

Bruce Karney '74

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After a memorable freshman year at Mudd -- truly, the most memorable year of my life with so many new vistas opening up -- I decided to look for a school that was not totally focused on science and engineering. I had visited a friend at Stanford in the Spring and decided I wanted to go there, but I didn't apply in time. Instead, I enrolled for my sophomore year at U. of Washington. I was able to get into Stanford to complete my last two years and majored in Mathematical Sciences, a program that combined math, stats, operations research and computer science.

Post college I worked for two years at SRI International as a research assistant in a group that was studying US welfare and tax policy. This work led to the creation of the Federal earned income tax credit and was the precursor to the "guaranteed basic income" experiments now going on in many parts of the world.

I entered Berkeley's Business School in 1978 and graduated in 1979 with an MS in Management Science. I had many fun times hanging out with Joe Costello and his girlfriend Nancy Wainwright (Scripps '74) who lived on the other side of campus.

After a two brief stints at other companies I joined Hewlett-Packard in 1981 and remained there until 2005. I had a wide variety of jobs in logistics, computer marketing, training and development, and knowledge management. I was primarily a program manager and enjoyed my career until an early retirement program came along when I was 52 that was too good to pass up.

I married my wife Twana in 1994. I met her when she responded to an ad that I placed in a Bay Area singles magazine called *Trellis*. "You're too bright for most men. Worse yet you want one who can make you laugh, make you dinner and make your friends think you have all the luck." About a hundred women responded, and Twana was obviously the best of the bunch. We have no children, but our seven nieces and nephews are starting to have kids of their own.

After HP I was hired by SolarCity (now the solar PV arm of Tesla) as its fourth marketing employee. Elon Musk was the Board Chair, but I never met him. His cousins Lyndon and Pete Rive were the CEO and COO, and I liked both of them very much. I later worked for two other solar companies and retired in 2012 when the second of those couldn't secure additional funding and shut down.

I've lived in Mountain View since 1981 and am very involved in local politics, with a strong focus on policies to reduce GHGs. I chaired two local [Sustainability Task Forces](#) that were set up by the City, one in 2008 and the other in 2017-18. These task forces were made up of 30-50 community members and as a result of our work and ongoing lobbying the City of Mountain View's staff working on sustainability has grown from one person to nine people, five of whom are permanent hires and the others temporary hires.

I'm very interested in Community Choice Energy, and a group I lead called [Carbon Free Mountain View](#) was largely responsible for doing the lobbying that led to the creation of [Silicon Valley Clean Energy](#) in 2016. SVCE replaced Pacific Gas and Electric as the provider of the power delivered to 12 cities in Santa Clara County. PG&E still owns and manages the "poles and wires" and also the natural gas infrastructure.

In Freshman year I was part of an engineering team whose project was called CLAPTRAP: Clean Los Angeles Air Pollution Through Regional Air Purification. The idea was to build a couple of hundred giant towers in the LA Basin that would act as electrostatic precipitators to pull pollutants out of the air. Our advisor was correctly critical of us because we hadn't bothered to figure out where the electricity to run them would come from.

Now I find myself quite interested in the nascent technology of Direct Air Capture (DAC) as a way to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and store it safely for centuries or longer. And the question of "where's the electricity going to come to run them?" is still valid.

It's clear to me that humankind will not be able to stabilize our climate without huge investments in some -- or many -- forms of geoengineering. I hope the current crop of Mudders are gearing up to work on that.

Lastly, if you haven't yet read "[The Ministry for the Future](#)" I highly recommend it. Engineers (and politicians) solve the climate crisis and save the world! If only...

Cheers,  
Bruce Karney