

The 1998 Ralph and Helen Oesper Awardee

Honoring

Jerome A. Berson

Yale University



Jerome A. Berson was born in Sanford, Florida. He was educated in the public schools of Florida and New York, received the degree of B.S. in chemistry from the City College of New York in 1944, and worked briefly at Hoffmann-LaRoche, Inc., in Nutley, N. J. After service in the Army of the United States (1944-1946, China-Burma-India Theater), he returned to the study of chemistry at Columbia University, where he received M.A. (1947) and Ph.D. (1949) degrees, working with W. von E. Doering. Following a postdoctoral year (1949-1950) at Harvard University with R. B. Woodward, Berson held faculty positions successively at the University of Southern California (1950-1963) and the University of Wisconsin (1963-1969). Since 1969, he has been on the faculty of Yale University, where he is now Sterling Professor Emeritus of Chemistry. He served as Chairman of the Department of Chemistry (1971-1974) and as Director of the Division of the Physical Sciences and Engineering (1983-1990). His research, carried out with about 150 graduate student and postdoctoral co-workers over the years, has been devoted primarily to the elucidation of the mechanisms of organic reactions and to the synthesis of molecules designed to test theoretical concepts. Recently, he has been studying the origins of chemical ideas.

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