



Nigel D. Sanders, Reed College, 1973 Winner



Nigel was raised in the Pacific Northwest and attended public schools in Portland, OR. Interested in chemistry from an early age (6), he received his BA degree in Chemistry in 1974 from Reed College and went on to graduate work at Harvard University as a National Science Foundation fellow, where he earned a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry in 1979. After completing a National Research Council Associateship in combustion and atmospheric science at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, DC, Nigel began an industrial career at Exxon's Corporate Research Laboratory in New Jersey, investigating fundamental chemistry of petroleum formation and recovery. Joining Minerals Technologies Inc. (MTI) in 1986, Nigel specialized in the application of colloid and surface chemistry concepts and techniques (the basis of what we now call “nanotechnology”) to a wide variety of materials applications including minerals, paper and plastics with 26 publications and patents in these areas. He frequently represented MTI in university outreach programs such as the MIT Industrial Liaison Program and the Paper Surface Science Program at the University of Maine. Retiring in late 2017 as Technical Manager – Global Synthesis, Nigel was a member of the MTI Technology Lead Team in charge of corporate-wide Technology Roadmaps. Nigel now teaches Inorganic Chemistry part-time at East Stroudsburg University.

A Past Chair of the Lehigh Valley section of the American Chemical Society (ACS), Nigel led the section to their first ever ChemLuminary Award in 2011. He began and still actively chairs the Strategic Planning Committee and is a visiting scientist engaged in public outreach. Besides his 32 years as a member of ACS, Nigel has also been a long-time member of several other technical societies including the Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI), the Materials Research Society (MRS) and the Mineralogical Society of America (MSA). He was a charter member of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania NanoMaterials Commercialization Center and helped found and co-chair the Lehigh Nanotechnology Network. Nigel and his wife, Regina, reside in the Lehigh Valley and have two children. They sing in several local area choirs including the Lehigh Choral Union with which they have twice been on tour to Europe.

