-related careers. Doing events and loaning equipment at plastics engineering schools helps teach the latest technology and advancement in our field. Also, we need more internships and apprentice programs to get people in roles that don't require college degrees in plastics."



## Jennifer Rapp

Customer & Applications Developer | ExxonMobil

**In her role at ExxonMobil, Jennifer develops innovative solutions to meet the product needs of new and existing customers. Her path to plastics started in graduate school when she was characterizing polymeric materials which then led to a career where she is now fully immersed in the plastics industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Not every career path is the same and being able to hear other people's success or non-success stories can help bring awareness to one's own path. Identifying a mentor with whom you feel comfortable asking difficult questions to, one who actively listens and who provides constructive feedback is important. Being a mentor not only can help the person you're mentoring, but it can enhance your own life, as well. It's a relationship in which you learn from each other. We all have received help in some way or another and providing mentorship is a form of paying it forward."

### On workforce development:

"We need to reach younger generations, new graduates, find a way to ignite passion and drive in those who are exiting the universities. Young minds equal fresh ideas. Plastics have been around for so long, being able to see the world of plastics in a new light and develop exciting new products and find new applications would help to renew and revitalize the industry!"



## Anna Ross

Packaging & Specialty Plastics Sustainability Director | Dow

**Anna was studying chemical engineering when an elective in polymer engineering captured her imagination and led her into the plastics industry. During her 23 years at Dow, Anna has excelled in a number of roles, leading to her current position, where she is instrumental in implementing sustainability initiatives including PLASTICS' own Operation Clean Sweep. Anna is also a member of the PLASTICS EHS+ Committee.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"It is critical to start forming your support network. Consider a network of people with different strengths and abilities to help you grow: technical experts in various fields, people in different functions (R&D, supply chain, manufacturing, human resources, etc.), and certainly seek out someone with strong leadership skills. Taking the initiative to offer support to others is also key, whether in an official mentorship capacity or just letting someone know they can come to you with questions. Having safe and reliable people to turn to with questions helps with overall job satisfaction and sheer efficiency while working through challenges."

### On workforce development:

"I volunteer with the Dow Leadership Academy, a 3-year pilot program that partners with high school sophomores all the way through graduation. The intent is to equip the students to be successful in whatever they choose to do following graduation, while giving them full visibility and opportunities to engage in STEM related fields."



## Kim Ryan

CEO | Hillenbrand

**Kim left college with an accounting degree but found herself on a very different career path than her degree suggested. She has held roles in finance, strategy, operations, logistics, information technology, HR, commercial division leadership, and now in the C-suite. As Hillenbrand's first woman CEO, Kim Ryan is dedicated to delivering value to customers, associates, and shareholders. A 33+ year veteran of Hillenbrand, Kim is a role model for the industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Two of the most important leadership lessons I learned came from mentors and each shaped how I lead today. One mentor was the type of leader who believed in you so much that he would assign you projects that maybe you weren't quite ready for or that were a little out of your comfort zone. I'm now a firm believer in the power of stretch assignments because they can help people see themselves differently and continually learn. The other valuable lesson I learned: it is my responsibility as a leader to empower and grow the next generation of talent, of all kinds, into our enterprise. We want to be the employer of choice for all qualified candidates, draw the best talent to our organization, and win them over."

### On workforce development:

"Studies show that a strong sense of shared purpose helps drive employee engagement, facilitate business transformation, and increase customer loyalty. That's why one of my top priorities as incoming CEO was to develop a unified Purpose to help differentiate us as an employer and provide a unifying force for our associates to rally around. As Generation Z enters the workforce, they are three times more likely to care about a company's social or environmental stance. They are interested in leaders that are ethical and transparent, while looking toward the future, which is why having a compelling company purpose is critical."



## Maureen Steinwall, PhD

President | Steinwall, Inc.

