



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

## Jack Howe

*Mechanical Engineering Hall of Fame, 2020*

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1967

MSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1968

*Corporate Senior Vice President (Retired)*  
Chevron Phillips Chemical

Jack was born in the Rio Grande Valley, but his earliest memories are living in Houston, where he moved when he was three. His primary school years were spent mostly outside. It was too hot in the house (pre air conditioning.) All the kids in the neighborhood would get together and spend the days swimming, biking, playing ball, or just goofing off. Swimming and basketball were favorites. Elementary school was ok, but what's the point?

Jack first played organized football in the eighth grade on the Junior High School team. He was pretty good at it, but honestly liked basketball better. School got a little more interesting; math and science were his favorites.

In high school, he made the varsity football team his first year and started at defensive end. In his junior year his older sister insisted he should ask a friend of hers, Carrie Lindsay, to the Thanksgiving dance. She convinced him by declaring, "She's lots of fun! It will never get serious." He must admit 60 years later- so far, so good.

In his senior year of high school Coach Royal came recruiting. It was not a hard sell. Jack was already impressed with Texas football. He loved Austin, the hill country, and Lake Travis, where his family had taken annual vacations. His sister was already at UT in Plan II. On his recruiting trip, he was wowed by the Engineering School. The only question was Mechanical or Chemical. He decided on Mechanical with a focus on Materials.

In the fall of 1962, it was off to Austin for six amazing, wonderful years. In football, the 1963 team were National Champions, the 1964 team defeated the #1 ranked Alabama in the Orange Bowl, and in 1965 Jack earned All Conference and Academic All Conference honors. Finally, in 1966 and 1967, while completing his BS and earning his MS in Mechanical Engineering, Jack coached the freshman football teams that went on

to become the core of the 1969 and 1970 back-to-back football National Champions.

All the while, studies in Mechanical Engineering got more demanding and more interesting. He was thinking about staying one more year to complete an MBA when his dad asked him, "Have you ever considered gainful employment?" He signed up for recruiting the next day. In the summer of 1968 Jack started with Phillips Petroleum Company at the Plastics Technical Center, where they were developing new technologies and new applications like blow molded HDPE vehicle fuel tanks, thermoformed tote boxes and extruded pipe for natural gas distribution. His first field assignment was as a Plastics Sales Engineer, where he participated in the commercialization of new applications like HDPE milk bottles and ice trays.

A personal highlight for the family was spending 5 years in Brussels, Belgium, where ultimately Jack was responsible for Phillips Plastics Business in Europe and Africa. After returning to the USA, Jack spent time in various divisions, including Coal, Petrochemicals, and Petroleum Products. Ultimately he was named Corporate Senior Vice President responsible for the Chemicals Group Worldwide. During the next 5 years, the Group enjoyed major expansions in domestic operations as well as market entry Petrochemical Complexes in China and the Middle East. Lastly Jack held the initial exploratory talks with Chevron Chemicals which resulted in the formation of Chevron Phillips Chemical.

Jack retired in 1999 and moved to Jackson Hole, WY (aka Heaven). He and Carrie generally spend November and April in Texas, splitting time between Austin and the Hill Country. Since retiring, thanks to his three daughters, Jack enjoys having a covey of eight grandchildren.