

The University of Kansas School of Engineering

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# **Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Department**



## **Hall of Fame Awards**

May 4, 2019

*Honoring*  
**Todd Slawson**

# **Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Hall of Fame**

In 1996, The University of Kansas Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering established the Alumni Hall of Fame to honor its outstanding graduates. The goal of this award is to seek out individuals who have made important contributions to the Chemical or Petroleum Engineering professions, the Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Department, or the School of Engineering, or have been outstanding role models for current and future engineering students.

Each nominee is a graduate of the KU Chemical and Petroleum Engineering department, and has made noteworthy contributions to the theory or practice of engineering. Each have given substantial service to our profession, or the University of Kansas.

The Chemical and Petroleum Engineering department is proud of the remarkable contributions made by each Hall of Fame Recipient. We are honored by their commitments to excellence, and their presence this evening.



## **Todd Slawson**

### **2019 C&PE Hall of Fame Inductee**

Mr. Robert Todd Slawson received his B.Sc. degree in Petroleum Engineering from our department in 1984. He became employed by Slawson Exploration Company in 1984 and worked one year in North Dakota before settling in in Denver, Colorado. He became Division Operations Manager in 1988 and now serves as President of Slawson Exploration. He is the youngest of the three sons of Donald C. Slawson who founded Slawson Exploration and many other companies. Todd has drilled over 800 operated wells (mostly horizontal) during his career in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado and California. Don Slawson drilled over 3,500 operated wells in his career – mostly vertical wells in Kansas, Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.

Todd and his team have been innovators his entire career. In his California exploration and drilling days, he quickly improved vertical drilling time from 30 days to 5 days and found enough bypassed gas, utilizing the newer 3D seismic technology, to become the number one gas producer in California. In 1989, his Williston Basin career led him to be one of the first to drill a horizontal Bakken

Shale well. That well, called the Sidewinder #1-7H, with a 1000' lateral, made national news, as it was the horizontal well that finally "cracked the code" in the Bakken with an IP of over 1,300 BOPD. The syndicated news story headline was "Dakota Find May Be Significant," but no one knew how significant the Sidewinder well would become. The Bakken is now estimated to produce over 30 billion barrels of oil over its lifetime.

Todd has continued innovating in the Bakken play throughout its development. He started with unfrac'd laterals, progressed to open hole fracs and improved to stage fracs—setting a world record in 2012 with 47 frac stages per lateral, while most companies had less than 10 stages. He has also experimented with other completion techniques such as cemented liners, pounds of sand per foot, sliding sleeves, slick water, perf clusters, and diverters. These completion changes have almost doubled the ultimate recoveries per well since the beginning of the play and have made uneconomic fringes of the Bakken region now profitable.

Todd also led the way in drilling techniques. Before stage fracking came about, he was the first to drill tri and quad laterals. Now, with stage fracking, he is the only operator that has drilled dual lateral, horizontal wells with cemented laterals and thus captured reserves in previously uneconomic benches of the Bakken. He started drilling 1-mile laterals in 40-50 days and now drills 3.5 mile laterals in 13 days – some of the deepest onshore US wells.

Slawson's efforts, along with other operators', helped North Dakota grow to producing 1.4 million barrels of oil per day which catapulted it to the number two producing state behind Texas. US oil production skyrocketed from just under 4 million bopd in 2008 to more than 12 million bopd today due to this shale revolution that started in the Bakken. The US is now the number one oil producer in the world, surpassing Russia and Saudi Arabia. The US is now also a net exporter of oil and refined products for the first time in the Nation's history. The world's oil demand is currently almost 100 million bopd and continues to grow yearly at an average of 1.4 million bopd. One must wonder where oil prices would be without the production from US shale. It has truly changed the world's economy.

Todd's inherited entrepreneurial spirit led him well beyond oil and gas exploration. He started many different companies including Alameda oil field rentals, Inland crude oil marketing, Mongoose water

and oil trucking, Pelican oil gathering and Williston water disposal. He also founded Alameda Juice LLC, which is Jamba Juice's largest franchisee in Texas. He is president of a hospitality company owning Marriott Fairfield Inn Hotels and of Slawson Real Estate which aggressively develops residential and commercial properties and currently manages almost 1 million square feet of retail space in Wichita, including New Market Square. Todd also develops restaurant concepts in the Kansas City area.

The Slawson family has a long history at KU, beginning with Todd's great grandfather, Marion Slawson. His grandfather, Charles J. Slawson, was also a Jayhawk and captain/pitcher of the 1920 KU baseball team. Todd's father, Donald Slawson, the founder of Slawson Companies, started the business on the strength of his KU geology degree and personal initiative at age 23. Don was a great supporter of higher education in Kansas. He served on the Kansas Board of Regents in the 1980s and was its Chair, founding the margin of excellence program, which helped KU and other Kansas institutions move forward. Don was also the KU National Alumni President.

In terms of service to KU, Todd was instrumental in founding the Earth, Energy, and Environmental Center (EEEC) at the University of Kansas. Completed in January 2018, the EEEEC is anchored by Slawson Hall, which is a tribute to Todd's father. The EEEEC is highly relevant to the integration of petroleum engineering and geology, the two disciplines most significant to the successful discovery and exploitation of oil and gas reserves. The Center transforms the approach to interdisciplinary study at KU.

