

Quote, Paul Walter, ACS president, 1996:

"I am proud to be a chemist. Chemistry has done more to reduce the death rate and improve the quality of life than has any other profession. In the 70 years between 1920 and 1990, life expectancy in the U.S. increased 50%, much of that increase due to the discoveries of chemists and to products of the chemical and pharmaceutical industries. Chlorine disinfection of water has virtually eliminated cholera and dysentery in Western countries. Insecticides control and eliminate debilitating tropical diseases. Fungicides and artificial fertilizers allow farmers to feed an Earth that long since would have starved, condemned to a Malthusian catastrophe. Polymers clothe and house us. Catalysts make usable the energy that transports and warms us. Refrigerants free us from daily shopping, minimize food spoilage, and facilitate productive settlement in warm climates. Contraceptives have changed forever women's lives. Medicinal chemicals improve the quality of life for the infirm, and often make the difference between life and death."