

Catalyst for Success Has Its First Show

February 1, 2013 – Catalyst for Success held its first official event at Sundance Elementary School, where two shows were performed: one for eighty fourth graders and another for eighty fifth graders. CEO Jason Ge introduced the organization by commenting on his achievements at the 44th International Chemistry Olympiad and explaining his first experiences with science and chemistry. When he was young, Jason's mother inspired his interest in chemistry by showing him a simple experiment. Jason stated to the students that by performing chemistry magic shows he hopes to "give every student the same opportunity to be inspired by science [just] as [he] was." After Jason introduced the rest of the members who facilitated the show -- James Chang, Aseem Keyal, Elisa Lupin, Erik Owen, Cameron Ramos, and Mary Zhao -- the show began.

The performance began with a "bang"! With Erik's assistance, volunteers from the audience exploded hydrogen balloons, creating quick bursts of flames. For the second demonstration, another volunteer poured a clear solution into three separate beakers, resulting in solutions of red, white, and blue--the colors of the American flag. The next two experiments utilized oscillating and two-step reactions that caused solutions to change color. Then the students were divided into teams and encouraged to cheer for a color as we told them that if the students cheered enthusiastically, the solution would turn their color. Excited by the challenge, the students passionately and cacophonously cheered as the two solutions transformed from gold to black and orange to brown, respectively. Next, a student caused a flammable paper cup to spontaneously ignite by staring hard at the materials "thinking about fire." Finally, the performance ended with one more exploding hydrogen balloon. After the experiments, Jason revealed that there was actually no magic involved in these incredible demonstrations--it was all chemistry. He then explained the science behind each experiment.

As Catalyst for Success' first official event, the performance at Sundance Elementary School was more successful than anyone could've expected. In addition to the students, the principal and teachers at the school loved it. Principal Bob Rodrigo stated, "Your show engaged our students and staff from beginning to end...our students left your show motivated that they too could be great scientists!" Mary Zhao, Catalyst's Director of Show Design, confirmed that the kids' reactions were "beyond our expectations" and the kids "enjoyed participating in the show." She "felt like our work really paid off and it was a great start."

About Catalyst for Success:

As STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education receives greater attention globally, Catalyst for Success aims to introduce the more captivating and interesting side of science to young students through chemistry "magic" shows, demonstrations of simple chemistry experiments pitched as magic. As a follow up to these assemblies, Catalyst organizes "hands on" after school science programs to give students a more personal interaction with scientific concepts and experiments. Catalyst for Success is a 501-(c)(3) non-profit organization.