

Biographical Sketch

Robert J. McMahon was born in Mendota, Illinois in 1958. He attended public schools in Mendota, and graduated as Valedictorian of his high school class in 1976. He received a B.S. degree in Chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1980, graduating *Magna Cum Laude* and with Highest Distinction in the Curriculum. He performed undergraduate research with Professor Stanley G. Smith into the mechanism and stereoselectivity of lithium aluminum hydride reduction of ketones. McMahon received a Ph.D. degree in Organic Chemistry from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1985, working with Professor Orville L. Chapman on the mechanisms of carbene rearrangements. As a graduate student, McMahon received Graduate Fellowships from the National Science Foundation and the IBM Corporation. He received the Winstein Dissertation Award, and was named a UCLA Distinguished Scholar. From 1985-1988, McMahon investigated excited-state electron transfer as a postdoctoral research associate with Professor Mark S. Wrighton at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. McMahon accepted a position on the faculty in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1988. He was granted tenure in 1994 and promoted to full professor in 1997. He received a Presidential Young Investigator Award from the National Science Foundation in 1989, an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship in 1994, and an NSF Award for Special Creativity in 1996. From 1994-2003, he chaired the Chemistry Department's Facilities Committee and managed the \$42 M Chemistry Building Addition and Renovation project. He was named an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Organic Chemistry* in 2000, a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2003, and Helfaer Professor of Chemistry in 2007.

Professor McMahon is an authority on aspects of mechanistic organic and organometallic chemistry, photochemistry, and materials chemistry. His current research interests include the generation and spectroscopic characterization of organic reactive intermediates organic chemistry of relevance to astrochemistry and combustion chemistry.