

TRANSCRIPT: IVAN W. SCHMEDEMANN INTERVIEW

Ivan W. Schmedemann · Professor Emeritus at Texas A&M

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Interview with Dr. Ivan W. Schmedeman, Professor Emeritus Texas A&M University. Schmedeman is a 1967 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

This video was posted February 23, 2011 on the Tyrus R. Timm Registry YouTube Channel.

I'm Ivan Schmedemann, Professor Emeritus from Texas A&M University, and I received my PhD from Texas A&M University in 1966.

Why did you decide to study Agricultural Economics?

I studied Ag Economics at Texas A&M, but I also studied it at Kansas State University. And my background, my background is, I grew up on a farm in Kansas in the 30s when The Depression, The Dust Bowl, and so forth. But agriculture is one, is one of the leading basic industries in the United States, and as a consequence, it is a very lucrative area to be in because there are lots of job opportunities and a tremendous variation in the types of opportunities that exist in the department – in the agricultural sector. Another thing is that the agricultural sector in the United States is one of the most efficient in the world. People spend in the United States a little less than ten percent of their income for food. And when you look at the statistics for the rest of world, most of the countries are twenty percent and up from there. So, this I think means there are lots of opportunities. This is why I stayed in agriculture.

What life experiences most influenced you in your life?

Well, I think one of the things that was very interesting was in 1950 I was selected as an International Farm Youth Exchange Student and the country that they chose for me was Germany. And this started my career interest in foreign countries and foreign nationalities for the rest of my life, and one of the reasons that my wife and I accepted a job in Ethiopia, Africa with Oklahoma State University to teach in a four year college agricultural college that they were operating in as an aid program.

In your opinion, what does it mean to achieve success?

I think success is happiness. If you're successful, you and your family should be happy. And you should be able to create happiness among your associates, and in my case among Former Students and students at Texas A&M University and at Kansas State, Oklahoma State and Imperial Ethiopia College in Africa.

What are your thoughts on being inducted to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry?

Well, that was a wonderful, wonderful experience. And I'm very proud to have been selected because I knew Tyrus R. Timm, Dr. Timm. He was one of the finest administrators that I've ever worked for. And I'll always remember the first fall that I was on the faculty, he got up and he told us, he said, now gentlemen, he said, the classes are about to start, and you need to get ready for the students. And that means that you wear a coat and a tie to class. And also that you remember that your employee of the State of Texas, and when you tell Texans where to go, 98% of them are not going to do it.

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What advice do you have for a student unsure of career interests?

Well, I've had several students like that, and I think you need to advise them as to what the opportunities are in the different sectors. And, my case, the sectors where land economics, real estate, agriculture in general, and the job opportunities that are in those areas and available which will give you happiness and keep you occupied for the years that you will be employed.

Thanks for listening

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