

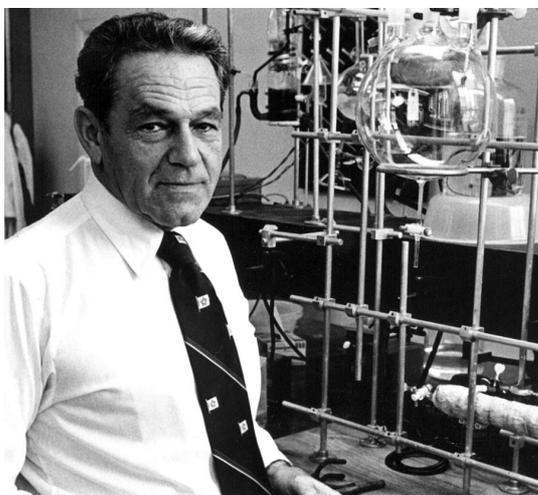
Norman Hackerman the role model

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Norman Hackerman has lived a long and productive life 1912-2007. He was born March 1, 1912, in Baltimore, Md. and it was there, at Johns Hopkins University where he received bachelor's (1932) and doctoral (1935) degrees in chemistry. While working as a chemist, he developed equipment that would homogenize milk. He became internationally known as an expert in metal corrosion. His research focused on the electrochemistry of corrosion, its mechanism and the processes to prevent or inhibit corrosion.

In 1940 he took a position as an assistant chemist with the U.S. Coast Guard, and the next year he went to the Virginia Polytechnic Institute as an assistant professor. In 1944-45 he joined Kellogg Corporation, where he was assigned to the Manhattan Project working on the gaseous diffusion process to separate uranium isotopes. This was his introduction to corrosion research. He never regretted his participation in the project that led to the atomic bomb. He is quoted in the blog "SciGuy" as saying, "There was a war on, you either fired a gun, flew on a plane, went on a submarine or did this. The ethics, at that time, were kill or be killed. We were losing troops at an awfully high rate."

In 1945, Norman Hackerman was recruited to The University of Texas at Austin as an assistant professor of chemistry and would serve in many leadership roles before becoming president in 1967.

As a great researcher, Hackerman was not willing to set his academic life aside in order to lead the University of Texas. He put three conditions to accept the position: He would keep on teaching a 8 a.m. undergrad chemistry course; he would keep up his research lab; and he would play squash at 5 p.m. everyday. After 25 years at University of Texas Austin, Hackerman was offered and accepted the presidency of Rice University, a position he held for 15 years until 1985. He taught a freshman seminar at UT Austin through May 2007. He died two months later at age 95.

Hackerman's many awards included Rice's Gold Medal for distinguished service and the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Chemists. He received the National Medal of Science from President Clinton and the Vannevar Bush Award, the National Science Board's highest honor.

Hackerman served on advisory committees and boards of several technical societies and government agencies, including the National Science Board, which he chaired from 1974 to 1980, and the Texas

Governor's Task Force on Higher Education. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and had served as editor of the Journal of Electrochemistry and as president of the Electrochemical Society.

He was longtime chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Robert A. Welch Foundation, one of the nation's oldest and largest sources of private funding for basic research in chemistry. In 2000 the foundation created the Norman Hackerman Award in Chemical Research to recognize the work of young researchers in Texas. The first recipient was Rice's Andrew Barron, the Charles W. Duncan Jr.-Welch Chair of Chemistry and professor of materials science.

In 1970 Hackerman was named professor of chemistry and president of Rice University, positions he held for the following 15 years. Upon his retirement in 1985, he was named President Emeritus and Distinguished Professor Emeritus. During his time at Rice, the university launched a graduate school of management and a school of music, divided science and engineering to create separate schools of engineering and natural sciences, and established biochemistry, linguistics, mathematics, and computer science departments, and the Rice Quantum Institute. Hackerman likewise expanded the number of staff by more than 200 and tripled the number of endowed chairs. Hackerman quadrupled during his tenure. The Rice president, David Leebron, is quoted in a Rice news release, "In the more than two decades since he was president of Rice, Norman has been a source of advice and inspiration to higher education leaders and state and national policymakers in the areas of science and education." For his many accomplishments, Rice awarded Hackerman its Alumni Gold Medal for Distinguished Service in 1984 and established the Norman Hackerman Fellowship in Chemistry in honor of his 90th birthday in 2002.

Hackerman's wife, Gene, died in 2002. He is survived by three daughters, Patricia Berry, Sally Myers, and Katherine Walker; a son, Stephen; ten grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

I wrote the above words about Hackerman as an appreciation for him as a fantastic supervisor, mentor, and friend. He has taught me so much in my time at Rice University 1999-2004 and I honestly can't thank him enough for his kindness, generosity, and support.

Hackerman was a role model for me and many others in at Rice and UT.

(2018) ; <http://www.jmaterenvirosci.com>