

# Roger E. Salters, Ph.D, E.E: Merced College Alumni Success Story



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Although he earned his Ph.D in Electrical Engineering, Merced College alumnus Dr. Roger Salters says the education he received at the community college was “more valuable than he could have imagined.” Since graduating in 1964 with an AA in Science, Dr. Salters has gone on to accomplish many things and the Foundation is excited to share his story with our community.

Dr. Salters was one of the community college’s very first students attending classes at the Merced County Fairgrounds well before the main campus was built. Stationed at Castle Air Force Base in the early 1960’s, Dr. Salters began taking college classes in the fall of 1961 at Modesto Junior College, which at the time, held classes on base. When Merced College opened in the fall of 1962, he transferred from Modesto to Merced where he continued classes until he graduated in the first graduating class of 31 students in June, 1964.

Dr. Salters fondly recalls his days as a student when classes were held at the Fairgrounds. “I don’t remember in which buildings I took classes, but I do recall the room where I studied physics,” says Dr. Salters in a recent interview. “It was a small room with a few tables, but had very good lab equipment. The teacher, whose name I do not remember, was excellent! He made the subject matter interesting and manageable for this high school drop-out! My mathematics and other classes were also well taught and were quite significant in forming the early years of the future scientist and engineer...me!”

Dr. Salters remembers that there was a little hamburger joint across the street from the Fairgrounds called Bert’s Drive In. He recalled that it was a great place to get a burger before class and would arrive several minutes early so that he could just hang out and talk to Bert and others. “Great conversations were always assured,” said Dr. Salters. “We probably solved most of the significant world problems several times over! As a consequence of the warm-up at Bert’s, I was then ready for the evening of the class room challenges. It was an ideal environment for learning at that stage of my life.”

Within a year of graduating from Merced College, Dr. Salters was transferred from Castle to an air force base in Ohio. He was there for a very short time before he asked for an opportunity to attend Colorado State University, in Fort Collins, Colorado, to study for a BS degree in Electrical Engineering, which he earned in 1968. “The great education background that I had gotten at Merced College was sufficient for me to complete about three years of course work in twenty-four months! This was hard work, but I was ready and had fun doing it!”

Dr. Salters later graduated in 1971 with a MS in Electrical Engineering from Northeastern University in Boston, and received his Ph.D in Electrical Engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1985.

Dr. Salters has conducted research and development in several areas at various USAF laboratories, was an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at the US Air Force Academy and

also taught courses in Electrical Engineering. He was also an adjunct professor at the University of Colorado. For the last twenty years, he has been a professor in the Department of Engineering, School of Engineering and Computer Science the University of Denver, where he conducts research and teaches in robotics, controls systems, communications, Electromagnetic Theory, Engineering Mathematics, Information Theory and Stochastic Processes, and non-linear systems.

Dr. Salters is a Professional at Fay Engineering, a Colorado corporation providing Forensic Engineering Analysis, 3D Visualizations, and testing for the legal and insurance professions. He has been honored with numerous military and civilian awards, including Defense Meritorious Service Medal for Research into anti-satellite System Development, USAF Meritorious Service Medal for Teaching and Research at the USAF Academy, and the Excellence in Education Award from the Learning Effectiveness Program at the University of Denver. He is a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE), which is the world's leading professional association for the advancement of technology.

With all the credentials following Dr. Salters' name, he contends that the AA degree he earned from Merced College was the most meaningful because "it proved to me that I could do college level work."

The Merced College Foundation appreciates hearing from Dr. Salters and his story is an inspiration to everyone.