

Dr. Ronald Chance '70 – 2011 Alumni Hall of Fame Inductee

Ronald R. Chance, PhD, will long remember his days at Delta State. His first child, Kris, was born when he was a senior studying chemistry. After receiving an undergraduate degree in 1970, he earned a doctoral degree in physical chemistry from Dartmouth College in 1974. He joined Honeywell Corporation that same year as a staff physicist. After rising to research manager of the inorganic materials department, he joined Exxon Research and Engineering as director of the polymers and fluids laboratory in corporate research.

A native of Como, Chance rose within Exxon to distinguished scientific advisor before retiring in 2009. He divides his time between Algenol Biofuels as executive vice president of engineering and the Georgia Institute of Technology as professor of the School of Chemistry and Biomolecular Engineering and associate director of the Strategic Energy Institute. He has organized various international scientific meetings and served on numerous advisory boards. Currently, he is on the Advisory Board of Directors for the University of Southern California Department of Engineering and University of Stockholm Department of Materials Science. He has published more than 140 peer-reviewed articles, edited two books and authored more than 40 patents and patent applications.

Allied Corporation presented Chance with the Special Achievement Award in 1979, and he was a Regent's Lecturer at the University of California-Riverside in 1986. Two years later, he was elected Fellow of the American Physical Society. In 2002, he garnered the Special Innovation Award from ExxonMobil Corporation.

Chance and his wife of 44 years, Judy, have two grown children, Kris and Rick, and four grandchildren—Jake, 11, Will, 8, Trey, 5, and Jackson, 1. The Chances reside in Naples, Florida, where he enjoys playing golf and bridge. He makes time to visit Delta State, where he has given motivational talks to students preparing for engineering careers.