Heraeus' Modern Materials Division Celebrates 65th Anniversary

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SOUTH BEND, Ind., Dec. 8, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The Modern Materials Division [1] of Heraeus Kulzer, LLC, the worldwide leader in dental esthetics, is celebrating its 65th anniversary. The division has been the leader in the U.S. dental market for gypsum products for virtually its entire existence.

Modern Materials was founded in 1946 in St. Louis, Missouri by Don McNary and Jack Piper. Mr. McNary, a chemist, was "Mr. Inside" while Mr. Piper, the consummate salesman, was "Mr. Outside." Early in the company's history, Mr. McNary developed a formula for manufacturing gypsum that no competitor has yet been able to match. One of the keys to this unique formula was the company's discovery of a source of pristine calcium sulfate, gypsum's primary component, in Oklahoma. A second key was the company's extremely tight control over the process by which the calcium sulfate is crushed, heated and dehydrated to form a fine, dry powder of unsurpassed consistency. Yet another hallmark of Modern Materials' distinctive approach was Mr. McNary's pioneering development of special chemical formulas that allowed customers to achieve different setting times and create different colors.

Mr. McNary's formulating brilliance was matched only by Mr. Piper's charismatic salesmanship. According to sales executive Joe O'Weger, a 35-year veteran of the company, "The way Jack would demonstrate our product superiority to a prospective customer was simply mesmerizing. He was selling a promise, and he knew that our products would keep that promise and exceed the customer's expectations." The tall, statesman-like Mr. Piper was known as one of nicest people in the business. "Jack was a terrific team-builder," said O'Weger. "He was a true gentleman and a class act, and his people would do anything for him and his company."

Mr. Piper
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