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# To Honor Retiring Faculty



Indiana University  
Bloomington  
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## V. J. Shiner Jr.

Vernon Jack Shiner Jr. has given forty-three years of distinguished service to Indiana University. Jack is a native Texan, born in Laredo in 1925. His early youth was spent in Laredo and Brownsville, where he began high school. He finished the last two years of high school at Austin High in El Paso, and enrolled at Texas Western College (now the University of Texas at El Paso) in 1942. In 1944 he enlisted in the navy, in which he served as a radar technician until 1946. He then completed his B.S. in chemistry at Texas Western in 1947 and moved on to graduate school at Cornell University, completing the Ph.D. in organic chemistry in 1950.

Jack's promise for a distinguished scientific career was immediately recognized by the award of a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship to University College, London, where he began honing his skills as a physical organic chemist by spending the year 1950–51 with Sir Christopher Ingold, a founder of this field. The next year was spent as a senior postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University, where Jack was again able to work with one of the giants in the field, Professor Paul Bartlett.

Jack joined the Department of Chemistry at Indiana University in 1952. He was the last regular chemistry faculty member appointed at the rank of instructor, but he rose rapidly through the ranks to full professor in 1960. In 1953 the department received a grant from the Du Pont company for the advancement of younger faculty members in research through the award of a summer fellowship. Vernon Jack Shiner was the awardee. During the period 1957–61 Jack held an Alfred P. Sloan research fellowship, awarded to younger faculty members with promise in research. In 1959–60 Jack also took his first sabbatical leave, as a National Science Foundation senior postdoctoral fellow at University College, London. He held an NSF senior postdoctoral fellowship again in 1966–67, this time at Brookhaven National Laboratory and the California Institute of Technology. In 1985 he served as a Fulbright distinguished scholar at the University of Zagreb in Yugoslavia.

As can be seen from the above, Jack Shiner has had a distinguished research career in the field of physical organic chemistry, with concentration in the area

of deuterium isotope effects. He has published widely, with more than 110 papers in both American and foreign scientific journals. He has given reports on his research at many national and international meetings over the years. In 1960 he made, by invitation, a lecture tour of ten local sections of the American Chemical Society in Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

At the same time, Jack did not ignore his professional responsibilities. He proposed and co-chaired a conference on hyperconjugation, which was held under departmental sponsorship on the Bloomington campus in June 1958. The conference proceedings were published in 1959 in the scientific journal *Tetrahedron*. Financial support was furnished by the National Science Foundation and six industrial companies. Jack also served as co-chair of the local arrangements committee for the National Organic Chemistry Symposium held on the Bloomington campus in 1961. An international group of nearly one thousand organic chemists, including several future Nobel prize winners, attended that symposium.

Jack was active in the local section of Sigma Xi, serving as its president in 1982. He has also been quite active in the American Chemical Society, both at the local section level and at the national level. He has attended most of the society's semiannual national meetings; at many he served as councilor of the southern Indiana section. As a member of the council, the governing body of the society, he has chaired the Committee on Science and served on the Subcommittee on Scientific Freedom and Human Rights. Recently Jack has been working with faculty members at Princeton University and Columbia College of Chicago on materials for teaching introductory chemistry to non-science majors under a National Science Foundation grant.

But Jack's major contribution to Indiana University has been in teaching and administration. In addition to the many students who have received their advanced degrees, both master's and doctor's, under Jack's tutelage, he has made innovations in the way we teach chemistry, especially at the graduate level. The Introduction to Research program for first-year graduate students, established by the department in 1957–58, was initiated by Jack. He served on the administrative committee supervising the department's Master of

Arts for Teachers program in 1956, and was a member of the department's first policy committee in 1961. Jack was appointed chair of the chemistry department in 1962 and served in that capacity until 1967. During this time he played a major role in the procurement of a basic award of several million dollars from the NSF under its University Science Development Program. This award was made to strengthen the physical sciences, especially physics, and proved to be of inestimable value to chemistry in various ways.

Jack was again called to administration as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 1973 to 1978. Under his deanship the Department of Biology was created through the combination of several departments and programs, and the Academic Fairness Committee was established. A few years after leaving the dean's office, Jack was again called upon to chair the chemistry department, serving from 1982 to 1988. During this time he played a major role in the planning and construction of the 1988 addition and its incorporation into the unified chemistry complex of today. He was also instrumental in recruiting a number of promising young faculty members.

Throughout the aforesaid trials and tribulations, Jack has been supported by his good wife. Jack married Reva Percival in December of 1946. Jack and Reva have three children, Lora, David, and Diane. Reva has always been a gracious hostess and an active participant in university affairs. She has been especially supportive of theater and the arts. Early on she worked with the Dance Group at IU. She was also active in the funding of the Waldron Arts Center, and has served on the board of the Bloomington Playwright's Project. Reva is currently active at the national level as second vice president of the National Society of Arts and Letters.

Jack's hobbies have been gardening and sports cars. In recent years he has had his beloved Series 1, 1963 Jaguar XKE roadster completely restored, and in retirement he hopes to spend a little more time on that, and on his large gardens. He and Reva plan to remain in Bloomington, so that we look forward to his wise counsel and lively conversation for a long time to come.

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Harry G. Day