

Paul G. Gassman

Distinguished Service Award

PURPOSE

To recognize outstanding service to the organic chemistry community.

ESTABLISHMENT

The award was established in 1994 with financial help from the Bayer Corporation's Pharmaceutical Division, located in West Haven, CT, and Bayer's Polymer and Materials Divisions, located in Pittsburgh, PA. In 2007, The award was endowed by the Midwest Pharmaceutical Process Chemistry Consortium with a supporting contribution from the Division of Organic Chemistry. The winner of this award and of the [Leete Award](#) are the only two awards actually selected by the Organic Division.

RULES OF ELIGIBILITY

Nominees must be long-standing members of the Organic Division of the American Chemical Society who through their contributions to the organic chemical community in the United States have significantly enhanced the welfare of its members. Contributions to the American Chemical Society and/or the Organic Chemistry Division, including significant accomplishments in the management and function of the ACS that impact the environment of organic chemistry, leadership and innovation in the Division, and conspicuous service on behalf of organic chemists are appropriate considerations.

ABOUT PAUL G. GASSMAN (1935-1993)



Paul Gassman was born June 22, 1935, in Alden, New York, son of Joseph Martin Jasmine and Florence Marie Rautenstrauch Gassman, of German Swiss parentage. In 1957, he graduated with a B.S. degree from Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. He received his Ph.D. in 1960 from Cornell University, where he worked with Prof. Jerrold Meinwald, and continued as a postdoctoral fellow during 1960 before beginning an appointment as an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Ohio State University, moving to the University of Minnesota as a Professor in 1974. He served the ACS Division of Organic Chemistry as a member of the Executive Committee (1976-88), Chairman-elect (1980), Chairman (1981), and Councilor (1983-1988). He also served as the ACS President for 1990.

Paul Gassman's research was centered in the area of organic reaction mechanisms, and focused on mechanisms of catalysis (including hydrocarbon metathesis), X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy, chemistry of highly strained molecules, neighboring group participation in carbocation chemistry, cycloaddition reactions, enzyme mechanisms, organoelectro-chemistry, carbanion chemistry, synthesis of heterocyclic molecules, oxidation of hydrocarbons, nitrenium ion chemistry, and electron-transfer reactions. The work resulted in over 300 publications in scientific journals, 32 patents, and 11 books in which he is listed as an editor and provided training for 72 Ph.D. and 13 M.S. students, as well as dozens of postdoctoral fellows and a number of undergraduate researchers. At the age 57, Paul Gassman was at home on the evening of April 17, 1993, when he suffered a torn aorta. The following day he underwent emergency open-heart surgery but suffered irreversible brain damage and never regained consciousness. He died on April 21, 1993. (Taken in part from the University of Minnesota's Senate Minutes.)