

Reflections of Roy D. Gerard

Looking back upon the people who have had substantial impact on me, I recognize my family, a primary school principal, a number of mathematics and science teachers in high school, and many of the faculty at LSU during the 1949 through 1958 period. I think back on Mrs. Purdy, a chemistry instructor; Dr. Germano, who taught statics; Dr. Horton, the department head of chemical engineering; Dr. Coates, the later head of chemical engineering; Dr. Pressburg, an outstanding and most demanding chemical engineering faculty member; and many other who taught mathematics, chemistry, physics, and engineering. All were outstanding teachers at the undergraduate level. They had great empathy for their students and they knew how to motivate and challenge us. Dean McLaughlin, whom I have come to know and admire, seems to fit the same mold of educator and scientist.

Next, I think of LSU the institution, which at the time has a military character. Leadership, engineering training and the development that came through R.O.T.C., and later through

active service in the military, were extremely important to my development. Social and fraternity life helped round off some of the rough edges. The sports program, which at the time included an outstanding boxing team to complement the fine football, basketball and baseball teams, helped round out my education. How fortunate that so many have the opportunity to benefit as I did from such a fine university!

Upon graduation, I began work with Shell Oil. Its substantial diversity is what allowed many like me to be challenged as engineers, members of our society, and later, managers. Shell offered an opportunity to practice engineering in a serious way, while being associated with some of the finest scientist and engineers throughout the world. In addition, I had an opportunity to work with leaders of government both here and in Saudi Arabia. While doing this, my family experienced life in places and environments that are quite unique and different from those here in Louisiana. Without the opportunity to work with and for both technical and commercial leaders

like John Bookout, Frank Richardson, Thomas Baron, Jim Henderson, Joseph Elger, Harry Beckers, and many other outstanding persons within the Shell family, my corporate journey would have been much less successful and satisfying.

Finally, I am honored to join the Hall of Distinction. Over the last thirty-eight years, I have been encouraged by my wife Jackie, and our four children. My parents, brother and three sisters were supportive of me from a much earlier age. Again, without the unique encouragement and support received from so many, much less would have been possible. To all ranging from family elementary school principal, high school teachers, LSU faculty, and the Shell Oil staff, I extend my sincere thanks for the help along the way.