**When the time came for Maureen's moldmaker father to sell Steinwall, Inc., Maureen suggested he sell it to his daughter! With that wonderful decision, Maureen began a career in manufacturing that led to her being inducted into the Plastics Hall of Fame, for which she currently serves as President. She has spent her career championing innovation in plastics and works tirelessly to increase the representation of women in the industry.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"You must have a network outside of your organization that will help provide context around a situation without bias. I've been a mentor, and it comes with mixed results. Some want you to tell them what to do, which is not a good use of a mentor. The best results I've experienced are when the mentee brings a situation forward with optional pathways and asks for additional thoughts and ideas. A mentor is a great brainstorming partner. A mentor can also be a resource for sharing private feelings like fear or anger. The feelings need releasing to maintain a healthy life balance, but you can't do so in front of coworkers or family. A mentor is a neutral caring person who can be a good listener."

### On workforce development:

"People plan their careers around the type of work they will be performing. For example, a robot engineer wants to design and implement robotic solutions and doesn't care if the robot is working with plastics or another material. Focus on the fun that manufacturing offers. But also, plastics as a raw material historically have solved societal problems such as food waste, public health, and safety, to name a few. Advertise that they can be part of a team to find the next solution to current needs."



## Melissa Vettleson

Sustainability and Project Engineer | IPL

**Sustainability has always been a driving factor in Melissa's education and career choices, so when a job came along with a company that considers sustainability an essential principle, the move into plastics wasn't a difficult decision. Melissa says she is grateful to play a role in finding solutions to the waste problem our world faces while highlighting the positives of plastics.**

### On the importance of mentorship:

"Mentors are an essential resource that help you acclimate and excel at your job. They build you up and prepare you for what comes next. Do not make the mistake of thinking you only need a single mentor, or that they should all 'outrank' you. Mine the experiences of others; be open to learning other ways of doing things. Building your team in this fashion helps the company succeed. Do unto others as you would have them do for you. Having a background in academia, I love mentoring and watching others achieve their goals. This practice also gives insight into your own strengths and weaknesses."

### On workforce development:

"It is important to promote internally, as these persons have a history with the company and understand its goals and culture. When this is not an option, LinkedIn is a great resource. It is important to consider persons with unique backgrounds that can enhance your team and bridge any gaps."

# The Women of PLASTICS

As we've already mentioned, our PLASTICS Women's History Month honorees are just a sampling of the many women who have dedicated their professional lives to the plastics industry. A true list of the great women serving our industry would be too long to print—however, PLASTICS will continue to magnify these contributions. In closing, please note the women of the Plastics Industry Association, whose professional lives are dedicated to creating value for our members by promoting, protecting and growing the plastics industry.



Apryl Alexander-Savino  
Senior Director,  
Marketing & Events



Annemarie Allain  
Senior Manager,  
Trade Show Marketing



Andrea Barber  
Manager, Event Operations



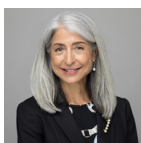
Maureen Cameron  
Senior Director, Trade  
Show Operations



Luiza Carson  
Digital Design &  
Brand Manager



Susan Celli  
Senior Director, Exhibit  
Sales & Sponsorship



Arlene Davis  
Director, NPE  
Content & Experience



Charlotte Dreizen  
Director, Sustainability  
and Environment



Danielle Fortunato  
Regional Director, State  
Government Affairs



Daniele Fresca  
Director, Trade Show Services



Camille Gallo  
Director, Communications



Marie Gargas  
Senior Technical Director,  
Regulatory Affairs



Myah Griffith  
Executive Assistant to  
the President & CEO



Monica High  
Office Manager



Ashley Hood-Morley  
Vice President,  
Industry Engagement



Leslie Jutte  
Director, Industry Engagement  
(Material Suppliers)



Claudia Knize  
Controller



Katie Koehling  
Associate, Member Relations



Autumn Kramer  
Director, Information  
Technology Operations



Madeline Kramer  
Manager, Industry  
Engagement (Equipment)



Felecia Madison  
Senior Manager,  
Event Operations



Suzanne Morgan  
Senior Director, Government  
Affairs & Grassroots Advocacy



Heather Nortz  
Manager, Sustainability  
and Materials



Vania Penaloza  
Database Specialist



Damaris Piraino  
Director, Trade Show  
Marketing



Kris Quigley  
Regional Director, State  
Government Affairs



Adrienne Remener  
Director, Data Engineer



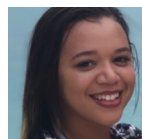
Quandra Simms  
A/P Manager



Stephanie Strategos Polis  
Vice President, Communications



Whitney Taveras  
Director, Industry  
Engagement (Equipment)



Ivory Via  
Office Assistant



Sulma Villatoro  
Revenue Accountant



The Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS) is an American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-accredited standards developer, working to ensure all plastics machinery is safely built to standard to protect our industry's most valuable resource: our people. To contribute your expertise, as a member of a PLASTICS technical committee improving both safety and productivity, email Director of Industry Standards **Jeffrey Linder** at [jlinder@plasticsindustry.org](mailto:jlinder@plasticsindustry.org). Make your voice heard.



