

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

MARY L. GOOD

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

James G. Traynham

at

Little Rock, Arkansas

on

2 June 1998

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

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Mary Good

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MARY L. GOOD

1931 Born in Grapevine, Texas on 20 June

Education

1950 B.S., chemistry, University of Central Arkansas
1953 M.S., chemistry, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
1955 Ph.D., chemistry, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Professional Experience

Louisiana State University
1954-1958 Instructor and Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Baton Rouge
1958-1963 Associate Professor of Chemistry, New Orleans
1963-1974 Professor of Chemistry, New Orleans
1974-1978 Boyd Professor of Chemistry, New Orleans
1978-1980 Boyd Professor of Materials Science, Division of Engineering Research,
Baton Rouge

UOP, Inc.
1980-1985 Vice President-Director of Research, Corporate Research Center

AlliedSignal Research and Technology Laboratory
1985-1986 President-Director of Research, Signal Research Center, Inc.
1986-1988 President-Engineered Materials Research
1988-1993 Senior Vice President-Technology

U.S. Department of Commerce
1993-1997 Under Secretary, Technology Administration

Venture Capital Investors, LLC
1997- Managing Member

University of Arkansas, Little Rock
1997- Donaghey University Professor

Honors

- 1969 Agnes Faye Morgan Research Award
- 1973 Distinguished Alumnae Citation, University of Arkansas
- 1973 Garvan Medal, American Chemical Society
- 1974 American Institute of Chemists Honor Scroll, Louisiana Chapter
- 1975 Herty Medal, American Chemical Society, Georgia Section
- 1979 Florida Award, American Chemical Society, Florida Section
- 1982 Scientist of the Year, Industrial Research and Development Magazine
- 1983 Gold Medal, American Institute of Chemists
- 1986 Elected Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science
- 1987 Elected Member, National Academy of Engineering
- 1988 Delmer S. Fahrney Medal, Franklin Institute
- 1990 New Jersey Women of Achievement Award, Douglass College at Rutgers
University
- 1991 Charles Lathrop Parsons Award, American Chemical Society
- 1991 Industrial Research Institute Medalist Award
- 1991 ASM International Distinguished Life Membership Award, The Materials
Information Society
- 1991 American Association of State Colleges and Universities Distinguished
Alumnus Award
- 1992 American Association for the Advancement of Science Award
- 1992 Distinguished Public Service Award, National Science Foundation
- 1992 Albert Fox Demers Medal Award, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 1993 Ralph Coats Roe Medal, American Society of Mechanical Engineers
- 1994 Fellow, Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences
- 1995 Honorary Fellowship, The Royal Society of Chemistry
- 1996 Earle B. Barnes Award for Leadership in Chemical Research Management,
Dow Chemical Company
- 1996 UCLA Glenn T. Seaborg Medal
- 1996 Federation of Materials Societies National Materials Advancement Award
- 1997 Priestley Medal, American Chemical Society
- 1998 Othmer Gold Medal Award, the founding members and affiliates of the
Chemical Heritage Foundation
- 1999 Philip Abelson Award, American Association for the Advancement of
Science

ABSTRACT

Mary Good begins the interview with a discussion of her family history, her childhood, and her early education. Her family moved from Texas to Arkansas in 1942, when her father was offered a principalship in Kirby. Good had very little science education in high school, and attended Arkansas State Teacher's College to become a home economics teacher. However, her interest in science was piqued by a freshman chemistry course, and Good soon became a chemistry and physics double-major. Her chemistry professor encouraged her to go on to graduate school, and she accepted a fellowship at the University of Arkansas to study radiochemistry with Raymond Edwards. She received her Ph.D. in 1955, and accepted a position at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Her early work included iodine and sulfur chemistry and managing the radiochemistry laboratory. She moved to the brand-new New Orleans campus in 1958, where her research moved away from radiochemistry and into spectroscopy. In 1974, Good became a Boyd Professor at LSU. She soon returned to the Baton Rouge campus to help establish a materials science program. In 1980, Good left academia to join Universal Oil Products as vice president and director of research. Soon thereafter, corporate mergers led to the creation of AlliedSignal. Good discusses her extensive involvement in the American Chemical Society, including her time as chairman of the board and later as president. In 1980, Good was appointed to the National Science Board by President Carter, and was reappointed by President Reagan. In 1991, President Bush appointed her to the President's Council of Advisors for Science and Technology. Good discusses the support she received from AlliedSignal during this time. In 1993, Good left AlliedSignal to become the Under Secretary for Technology in the Department of Commerce. When she left the Department of Commerce four years later, Good joined Venture Capital Investors, which seeks to stimulate the creation of technology-intensive companies. Good concludes the interview with a discussion of her awards and honors, her family, and professional women in general.

INTERVIEWER

James G. Traynham is a Professor of Chemistry at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. He holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Northwestern University. He joined Louisiana State University in 1963 and served as chemistry department chairperson from 1968 to 1973. He was chairman of the American Chemical Society's Division of the History of Chemistry in 1988 and is currently councilor of the Baton Rouge section of the American Chemical Society. He was a member of the American Chemical Society's Joint-Board Council on Chemistry and Public Affairs, as well as a member of the Society's Committees on Science, Chemical Education, and Organic Chemistry Nomenclature. He has written over ninety publications, including a book on organic nomenclature and a book on the history of organic chemistry.

NOTES

1. C. A. Clausen, III, R. A. Prados and M. L. Good, "A Mossbauer Study of the Bonding in Ruthenium(II) Compounds," *Journal of the American Chemical Society* 92 (1970): 7482.
2. Basil D. Catsikis and Mary L. Good, "Preparation and Spectral Studies of a Series of Rhodium(III)-Acetonitrile Complexes," *Inorganic Chemistry* 8 (1969): 1095.
3. Mary Good. *Technology in the National Interest*, published by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the White House (1996) by the Government Printing Office.

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