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DEPARTMENTS

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Robert G. Kelly Receives the Hartfield Excellence in Teaching Award


Photo: Tom Daly

In March, the Jefferson Scholars Foundation honored **Robert G. Kelly** with its Hartfield Excellence in Teaching Award for his decades of "exceptional teaching and mentorship" at the University of Virginia (UVA).

Rob is the Thomas Goodwin Digges Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at UVA, where he co-directs the Center for Electrochemical Science and Engineering. The award committee recognized Rob's innovative approaches and classroom excellence, stating that he is described by his colleagues and students as a patient mentor who is deeply invested in developing young scientists. Rob has advised and mentored generations of students and researchers at every stage of their careers. His graduate students have earned numerous honors, including six who earned The Electrochemical Society Morris Cohen Award for outstanding research in corrosion science and engineering.

Each year, the Foundation invites deans and department chairs across the university to nominate outstanding educators for its Award for Excellence in Teaching. Nominations for the Hartfield Excellence in Teaching Award are submitted by department chairs and the dean within the UVA School of Engineering and Applied Science. Recipients are selected by a review committee composed of current UVA faculty.

John R. Scully Awarded Fellow of the Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society

The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society (TMS) has elected **John R. Scully** to its 2026 Class of Fellows. Elevation to fellowship in the society is a pinnacle award that recognizes outstanding contributions to the practice of metallurgy, materials science, and technology. The honor of TMS Fellow is one of the highest in the field of metallurgy and materials science as the number of fellows is capped at 100, which is 0.1% of the professional members of TMS. The award honors John's outstanding scientific advances in the understanding of the mechanisms of corrosion and hydrogen embrittlement of engineered materials, emphasizing interdisciplinary, integrated studies of metallurgy, electrochemistry, and surface science.

John holds the Charles Henderson Named Professorship in Materials Science at the University of Virginia. He is an Awarded Life Member and Fellow of The Electrochemical Society who joined ECS in 1981. His ECS recognitions and awards include the 2009 Corrosion Division H. H. Uhlig Award and the 2016 Henry B. Linford Award for Distinguished Teaching.


Photo: UVA School of Engineering and Applied Science

Abstract submission opens in August

The Electrochemical Society
Advancing solid state & electrochemical science & technology

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251st ECS Meeting
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In Memoriam ...

Werner Kern

(1925–2025)



The Electrochemical Society mourns the passing of **Werner Kern**, who died on December 19, 2025. Werner was born on March 18, 1925, in Basel, Switzerland. When his regular schooling was cut short by World War II, he joined the pharmaceutical firm Hoffmann-La Roche as a junior chemist, assisting Dr. **Max Kofler** in vitamin research while attending night school. In addition to his work at Roche, he maintained his own basement laboratory where he invented, produced, and sold a new type of liquid soap to finance his research. One of his first publications (in German) was on the discovery of fluorescing carcinogenic hydrocarbons in certain organic soils.

In 1948, at the age of 23, he moved to the US, where he joined Roche's New Jersey branch. On December 13, 1954, he became a naturalized US citizen. On a 10,000-mile trip around his new country, he met Mildred C. Patti in Bryce Canyon, Utah. After a short courtship, they married on November 20, 1955. Midge and Werner had three wonderful children: Jeffrey (1957), Vanessa (1959), and Peter (1967). Later they would have five grandchildren.

In 1955 Werner received a BS in chemistry from Rutgers University. In 1960 he was given an offer he could not refuse: to join the RCA Semiconductor Division and oversee the newly opened Radioisotope Laboratory which was investigating transistor chip processing using radioactive tracers. Five years later he joined the RCA David Sarnoff Research Center in Princeton as a Fellow of the Technical Staff specializing in research into dielectric film formation, chemical vapor deposition, microcontamination, and etching processes. From 1974 to 1979 he was a Project Scientist for government-sponsored research contracts on glass passivation of ICs, dielectric defect detection, and large-scale production of silicon solar cells. He was Chief Investigator and Technical Consultant on silicon device processing and chemical safety for RCA for over 20 years.

In 1987 he opened his own company, Werner Kern Associates, for technical and scientific consulting in semiconductor materials processing for the microelectronics industry. With Advantage Production Technology in New Mexico, he developed the basic process sequence for vapor phase cleaning of silicon wafers. In 1988 he joined the CVD Division of Lam Research Corporation as a Senior Scientist and Research Advisor for developing new CVD processes.

Werner joined ECS in 1965. He was a member of the Dielectric Science and Technology Division (DSTD) until his passing. The division awarded him the Thomas D. Callinan Award in 1971 for his research in chemical vapor deposition processes. He served as division Vice Chair (1981–1982) and Chair (1982–1984), and as Technical Affairs Advisor to each of the three solid state divisions of the Society until 1987. ECS named him a Fellow of The Electrochemical Society in 1991.

His work resulted in 14 US patents, more than 150 peer-reviewed publications, and chapters in several books. With **John L. Vossen**, Werner co-edited the best-selling classic *Thin Film Processes* in 1978, and its sequel, *Thin Film Processes Volume II*, in 1991. He and **Karen A. Reinhardt** co-edited the *Handbook of Semiconductor Wafer Cleaning Technology*—the first comprehensive book on the subject—in 1993, followed by two more editions.

He received three RCA Outstanding Achievement Awards: in 1966, for his work in integrated-circuit process research; in 1973, for contributions to glass passivation of silicon devices; and in 1983 for inventing the fusible glass (CVD BPSG) for VLSI circuits. In 1981 NASA awarded him a Scientific Certificate of Recognition for his research. In 1997 Werner was honored with the prestigious SEMI Award for his lifetime contributions to the semiconductor industry. SCP Global Technologies, Inc. gave him the inaugural Werner Kern Award for technical excellence, which was founded in his honor in 1999.

In 2000 Werner retired from his many business activities to spend more time with his wife and family and to enjoy reading, music, and his library of travel photobooks.

Based on a remembrance from Jeffrey Kern.

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