

News Release

BASF and The Manufacturing Institute honor outstanding women in manufacturing

Female leader from BASF site in Freeport recognized among 130 nationally

Freeport, TX, April 16, 2019 – BASF employee, [Beth Holland](#), Vice President of Operations for Polyamides and Precursors in Freeport, Texas was among 130 women recognized nationally through The Manufacturing Institute's [2019 STEP Ahead Awards](#). Focusing on science, technology, engineering and production (STEP), the program annually honors female leaders for their advocacy, mentorship, engagement and leadership in the industry.

“Beth is a great example of living the STEP Ahead Pledge by leveraging her strengths for personal development, engaging and mentoring young women, advocating as an ambassador for the manufacturing industry and developing her network to generate ideas and share best practices,” said Chris Witte, Senior Vice President and General Manager of BASF’s site in Freeport, Texas. “She has grown in her career and gained respect globally for her technical knowledge, while always encouraging other females along the way.”

The STEP Ahead Awards are part of the STEP Ahead initiative, that aims to attract, advance and retain strong female talent. It examines and promotes the role of women in the manufacturing industry through recognition, research, and leadership. In five

years, STEP Ahead Award winners have impacted more than 300,000 individuals – from peers in the industry to school-aged children across the region.

“As the national sponsor of the STEP Ahead initiative, BASF collaborates with The Manufacturing Institute on the grassroots movement to encourage women to embrace manufacturing as a viable career and help them overcome the shared challenges they may face,” said Teresa Szelest, President of Market and Business Development at BASF and National Association of Manufacturers’ Board of Directors member. “Throughout my career at BASF, I have seen firsthand the value women bring to manufacturing, and we want to continue to provide them a supportive and inclusive work environment full of opportunity.”

Women constitute one of manufacturing’s largest pools of untapped talent. Female employees totaled 47 percent of the U.S. labor force in 2018, but only 29 percent of the manufacturing workforce. Not only does the STEP Ahead initiative bolster manufacturing’s attractiveness to women, it also plays an important role in improving the perception of careers in the industry among younger generations.

“Providing more opportunities for women in manufacturing is more than just the right thing to do. At a time when manufacturers face a workforce crisis, and with women still constituting less than a third of manufacturing workers, it is clearly critical to the future of our industry and the economy,” said Carolyn Lee, Executive Director of The Manufacturing Institute. “The Manufacturing Institute’s STEP Ahead awards – which provide today’s female leaders in manufacturing the recognition they deserve while simultaneously elevating role models that can inspire future generations to join them – are an important element of our commitment to helping foster a 21st century manufacturing workforce by developing current leaders and engaging future ones.”

BASF sponsored the seventh-annual awards ceremony, which was held April 11 in Washington, D.C. For more information about BASF careers and efforts that promote women in manufacturing, visit <http://www.basf.us/women>.

About BASF

BASF Corporation, headquartered in Florham Park, New Jersey, is the North American affiliate of BASF SE, Ludwigshafen, Germany. BASF has more than 20,000 employees in North America and had

sales of \$19.7 billion in 2018. For more information about BASF's North American operations, visit www.basf.com.

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