

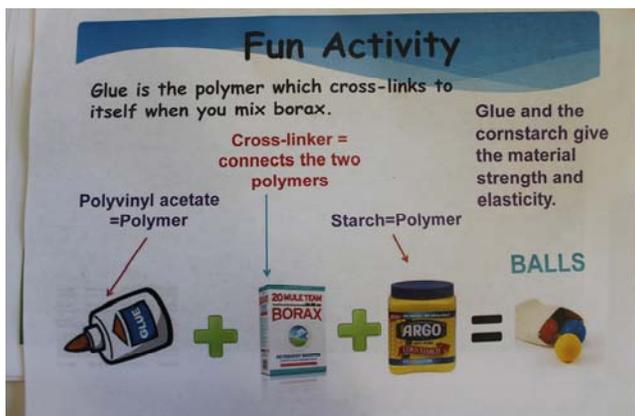
## News Release

# BASF Scientists Introduce Chemistry “Kids Lab” To Springhurst 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders

**Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. October 24, 2013--** Seventeen scientists from Tarrytown-based BASF, a leading international chemical company, brought their “Kids Lab” to Springhurst 3<sup>rd</sup> graders for a fun and educational afternoon of science. The company’s global Kids Lab program is aimed at elementary school children (ages 6-12) to raise their interest in chemistry through safe and engaging hands-on experiments. The selected lab on polymers was a huge hit with 118 budding Springhurst scientists.

“The Polymer lab is great lead-in to the water unit of study that students will be starting in November,” said 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher Melissa Schwartz. “It introduces the kids to liquids, the chemical process and the steps in scientific investigation. This lab is very interactive and takes the curriculum beyond the classroom.”

Each student eagerly opened their BASF lab “kit” (which doubles as a knapsack) and donned a “lab coat” apron, clear plastic goggles and gloves in preparation for the polymer experiment. The kit also included a notebook... a key tool for every scientist. There were approximately three BASF scientists in each of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms conducting the Kids Lab sessions. The aim was to learn how polymers behave through the creation of a non-Newtonian fluid...Slime! Here are the steps that the students followed in creating their polymers (chains of molecules).



Many children know Slime as a toy you can buy in your local five and dime. Slime consists mainly of water gelatinized with a thickening agent. Slime has to form a coherent body to prevent it from coming apart in little pieces like jelly during play—how and with what this is done was demonstrated in the experiment.

The BASF instructors are all working scientists at the company and volunteer their time to bring Kids Lab lessons to local schools. Their expertise is in many different fields including analytical chemistry, personal care (skin, hair care), biotechnology, resynthesis, scientific computing and more. Coincidentally, one of the scientists said that he was presently researching polymers to be used in mouth rinses. The company is involved in a number of science education initiatives and with the help of Susan Vittorio, site HR Manager at the Tarrytown, NY BASF facility, Springhurst was one of only two schools selected to participate in the Kids Lab this year. Last year, BASF also matched one of their scientists with a Dobbs Ferry High School Science Research student (Ankeeta Shah) to serve as a mentor.

The relationship between BASF and the School District was initiated by Dobbs Ferry parent Elizabeth Bohl (who also works for North America BASF) and Dobbs Ferry High School Science Research teacher Tom Callahan. According to Callahan, it is vital to the Science Research program that the students be matched with area researchers and scientists at the forefront of their fields and that they have a positive mentoring experience. There are now 50 students in the Science Research program, double the amount of the previous year.

“We want to reach out to our neighbors,” said Ms. Vittorio. “These school-community partnerships are essential to create chemistry for a sustainable future. ”

**For more information, please contact:**

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