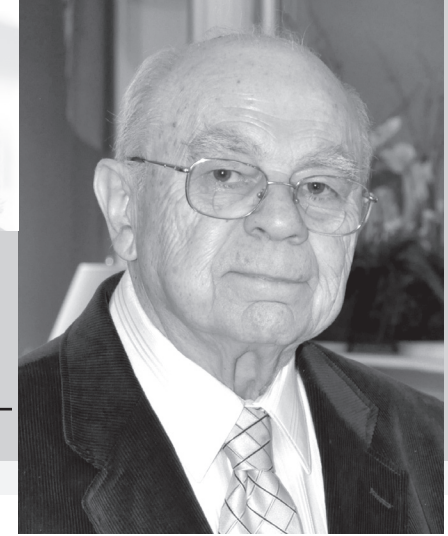




DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Nicholas Pelick '60, '64g



To Nicholas Pelick for his distinguished career in business and his commitment to academics and innovation in the sciences.

Like other successful companies with humble beginnings, Supelco, Inc., began in an old garage. Nicholas Pelick and fellow Penn Stater Walter Supina '53, '58g, '60g borrowed enough money to launch the business and buy a key piece of equipment.

“That was new technology at the time, when we opened the lab in a garage in 1966,” said Pelick. “That first piece of equipment was valuable in all of our uses.”

Supelco—which combines its co-founders' surnames—developed and produced analytical products for gas chromatography and lipid biochemicals for medical research and standardization. Pelick and Supina both learned the complexities of chemical testing from the late Arthur Rose, who retired as Penn State Professor Emeritus of Chemical Engineering, in Rose's privately owned lab near North Atherton Street in State College. Pelick considered Rose a mentor, and learned distillation

processes from Rose during the three years Pelick worked on his master's degree in biochemistry.

Pelick and Supina salvaged discarded furniture and equipment from Penn State to use in their lab in Bellefonte, Pa. Gradually, they were able to purchase a few pieces of brand new equipment. Ladders were kept on hand to fix the garage's leaky roof. During those early years, they garnered business by visiting university labs and hospitals and selling products for research and development and medical research. Business boomed, making it necessary to hire several people, and more space was needed. A 10,000-square-foot new building was constructed on property from purchased farmland.

The company continued to expand globally, including several overseas facilities, managed by Supina, and eventually employed about 500 people worldwide. “It got to a point where we had established a reputation in lipid chemistry and chromatography,” said Pelick.

Pelick's wife, Gelsa, who goes by Dolly, has been at his side for 59 years. They met

while attending two neighboring Scranton high schools; he played football, she was a head majorette. Pelick attended Penn State Hazleton for two years, where he joined the ROTC program, then left school to enter the U.S. Air Force. His four-year term included an assignment in Alaska, where he assisted with radio communications.

Near the end of his service, he worked with Air Force station communications in Washington, D.C., and Dolly worked as a full-time nurse. Pelick left the service, determined to continue his schooling at Penn State. To earn extra money, he played the accordion at weddings and other events in a polka band. In 1958, he finally returned to Penn State at University Park and completed two degrees. And then in 1966, he and Supina started Supelco.

The Pelicks have long been involved with Penn State and the Eberly College of Science. Nick Pelick served as an emeritus director on the Penn State Research Foundation Board; as a presidential counselor, advising the University on philanthropic issues; as chair of the college's component of the Grand Destiny fundraising campaign; and as president of the college's Alumni Society Board.

He received the Penn State Alumni Association's Alumni Fellow Award in 1991.

The couple endowed a faculty chair in the college and a biotechnology innovation fund in the Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences. A courtyard with a statue of the Pelicks now exists beside the Chemistry Building on the University Park campus. They've also supported Pennsylvania Centre Stage, WPSU, Intercollegiate Athletics, and construction of the Bryce Jordan Center. Pelick received the A. Richard Baldwin Distinguished Service Award in 1988 and recognition as a past president from the American Oil Chemists' Society in 1997.

Supelco was sold to Rohm and Haas Company of Philadelphia in 1986, and in 1991, both Pelick and Supina retired.

Pelick enjoys working at the True Value Hardware store he and Dolly own near their farm in Zion, Pa. They are life members of the Penn State Alumni Association and have two daughters, Pamela and Daria '80, and two grandchildren, Rebecca and Nick Jr., who is in his final year at Penn State.