

David Katz

2009 Helen M. Free Award Winner

David Katz, Professor of Chemistry at Pima Community College in Pima, Ariz., is the winner of the 2009 Helen M. Free Award for Public Outreach. From developing some of today's most common classroom chemistry activities to giving live demonstrations before international audiences, from conducting televised experiments and radio interviews, to providing a continuously updated website of educational chemistry activities, Professor Katz has been a leader in performing chemistry outreach and enhancing the public understanding of chemistry for over 30 years.

Katz earned his B.Sc. in Chemistry from Drexel University and his M.Sc. from Villanova University. Katz is an active member of the ACS and has worked to improve chemical safety and education through numerous national and local activities.



A self-described “science communicator” and “expert demonstrator,” Katz has presented hundreds of chemistry demonstrations, lectures, and seminars around the world, traveling to Cuba, Australia, Ireland, Egypt, China, Korea and other countries. He also travels the U.S. teaching workshops at local colleges, high-schools, and middle schools which teachers and parents can attend. Katz’s fascination with the chemistry of toys was the inspiration behind one of his most popular and famous presentations, “Chemistry in the Toy Store” which he has presented over 200 times.

Katz’s first published work appeared in a 1968 copy of *Microchemical Journal* titled, “determination of halides with ion specific electrodes” and since then his work has been featured in countless publications, including the *Journal of Chemical Education*. He has even had his own column in *Education in Chemistry* from 1990-1993. Katz has also contributed work to many textbooks and most recently released his own textbook in 2005 titled “The General Chemistry Laboratory Survival Manual.” Katz now manages his own website, www.chymist.com, where he profiles some of his experiments and provides tips and study guides for college students studying chemistry.

From 1966 to 1993, Katz taught at the Community College of Philadelphia where he gradually rose to become Associate Professor of Chemistry. In 1991, Katz also began teaching at Cabrini College in Radnor, Pa. where he rose to the position of chairman of the department of chemistry in 1995. By the time Katz left Cabrini College in 1998 he had been teaching over 14 different

chemistry and science classes. After various teaching jobs, Katz moved to Tucson, Ariz. where he began teaching at Pima Community College.

Katz's distinguished career with the American Chemical Society began in 1981 when he joined the Philadelphia Local Section. Katz later joined the Southern Arizona Section where he eventually was elected chairman in 2005. Katz has been involved with the national ACS organization in numerous capacities, having served on the Division of Professional Relations, Division of History of Chemistry, Division of Chemical Health and Safety, and Division of Chemical Education. He currently serves on the ACS Committee on Chemical Safety.

Through Katz's long and experienced career he has earned 11 different awards and honors, including the Chemical Manufacturers Association National Two-Year College Chemistry Catalyst Award for outstanding college chemistry teaching. Katz continues to teach at Pima Community College and outside of his enormously busy schedule of teaching and conducting chemistry demonstrations, he also enjoys photography, lapidary, downhill skiing and golf.