THOMAS R. DAVIS '82, '85g, '88g

Biographical Sketch

A life-long resident of Pennsylvania, Tom completed a “decade of excellence” at Penn State earning degrees in Biochemistry (B.S.) and Food Science (M.S.) and (Ph.D.). Tom worked his way through graduate school by lecturing in the classroom, conducting research and doing odd jobs.

Tom comes from a family with strong ties to Penn State beginning with his father (Donald ’53) and continuing with his siblings - Paul ’80, Dona (#19 on ballot) and Martin (#11 on ballot). The Penn State tradition for the Davis family proudly continues Don’s two grandchildren (Stefanie ’09 and Brian ’13 B.S., M.S.). The Davis family tradition will continue as several more grandchildren including Tom’s three children approach the college selection age. A tradition which started in 1947 continues into its eighth decade – perhaps beyond.

A native of Schuylkill County, Tom and his college bride (Joanne Hoffa ’83), a native of Berks County – reside in Bucks County. Joanne attended a commonwealth campus for part of her Penn State experience.

Professionally, Tom is Vice President of R&D and a minority equity partner at Sweet Ovations LLC - a food development and manufacturing company - headquartered in Philadelphia. Tom was employed by Johnson & Johnson and helped launched Splenda™ Brand sweetener.

Tom is a life member of the Alumni Association and returns to the university periodically to recruit recent graduates. Tom and his wife are very active in local youth organizations in the Yardley, PA area. Tom is Penn State proud for several generations.

Position Statement

I am like you – a common person with common-sense principles. Like you, I am not a public figure although I have many achievements. I am not a former athlete, politician, nor high level executive serving many boards. I have no sensational story other than my family’s Penn State tradition. I am a person who strongly believes in affordable education and that education is the solution to our future challenges.

I’ve had the pleasure of experiencing Penn State from the ground level and with a diversified perspective – student, teacher, researcher, employee, recruiter, donor, fan, but most importantly, as an active participant. I am familiar with the commonwealth campus system; undergraduate and graduate programs; research, social life and athletic programs – all of which comprise our great university.

My position statement is simple – “Promote change and introduce transparency.” This position comes from the disappointment of recent events and how decisions were made AND communicated to the alumni, students, faculty and public. We need a new perspective for governance; one that embraces change and openness. I, like you, want to see honorable traditions continue, and new traditions created.

I ask for your support for me as well as for Team Davis (Dona #19 and Martin #11 on ballot). I will put my perspective to work to represent you – the alumni. I, like you, am one of the more than 557,000 Penn State alumni. Most of us are common people. I am one; and you are one, but together … We Are Penn State.