

Norman Hackerman (March 2, 1912, Baltimore, Maryland, USA–June 16, 2007, Austin, Texas, USA)

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The editors of JSSC and the editorial board were sad to learn of the recent death of this eminent electrochemist and member of the editorial board for many years.

Hackerman received both his baccalaureate (1932) and doctoral (1935) degrees in chemistry at Johns Hopkins University. He held assistant professorships at Loyola College in Maryland (1935–1939) and at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (1941–1943), as well as positions with Colloid Corporation and Kellex Corporation. During the period of World War II, he also served with the US Coast Guard and the Manhattan Project. In 1945, he moved to Texas to accept a teaching position at The University of Texas in Austin (UT) and remained in Texas for the rest of his life.

Hackerman quickly rose through the academic ranks at UT and served as chairman of the chemistry department (1952–1962), dean of research and sponsored programs (1961–1962), vice president and provost (1962), vice chancellor of academic affairs (1963–1967), and university president (1967–1970). In 1970, he joined the faculty of Rice University as a professor of chemistry and president of the university, holding both appointments until his retirement in 1985. Beginning in 1982 and continuing until 2005, Hackerman chaired the Scientific Advisory Board of the Robert A. Welch Foundation, which had a large impact on fundamental chemical research in the state of Texas.

Hackerman was a leader in the fields of corrosion, passivity, and surface chemistry at electrodes and metals.



He was especially active in the field of corrosion inhibitors and establishing a molecular basis for their action. Hackerman promoted science at the federal and state levels through many activities, such as the National Science Board (1968–1980; chair 1975–1980). He was also active in the Electrochemical Society, serving as president (1957–1958) and editor of the

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Journal of the Electrochemical Society (1969–1989). He was elected to membership in a number of societies, including the National Academy of Sciences (1971), the American Philosophical Society (1972), and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1978). He received numerous awards, including the Palladium Medal from the Electrochemical Society in 1965, the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Chemists in 1978, the Charles Lathrop Parsons Award from the American Chemical Society in 1987, and the National Medal of Science in 1993 from the president of the USA.

If I may add a few personal comments, Norm was my colleague for almost 50 years and was the chair of the chemistry department when I was hired to teach at the

University of Texas. Through the years, I grew to appreciate his wisdom, advice, and support. At a 95th birthday party earlier this year, Norm enjoyed a symposium and dinner in his honor and, in his closing remarks, said “I don’t look back, only forward.” He remained active, as a professor *emeritus* from both UT and Rice, in both teaching and research activities (and also played squash) until his death. We shall miss him.

Reference

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