

# The Daily

at West Point, Blue Bell and Union Meeting

Friday, Oct. 14, 1994

## The Merck Mentor Program: Working Together to Strengthen Each Other

More than 30 Merck employees at West Point are helping students in Norristown, Pa., jump the track of obscurity and mediocrity. Since 1990, the Merck Mentor Program has opened students' eyes to new careers in science and technology by providing successful examples — themselves.

"There are more minority students looking to careers in science and technology now than before, but not nearly enough," says Alicia Harper, Project Facilities Engineer, MMD, and Chairperson of program.

"One reason may be that many students don't know about these opportunities because they may not have anyone to expose them to these opportunities."

"It was clear that there was a need for professional minority involvement as positive role models in the schools."

Ms. Harper emphasizes, however, the program is not limited to minority employees.

### Every Wednesday

Each Wednesday morning, several Merck Mentors visit East Norriton Middle School to tutor. Sixteen students are enrolled this year.

"After consulting with the school, it was apparent that the immediate need was math," Ms. Harper says. "We're trying to show young people that to be successful in today's industrial environment, they will need a strong background in math, but even if they choose other professions, that background will help them in the long run."

### Connectivity Plus

Mentors explained that a major barrier for minorities who might seek professional careers is the absence of exposure.

"Many kids know they can perhaps be successful in the trades, because they grow up in those environments," says Elmer Gilliam, Process Engineer, MMD. "That's fine, but the students may not be aware of other possibilities. They see people in suits going to work, but because they don't have anyone around to encourage them to pursue professional careers."

### Linking Math to Music

The Mentor Program often uses creative techniques to demonstrate the relevance of mathematics in students' lives. "For example, all of the students go shopping at one time or another, so we developed a grocery store session that teaches them math in a setting they're familiar with," says Greg Reaves, Manager, Site Public Affairs. "We've also used music, which is important to kids, as a means of encouraging them to memorize concepts."

The Merck group works closely with the East Norriton administration and faculty to maintain academic standards and make the program more appealing and relevant. They're also co-developing a more structured curriculum with specified objectives and realistic goals for students to achieve.

But mentors want to be a positive influ-



Using rap music to show kids the importance of getting a good education, rapper Tyraine Ragsdale — a chemist for R.W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute by day — performed for (number) of middle-school students in Norristown yesterday. His performance was a highlight of the Merck Mentor Program this year.

ence in more than just academics. The group organizes many after-school and weekend activities for the students, including charity drives, picnics and field trips.

"We've also brought the students to Merck for tours and provided informal 'shadowing' with Merck employees so that they can experience working in a professional environment," Ms. Harper says.

### If You're Interested...

The group would like to attract more members, expand the program and reach more students.

If you want to be a Merck Mentor, contact Jada Paysour at 682-3779.

## Learn More About Marketing to Women

At the next Business Review meeting at 10 A.M., Thursday, Oct. 20, in the bldg. 37 auditorium, hear from an expert on taking the pulse of women. Increasingly, Merck's business is tied to the elderly, and the majority of elderly are women. Women make up 60 percent of Americans over age 60.

Ethel Klein, president of EDK Associates, a strategic research firm, will explain why marketing to women is a whole new ballgame and offer practical tips on this huge and growing customer group.

Also on the agenda:

- Packaging Technology will overview on the Customer Specific Packaging Line, highlighting strategic drivers provided by the technology, such as the flexibility to make-to-order, capability to eliminate steps in the supply chain and the potential benefits and applications of these drivers.
  - William Westrick, Marketing Director, New Product Planning will give us an update on Cozaar and Hyzaar, first in a class of antihypertensive drugs.
- Everyone is invited.

## Shirlene Cook Memorial Fund

The Merck Mentor Program would like to thank all Merck employees who contributed to the memorial fund for Shirlene Cook, a Supervisor in MRL Laboratory Services. She was not only a dedicated leader of the Merck Mentor Program but was also dedicated to other organizations that benefitted young people. On behalf of all her friends at Merck, a significant donation will be presented to the National Young Folk Friends Union.

Stock Information  
Oct. 13, 1994

Volume  
2,711,000

Close  
36-5/8

Change  
- 3/8

