

Roy Hammerstedt (2009)



Vice President – 2016-2017

President - 2017-2018

Nov 11, 2009: Technology Transfer: The Path from Basic Studies to Successful Products

Nov 9, 2011: Presenting Technical/Scientific Information to the General Public

Mar 13, 2013: One Size Does Not Fit All: Personalized Medicine

Nov 12, 2014: Ponzi Schemes: How any Affect You?

Dec 14, 2016: Nutroceuticals: Snake Oil for the 21 Century

Nov 14, 2018: Crony Capitalism: Here and There, Now and Then

Oct 8, 2025: Baby Steps for Microgravity Bioscience: The NASA Funded PSU Center for Commercialization of Research (CCR) in the 1980's and 1990's

I was born in Duluth MN in 1941 and lived there until early 1960s as revealed with the trace of “oot and aboot” in my accent. A wonderful start but then I joined the flood of kids departing after yet another economic collapse of the area. As one of the neighbors said: first they came for the furs, then the forests, then the ore, and now the kids. Luckily I benefitted from a supportive neighborhood and a wonderful public school system. I had a test run for a year at Michigan Tech [242 inches of snow is enough, and I missed my wife-to-be Susan]. Then I transferred to the University of MN [Duluth] where I discovered chemistry in an environment where the faculty gave you all you asked for including unlimited and unsupervised lab access. It was wonderful, in that I could fit that in around the series of odd jobs needed to pay the tuition. Not recognized was that this also was my introduction to the unadvertised “Midwest consortia of Biochemistry”, where faculty planned, but I was not perceptive enough to recognize, a path for kids with promise. That path carried me to U of MN [St Paul] in 1963, then to Michigan State [East Lansing] in 1967, and then to the faculty at Penn State in 1969. I guess I never got out of town because we are still here, but why, you may ask? On the personal side it proved an excellent place to raise our kids [Scott and Heather] and a place for Susan to show her skills and continue her professional path. The rule: when kids are in early school, never schedule class lectures at the same time because you can never cover up an empty lectern. We both had a chance to get involved in Harris Township and Regional activities in multiple ways.

Professionally PSU was excellent in that it was an era where the administration was trying to figure out how to get sufficient contemporary vigor to carry them from past areas of excellence in the 1930s-50s to the present through college rearrangements and adjustments. To state bluntly, if you could find colleagues that shared your vision, you could do anything that could get funded. I could and did with links from agriculture to engineering and to science. In each case finding a thread where study of a defined and relevant biological system could benefit from quantification. To borrow dignity from James Clerk Maxwell (1888): “The most important step in

the progress of every science is the measurement of quantities. ...” This allowed me to range from reproductive biology with the College of Agriculture, to analytical chemistry and unique design and fabrication of instruments with the Colleges of Science and Engineering. In addition I helped a few colleagues turn concepts into companies. In retrospect, wonderful good fortune to find necessary federal funds to carry too many projects along the paths that developed.

By 1999 Susan finally got me to the realization that I had to pick one of the many things I had underway. I retired from PSU and have put the effort in the bio-business side where I operate a “local consulting company with a lab” that solves problems for others and develops ideas of our own. Each of which in turn was moved on to others elsewhere with experience for final commercialization. Central PA is a wonderful place to start but has insufficient links to the larger world of commerce in areas of interest to me to carry a concept to the top; let others do it. I still have not had enough sense to stop.

Revised 9/23/2025