ADVANCING SAFETY IN PLASTICS

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Be connected. Be heard. Be represented.  
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## WHO ARE WE?

The **Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS)** represents the entire plastics supply chain, globally — from materials and equipment suppliers to processors, converters and recyclers. Partnering with leading brand owners, we allow innovative companies to shape our industry's future. To help your business thrive, PLASTICS provides valuable connections to industry peers, exclusive economic data, the latest standards and regulatory information, and a voice in every state and the nation's capital.

## WHY CHOOSE US?

- ✓ **Information** — Access to exclusive economic reports, the latest manufacturing standards and more
- ✓ **Events** — Dozens of special events each year promoting partnership and innovation
- ✓ **Networking** — Meet new suppliers and customers to grow your business
- ✓ **NPE®** — We organize one of the world's largest plastics industry trade shows

## WHAT DO WE DO?



### ADVOCACY

Advocate for an environment where the plastics industry thrives.



### ENGAGEMENT

Deliver value that drives growth and engagement for members and customers.



### COMMUNICATIONS

Educate society on the true value of plastic.



### SUSTAINABILITY

Lead and rally the plastics industry in sustainable materials management.

[PLASTICSINDUSTRY.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](https://plasticsindustry.org/membership)



# Reminiscing About Re|focus 2023

Patrick Krieger

Vice President, Sustainability

During the first week of May, PLASTICS hosted our annual **Re|focus: Plastics Recycling and Sustainability**, event in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was an opportunity for leaders in the plastics industry to come together and continue to move beyond the “why” of sustainability (we already agree it’s important) to the “how.” Spending time with so many familiar and new faces and discussing the important issues we need to solve was both encouraging and rewarding.

## Understanding the larger picture

Dr. Rachel Meidl—Fellow in Energy and Environment at Baker Institute Center for Energy Studies—started us off with a keynote presentation reminding all present to avoid “carbon tunnel vision” and to keep in mind that sustainability is much broader than simply our carbon footprint.



Dr. Meidl shared that while circularity is a laudable goal, we can’t just be circular for circular’s sake. In other words, we need to be mindful and not lose sight of other important considerations like natural resource stewardship, worker health and safety, and energy consumption, all while maintaining profitable businesses. To borrow an analogy rooted in an old carnival/circus routine, we’ve been focusing on spinning one plate for a while, and now we’ve been handed a few more to spin. That’s a daunting task but, there’s good news: no one is expected to do it all alone.



Another thing Dr. Meidl offered is that sustainability is about system balance: it isn't a characteristic of a single product or even a company. You can't be sustainable unless you are part of a sustainable ecosystem with partners and peers. Effective systems thinking requires robust data to ensure that we are making rational and effective business and policy decisions. It also means that, for our industry to move from linear to circular, we have to work together.

### **Designing with sustainability in mind**

Consistent with that theme—it's not just about the material we make, but also how we make it—I was heartened to see a growing level of participation by equipment manufacturers at Rel|focus. It was interesting to see the evolution of technology; rather than adapting off-the-shelf solutions, manufacturers are focusing on new equipment designed with resin loss in mind.

For example, Hoola One shared the development history of how they designed durable vacuums to collect resin in difficult terrain. The people at IADYS were surprised when plastics companies approached them about their autonomous Jellyfishbot, originally designed to recover litter in harbors, for use in retention ponds to collect errant resin.

### **Gathering and learning together**

Rel|focus offered additional opportunities to experience other parts of the industry, as well. The three facility tours on our agenda had long waitlists and we were very thankful that Eureka Recycling was able to accommodate not one but two extra tour groups.

