Jim Sorden

What is your favorite Madison/campus memory?
Having spent time in the US army before entering college, when I entered UW, I thought I was already grown up. In reality I learned much more than I had expected. The atmosphere and diversity of disciplines of the entire campus provided a holistic experience.

What has helped you achieve success in your career?
In addition to the support I received from my family throughout my life, the superb fundamental background in Engineering was also critical to my success.

Outside of class, what experiences did you find most meaningful?
Perhaps more difficult for me than the engineering classroom, I found the quest to learn about the opposite sex equally interesting and satisfying.

What excites you about the future of Engineering?
The fact that this is where the future is; in engineering. Technology continues to expand at a tremendous rate and the contributions of engineering will be positive for the health and wealth of all mankind.

Besides engineering, do you have another passion you have pursued or would have liked to pursue given the time?
I have spent quite a bit of time learning more the about the history of the United States, and studying the genealogy of my family.

Who was an influential peer/professor from your time at UW-Madison?
Professor Richard “Doc” Greiner was the only professor in the department at the time who knew anything about semiconductors, transistors, and integrated circuits.

What are you most proud of in life? What is your greatest achievement?
I am most proud of my family, which includes my wife and two kids. Regarding my professional achievements, I categorize these into two phases. Starting out, many of my achievements were technical and were reported on in the HP Journal. The second phase of my career focused on engineering at a much larger level and general management. This is where I was able to be a part of the commercialization of precision GPS.

What would be your advice to current students? What do you wish you had known?
Work hard, study deep, but also attempt to achieve some balance of being a social being! We humans are social beings, and in order to be successful in whichever path you take, you have to be able to relate to the person next to you on some level. The university setting is a great place to practice these skills, but it does take effort!