Chemtoberfest: something for everyone

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Creators of Chemtoberfest set out to prove that chemistry has something for everyone, and they were right.

The first annual Chemtoberfest took place in Stowell Hall from noon to 4 p.m. on Oct. 23. It was a community event that featured students and professors presenting the importance and prevalence of chemistry in our world.

The chemistry behind everything from chemical luminescence to cotton candy was on display as students and professors gave out goodies. Attendees were offered free popcorn, cheese, ice cream, candy apples, cider, and more to munch on while exploring the fall-themed Stowell hallways. There were also take home items including colorful cornstarch goo, glow sticks, balloon figures and face painting.

Student and professor presentations were definitely highlights of the event. Dr. Martin Walker’s presentation on creating nyons and other chemistry-made synthetic materials was a crowd favorite. The black light-lit chemical luminescence room also got a lot of traffic. Who knew that tonic water was luminescent?

Everyone looked forward to the main event of Chemtoberfest, Dr. Magic’s chemistry magic show. A crowd of all ages packed Stowell 211, the largest lecture hall in the building. Well over a hundred Chemtoberfest attendees looked on as Dr. Magic, also known as Dr. Fadi Bou-Abdallah, and his three student assistants performed chemistry magic. Exploding reactions, color changing reactions, state changing reactions, energy sparking reactions, and creating colorful flames were just a few of the wonders performed with chemistry by Fadi Bou-Abdallah. The crowd burst into laughter and astonishment as several audience participants helped perform playful tricks.

"Chemistry is all around us," said Fadi Bou-Abdallah. "Chemistry is part of every science, from the medical field, to engineering, to consumer products, to biology to working with metals. You name it, chemistry is a major aspect of it."

After experiencing the large, excited and happy crowd attracted to Chemtoberfest this year, the chemistry department hopes to make Chemtoberfest bigger and better for next year.