The tour at Cortec was the first opportunity many attendees had to visit a film producer—it was especially interesting to see how Cortec is incorporating Operation Clean Sweep (OCS) principles into their operations to reduce plastic resin loss. Operation Clean Sweep is an initiative begun by PLASTICS and managed in cooperation with American Chemistry Council to give participating companies a framework within which to reduce and eliminate resin loss to the environment.

### **Ultimately, it's about people connecting**

Outside the formal program and tours, the most valuable part of an in-person Rel|focus meeting was the opportunity to meet with peers. I was personally looking forward to attendee's reactions to the games organized for the reception, and the feedback received was universally positive. A big thank you to the game sponsors, ExxonMobil, Sabic, and PolyVision for supporting the idea.

In our post-event meeting of the Recycling Committee, many commented that they'd found the conversations they had at Rel|focus beneficial to understanding issues and developing relationships. No one can achieve circularity and sustainability alone. Rel|focus demonstrates that, by being present and engaging in solutions, we can together achieve a sustainable, circular economy.

## **Recycling Committee Update**

Andy Brewer | Associate Director, Sustainability & Recycling

The PLASTICS Recycling Committee recently met for their second annual meeting. Committee members, joined by a few first-time attendees, extended the conversation around the topics of sustainability and recycling that began during the Rel|focus: Plastics Recycling and Sustainability event.

The committee's 2023 focus has been centered around communications, advocacy, education/content, and the PLASTICS New End Market Opportunities (NEMO) programs. The committee discussed the association's busy advocacy agenda, spotlighting the FTC Green Guides, the EPA draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution, and the upcoming UNEA Plastics Treaty.

Recycling Committee members provide valuable input and expertise on all advocacy related topics, strengthening the industry's voice to build recycling infrastructure. Member engagement in current NEMO programs shows the potential for recycling certain materials and products that are historically difficult to recycle.

Advanced recycling has been a popular topic for the committee over the past few years, and efforts to educate and inform about the benefits of these technologies continue to be a top priority. The group is currently working on a position statement around mass balance and will also be hosting a learning session with the EPA Office of Policy in the summer. The Recycling Committee is open to all PLASTICS members interested in recycling and continuing their sustainability journey!

**plastic** then and now



# CLASSIC PLASTIC

Opening a 3D Window to the World

*Special content by Jim Moore*

# View-Master...hours of exploration and entertainment in the palm of your hand.

PLASTICS readers of a certain age will remember 1970s TV commercials in which Henry Fonda told America about an amazing gadget that put remarkable, full-color, 3D images before your very eyes—the GAF View-Master.

For younger readers, a bit of explanation may be in order. 1) Henry Fonda was a famous actor, 2) View-Master was (and still is) a wonderfully low-tech, analog way of viewing three-dimensional still images; users slip a disk of small color transparencies into a gizmo that looks like a pair of oddly shaped binoculars and then look through a set of eyepieces.

GAF didn't invent the View-Master, but owned it at the time of those Henry Fonda commercials, having bought the company from its original owners. However, since they owned the brand through a high-profile time frame (1966 to 1981), the "GAF" tag lingers in the minds of a lot of people who grew up looking at those amazing-for-their-time images.

## From two dimensions to three

View-Master is essentially a "stereoscope"—a device that uses two different photo perspectives of an object to enable the viewer to see a three-dimensional image of said object. They've been around since the 1800s, but about a hundred years after they showed up on the scene, the stereoscope concept was revolutionized by a scenic-postcards company in Oregon.

The View-Master story began in the 1930s, when America's largest producer of scenic postcards—Sawyer Service—who had been developing a way of viewing stereoscopic (3D) images, got together with a photography buff named William Gruber.

Gruber, as part of his own stereoscope work, had created an innovative method for taking stereoscopic images and then presenting them in a cardboard disk format, creating a brief 3D slideshow. At



the 1939 World's Fair in Queens, New York, these partners introduced the world to a device, made mostly of plastic, that opened a whole new window to the world. From the comfort of a favorite armchair, people could enjoy vivid, full-color 3D images of natural wonders and famous places from around the world, without having to make the trip.

They called their invention, View-Master—described in U.S. patent application 2,189,285 as a "Stereoscopic Viewing Device...by means of which the cost of taking and showing colored pictures will be reduced to a point where they may be enjoyed by the average person without an excessive outlay."