With Todd now based in Denver and Slawson Exploration now focusing on the Bakken in North Dakota and Montana, it would have been easy for him to migrate away from the Kansas legacy established by three previous generations. To the contrary, he doubled down on the Kansas, KU, and higher education legacies by making Slawson Hall and the EEEEC a reality for future Jayhawks. Todd also serves on the KU Endowment Association (KUEA) Board of Trustees.

Todd Slawson has made stellar contributions to the oil and gas industry, was and is an engineering innovator, has been a fervent supporter of KU and the C&PE Department, and represents a legacy we would like to encourage our alumni to continue. These traits and

accomplishments clearly merit his induction into the C&PE Hall of Fame.

# The Chemical and Petroleum Engineering Hall of Fame

## **Inducted 1996**

David R. Boylan, Jr. '43  
(Iowa State Univ.)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Paul Haney '33  
(Black and Veatch)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Charles R. Clark '68  
(Conoco)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Roy M. Knapp '63,'69,'73  
(University of Oklahoma)  
B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Chemical  
Engineering

Joseph W. Davison '43  
(Phillips Petroleum)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Dale R. Laurance '71,'73  
(Occidental)  
B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Chemical  
Engineering

William C. Douce '42  
(Phillips Petroleum)

B.S. Chemical Engineering

Paul M. Pancratz '55  
(Dow Chemical)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Thomas F. Edgar '67  
(Univ. of Texas)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

James Russell  
(Russell Petroleum)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

## **Inducted 1997**

Stanley M. Englund '50  
(Dow Chemical, Midland  
Engineering Ltd.)  
B.S., Chemical Engineering

William M. Nofsinger '55  
(Nofsinger, Inc.)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

George W. Swift '53, '57, '59  
(Univ. of Kansas)  
B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Chemical  
Engineering

**Inducted 1998**

Russell B. Mesler '48  
(Univ. of Kansas)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Charles E. Sturgeon '51  
(Vulcan Chemical Co.)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 1999**

Paul L. Hellman '59  
(Mobil Oil Co.)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

Kyle D. Vann '69  
(Koch Industries)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2000**

John A. Davis '58, '63  
(Marathon Oil Co.)  
B.S., Ph.D. Chemical Engineering

Robert H. Smith '64, '70  
(Black & Veatch-Pritchard)  
B.S., M.S., Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2002**

Allyn W. Risley '72  
(Phillips Petroleum Co.)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

**Inducted 2003**

Linda Z. Cook '80  
(Shell Oil - Canada)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

Linda S. Ellis '78  
(Exxon-Mobil)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2004**

Christine Ehlig-Economides '77  
(Univ. of Houston)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

Michael J. Economides '74, '76  
(Univ. of Houston)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

**Inducted 2006**

Elmer L. Dougherty '50  
(Univ. of Southern California,  
Maraco, Inc.)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2007**

Stanley T. Myers '60  
(Semiconductor Equipment and  
Materials International)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2009**

Edmund H. Fording, Jr. '59  
(Synthetic Organic Chemical  
Manufacturers Association)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

Frank Komin '78  
(Occidental Petroleum)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

John E. McElhiney '61 & '63



(20/20 Reservoir Resources)  
B.S., M.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2010**

Dawood M. Al-Dawood '88  
(Saudi Aramco)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

**Inducted 2011**

Al Self '43  
(Allen Financial, Tioga  
International)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

J. Bert Ladd '49  
(Ladd Petroleum Corporation)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

J. T. (Tim) Hood '62  
(Lockheed Martin)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2012**

Mark F. Heinrich '79, '89  
(Naval Supply Systems  
Command (NAVSUP))  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering, M.S.  
Business Administration and  
Petroleum Management

Lanny G. Schoeling '83, '93  
(Kinder Morgan CO<sub>2</sub> Company)  
M.S., Ph.D. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2013**

Kyle A. Mathis '90  
(Chevron Phillips Chemical  
Company)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2014**

James C. Remsberg '57  
(Conoco, Argent Energy)  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

Patrick R Oenbring '74  
(Hawkwood Energy, LLC)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2015**

Lance Lobban '81, '87  
(University of Houston)  
(CBME Chair, University of  
Oklahoma)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering  
Ph.D. Chemical Engineering

David Zornes, '76  
(Phillips, Conoco Phillips)  
B.S. & M.S. Chemistry/Physics  
Education (Emporia State)  
M.S. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2016**

Carlos Rocha, '90  
(Baxalta)  
B.S. Chemical Engineering  
(Universidad Nacional de Mar  
del Plata)  
Ph.D. Chemical Engineering

**Inducted 2017**

Gary Gould, '91, '87  
(Continental Resources, Inc.)  
B.S., M.S. Petroleum Engineering

Guy Green, '91, '85  
(US Army Corps of Engineers)  
M.S. Environmental Engineering  
B.S. Petroleum Engineering

**Inducted 2018**

Richard Hoover '71  
B.S. Chemical Engineering