

## **Memphis Stone & Gravel Company- A Resource for Education** **by Alan Parks, Vice President, Memphis Stone & Gravel Company**

Memphis Stone & Gravel Company explores opportunities to be active in communities where we have operations. As stated in our Community Engagement Plan, “we believe our philosophy to be an outstanding neighbor has contributed to our longevity in the industry. We are highly involved in the communities we serve and regularly reinvest our time, money, and resources back into those neighborhoods.”

A unique way we engage our communities is through education, specifically earth science, mining engineering, and environmental studies. We start with the premise that educating the community about mining and the aggregates industry is an investment in our future. Memphis Stone and Gravel Company engages in large scale surface mining and as a result has a team of scientists and engineers that form a unique knowledge base that can benefit teachers at all levels. Subjects such as the local geology, soil science, environmental management, hydrology and water use are key aspects of our business.

Over the last decade I have personally toured thousands of students and teachers spanning all age groups from elementary to college. Additionally, I have provided various class room presentations about the five key steps in the mining cycle, which are exploration, planning, mining, processing, and reclamation. Knowledge is shared with researchers, professors, and students at several area colleges on a regular basis. Our mining activity literally opens a “window” to our geologic past, therefore, many colleges in the area including the University of Memphis, University of Mississippi and Delta State take advantage of mine visits and lectures for education and research purposes. As a graduate of the Missouri University of Science and Technology, founded as the Missouri School of Mines, I visit the campus on an annual basis to present various seminars on mining, mineral processing, and resource exploration. As a professional geologist I have taught the geology merit badge for hundreds of Scouts over the years.

Memphis Stone and Gravel Company, its sister company Lehman-Roberts Company and the Mississippi Department of Transportation have hosted numerous career fairs for many county high schools in Northwest Mississippi. Thousands of students have participated over the last several years. The event is a large scale exposition of the construction industry and allows participants to see and operate construction equipment and tour both an asphalt plant and a sand and gravel mine.

Each year we support *The Earth Wide Open*® held at the Agricenter International in Memphis, which is produced by the Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society. This event reaches over three thousand people each year, particularly those interested in rocks, fossils, and minerals. Since 2009 Memphis Stone & Gravel Company has been the exclusive sponsor for the very popular RockZone™. The RockZone™ is an education and entertainment area with a variety of interactive games and events for children and their families. RockZone™ events typically include activities such events as Paint Your Pet-Rock, Panning for Gems and Crystals, Rocks Around the Clock, Merit Badge Programming for Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, and the always popular Gem Dig. MS&G has supplied the pea gravel for the Gem Dig and supplies the rocks used in the rock painting.

Memphis Stone & Gravel Company embraces the industry’s highest standards of *Sustainability*. Sustainability is a business approach that integrates environmental stewardship, social responsibility and economic prosperity to ensure the long-term supply of aggregate materials to society. And we find our unique position as educator rewarding and consonant with our objective to be an industry leader.