## More than a gimmick

Interestingly, it wasn't just the average person who enjoyed View-Master, mostly to do some 3D sightseeing. One of the first customers drawn to its multiple-image innovation was the U.S. military, which used View-Master reels for training throughout World War II.

In 1951, Sawyer's purchased View-Master's market rival, the single-image Tru Vue device, and along with it,

the company's agreement to distribute images of characters from Walt Disney Studios; that, combined with the ability to take people to the all-new Disneyland via 3D images proved a big success for View-Master, expanding its appeal beyond its travelogue roots and into the world of entertainment directed at children of the Baby Boom.

As time went by, more licenses were added to the View-Master portfolio. Anyone who remembers the aforementioned Henry Fonda commercials will also remember View-Master reels featuring images and stories based on the many cartoons and sitcoms that flourished as color television entered American homes.

By the way, PLASTICS member Eastman played a big role in View-Master history, as the provider of celluloid acetate for all those crisp, clear, full-color Kodachrome images in those famous cardboard reels.

View-Master has changed hands several times over the years (Mattel owns it today). But no matter who has owned this classic plastic brand over the years, View-Master has earned its rightful place in the memories of millions.

# WHEN AND WHERE CAN YOU SEE US NEXT?

Industry Trends. Industry Experts. Industry Solutions.



## **2023 Annual Meeting and Fall Conference**

September 18 – 21, 2023 | Charleston, SC

## **2024 Fluoropolymers Conference**

February 5 – 7, 2024 | Austin, TX

## **33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Vinyl Compounders Conference**

December 4 – 6, 2023 | Austin, TX

## **NPE2024: The Plastics Show**

May 6 – 10, 2024 | Orlando, FL

**PLASTICSINDUSTRY.ORG/EVENTS**

# Let us know what's going on at your company.

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► **magazine@plasticsindustry.org**



# FUTURE LEADERS IN PLASTICS (FLiP)

## Testimonial

Participating in FLiP has connected me to so many young professionals across the plastics industry and has supported my growth as a future leader in plastics. I have found great value in the mentorship program, book club, networking events, and community involvement volunteer opportunities. It's FLiP programs like these that prove the Plastics Industry Association truly cares about developing the next generation of plastics professionals like me.

**Mollie Hoffman,**  
**Placon Corporation**



Is your company fostering a new generation of leaders? Show support to your employees while gaining recognition for your company. Contact [FLiP@plasticsindustry.org](mailto:FLiP@plasticsindustry.org) or visit [plasticsindustry.org/flip](https://plasticsindustry.org/flip) to learn more.

## Young Professionals Are The Future

PLASTICS and Future Leaders in Plastics (FLiP) are devoted to supporting and encouraging plastics leaders under 40 who will play a crucial role in the innovation, technology and future of the plastics industry. Participating in FLiP provides opportunities for:

### Education

- Mentoring & Continuing Education Programs
- Stories and Lessons from Top Leaders in Industry

### Connection

- Networking & Social Opportunities Among Peers and Tenured Executives
- Relationship Building

### Empowerment

- Leadership Opportunities
- A Voice in Shaping the Industry

### Growth

- Leadership Development
- Personal & Professional Development

### FLiP Benefits the Overall Plastics Industry:

- Develops a strong workforce
- Cultivates the next generation of leaders
- Develops and retains industry professionals
- Creates strong advocates and champions for the plastics industry



# ADVOCACY. CONNECTIONS. SUSTAINABILITY. VALUE.

The Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS) is the only association that represents companies from the entire plastics supply chain, globally – from material and equipment suppliers to processors, converters and recyclers.

As a PLASTICS member, you have a voice in shaping the future of the industry and the global, circular economy. To help your business thrive, PLASTICS provides valuable connections to industry peers, exclusive plastics-specific economic data and regulatory information, and a voice in every state and the nation's capital. Members receive a measurable return on investment. Are you with us? Become a member of PLASTICS today!

**[PLASTICSINDUSTRY.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](https://plasticsindustry.org/membership)**

For membership details and how to join, contact PLASTICS at [membership@plasticsindustry.org](mailto:membership@plasticsindustry.org).



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