

## STEPHEN MEER

Thank you for reaching out. I am not aware of the Irwin project that you referenced, but think it's a great idea! I actually have an number of intersections with Dr. H, starting when I was in Junior High School and managed to work my way into his Wednesday afternoon computer classes at DU for pre-college students. At the time I didn't really understand that, to some degree, we were fodder for a thesis, but that certainly didn't detract in any way! That lasted for the remainder of my Jr. High days and then I was lucky enough to attend GW as my normally designated high school, while living in the area that was slated for bussing to Manual.

One year (I think is was still in 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Merrill), he convinced a senior engineer from Digital Equipment Corp (DEC, unfortunately now gone...) to come teach his more advanced GW students a series of seminars about the design, construction and operation of their PDP-8 computer that turns out to be one of the most game changing significant machines of all time. When I wouldn't take no for an answer from anyone, my parents, my Jr. High teachers or to some degree the administration of GW, he fought for my ability to attend this seminar during normal school hours. I still have some of the diagrams and notes from that seminar.

Once at GW, I'm not sure really where to start, other than he was first and foremost a champion of the notion that, just because someone was a youngster or teenager, it didn't mean that they couldn't be a valuable contributor to "the field" or society. I was already a "beg forgiveness as opposed to ask permission" kind of guy, but if I ever had any trepidation about living life that way, he was a major factor in cementing that as a way of life for me. It has served me well in all ways.

Through his energy and passion I had the opportunity to get involved in a number of things that broadened my horizons well beyond what I might have ever imagined:

We wrote programs that were integrated into a number of learning units that DU published for educators to use with Jr/Sr high school students, related to everyday living involving mathematics. I recall hours of agony, getting ready to present these to high school teachers and administrators from around the country, at a convention in Denver at the Phipps Mansion. Many more skills than just math were learned from this man.

I am the recipient of a Presidential Award of Excellence from President Nixon, as a result of Irwin thinking big about an automated carpool program that was originally written by Mark Frank (another of his students—one year older than me, I think). Irwin realized that this program could have real community impact (huge fuel shortages at this point in the '70s) and involve a number of aspects of the GW community beyond just the computer geeks, if we reached out to assist businesses in setting up carpooling for their employees. Irwin promptly set about rallying a speakers bureau, community outreach, and interaction with the business community. Somewhere along the line, I was drafted and became a sort of project manager and worked with a large insurance company in Denver to assist them in making carpooling a reality. Irwin reached out to the broader GW community and caused a speakers bureau, carpooling resource center, and community outreach programs to all happen – staffed by students. Many of the students involved in this project were recognized by State

Government, the EPA [school won the EPA award], and the Nixon Administration for their involvement in this project. All because Dr. H thought big and didn't take "no" for an answer. [DPS relieved IH of his teaching duties so he could administer all of these projects, and hired his father as his substitute.]

Dr. H was (and I suspect still is) always a wangler and negotiator. He was the case study in never settling if you think something better can be obtained. Some translated this to more for less money (cheap), but in many cases (and hindsight, as I write this), I think is often also about never settling for status quo.

I watched Irwin push students, pull students, and fight the rules of the norm all along the way to make sure that his kids got the freedom and what they needed to keep moving forward in what was an exciting somewhat new field at the time. I certainly owe a lot of my success to both what he taught me directly and to what I learned because of the situations that I happened into by being in his sphere.

As I write this, I realize that there are many more stories and anecdotes, and probably several that I have forgotten. Some including tennis, some travel to the mountains, and some of his family. If you communicate with him, please pass on my best regards to both Jackie and Dr. H. Also feel free to pass my email along to him, as well.

Best regards,

Stephen Meer  
Chief Technology Officer and co-Founder  
Intrado, Inc.

[www.intrado.com](http://www.intrado.com)

720.494.6502 Direct

720.494.6505 Assistant

January 3, 2011

---

**Stephen Meer** is co-founder and chief technology officer of Intrado (intrado.com), where for more than three decades he has made significant contributions to the advancement of the nation's 9-1-1 network. He is actively involved with the development of 9-1-1 public policy and is a valued advisor to government and industry organizations, such as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation.