

Donald C. Slawson

1933 - 2014



Donald Slawson was born in Wichita on August 12, 1933, the only child of Charles and Kathryn (Swanson) Slawson. He was a graduate of East High School and University of Kansas (1955) with a degree in Political Science and a minor in Geology. Don was a member of Delta Upsilon Fraternity and played on the KU freshman basketball team. He married his college sweetheart, Judy (Garver) Slawson, to whom he was married for 59 years.

After graduation, Mr. Slawson became involved in the oil exploration, production, development and operation of oil and gas properties in Kansas and nine other states. In 1957, Don founded Donald C. Slawson, Oil Producer. In 1964, he expanded the company to include Slawson Drilling Company, Inc. which owned and operated nine drilling rigs and led to the founding of Inland Crude Purchasing Corporation, Prairie Gas Company and Sunrise Oil Supply Company. Mr. Slawson's company continued to grow and ultimately drilled over 4,000 operated wells in 10 states and at one time was the most active driller in the State of Kansas.

Don helped pioneer the horizontal drilling technique in the Bakken Shale in North Dakota in 1989 and the company remains a leader in drilling the Bakken today.

Slawson Co. employs more than 950 people in offices located in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas and North Dakota. Slawson Co. has grown from its core business to include drilling rigs, crude oil marketing and several other oilfield services.

Don served two terms on the National Petroleum Council. One of Don's proudest achievements was the development of NewMarket Square shopping center. He helped develop the Tallgrass community and its associated commercial and residential real estate. He served on many area boards and committees including Intrust Bank; Cessna Aircraft; KG&E; Security Benefit Life; Kansas Health Foundation; Downtown Development Committee; WI/SE; Airport Advisory Board; Area Sports Commission and the Wichita Collegiate School Board.

Don devoted a tremendous amount of time to improving higher education in Kansas. He was appointed to the Kansas Board of Regents for 8 years and was its Chairman from 1987 to 1993. Don was the driving force behind the creation of the Margin of Excellence Program to increase funding for professors to retain them in Kansas. Don felt strongly that "Our ability to attract and retain business in Kansas depends upon the quality of our institutions of higher education." Don's support of the University of Kansas extended to both education and athletics. He was a past President of the KUs Alumni Association and its Athletic Board. Don and Judy supported many Wichita community projects but their favorite project was the Slawson Family Tiger Trek at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

SOURCE: <https://www.downingandlahey.com/obituaries/Donald-C-Slawson?obId=14792886>