



Ronald K. DeFord, Ph.D.
1902 - 1994
Inducted 1975

Ronald DeFord was born in southern California and entered the Colorado School of Mines at age 15, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in geology. After teaching at CSM for a year, DeFord went to work in 1924 for the Midwest Refining Co. in Roswell, New Mexico as their resident geologist. He worked the Borger, Texas boom of 1926 and in 1927 drove the stake that marked the location for the discovery well for the Hobbs, New Mexico field—one of the most significant finds in the history of the U.S. petroleum industry. In 1933, he joined Argo Oil Corp., soon becoming chief geologist and establishing an office in Midland. For 15 years, DeFord played a role in deciphering the complex geology of the Permian Basin. In 1948, interested in sharing his knowledge and broadening his experience, he returned to teaching, accepting an appointment a Professor of Geology at the University of Texas in Austin. DeFord earned distinction not only as a professor of geology and but also as a departmental graduate advisor for the University of Texas in Austin. He published over 40 scientific papers and supervised 19 Ph.D. dissertations and 126 Master's thesis', truly earning the nickname "The Professor."

