Kenneth Schroeder

What is your favorite Madison/campus memory?
Falling in love for the first time and the grill at Edgewood College.

What has helped you achieve success in your career?
My organizational abilities have made me successful. I also had great mentors from working in the Silicon Valley who taught me technology.

Outside of class, what experiences did you find most meaningful?
Socialization, go to college, meeting and interacting with people, playing sports.

What excites you about the future of Engineering?
To make great leaps in tech in semiconductor industry by miniaturization and cost reduction. Incredible piece of technology.

Besides engineering, do you have another passion you have pursued or would have liked to pursue given the time?
I’m a family person, so my greater passion is for my family. Other than that I enjoy skiing, hiking, traveling the world. I’ve enjoyed meeting people from so many countries - widely traveled China, Japan, Indonesia, East and Southern Africa, and Europe.

Who was an influential peer/professor from your time at UW-Madison?
All of the professors in the ECE department were very helpful. John Bollinger, who was probably the Chair of the department as I was graduating was a very influential person to me.

What are you most proud of in life? What is your greatest achievement?
KLAC stock exchange symbol. I worked there for 22 years, as CEO for several of them, and helped it go from nothing to $10-billion-dollar profitable business. We were able to create jobs for tens of thousands of employees. The semiconductor industry has been instrumental in progression of Moore’s Law.

What would be your advice to current students? What do you wish you had known?
Get a good summer job, close to your discipline. It will help you understand your passions. That was what helped me to understand what I really wanted to do. Make sure you’re persistent and fully believe in what you do.