



Biography

Dr. C. Samuel Micklus, Founder



Fast facts about "Dr. Sam:"

- *Born in 1934 and raised in Southern New Jersey.*
- *Currently resides in Bradenton, Florida.*
- *Taught in the Technology Department of Rowan University from 1968-1991.*
- *Has made Odyssey of the Mind a family effort: wife Carole is World Finals Tournament Director and son Sammy is Program Director.*
- *Along with Sammy, writes 6 long-term and more than 30 spontaneous problems each year.*
- *Favorite sayings:
"There's a problem in there somewhere."
"There's no such thing as a bad idea -- but there's always a better one."
"Creativity can be taught!"*

Dr. C. Samuel Micklus is the Founder of the Odyssey of the Mind program and a Professor Emeritus at Rowan University (formerly Glassboro State College) in New Jersey, where he taught technology courses from 1968 to 1991.

In his early years at Rowan, Professor Micklus experimented with creative problem-solving activities in his industrial design classes. He wrote challenging problems to set a creative framework for the course, oftentimes rewarding the risk-takers whose solutions may not have worked, but whose ideas were feasible and innovative.

Dr. Micklus' classes at Rowan grew in popularity, and before long his creative activities received media attention. High school students became interested in Dr. Micklus' "challenges" and, in 1978, teams from 28 New Jersey junior and senior high schools participated in the first creative problem-solving competition. Since then, millions of students around the world have solved problems written by Dr. Micklus.

"Dr. Sam," as the kids call him, loves watching teams solve his problems. He says, "Odyssey of the Mind teaches young people to think, create different possible solutions to problems, evaluate ideas, and then carry them out. The problems must be challenging and, at the same time, make learning fun."

Dr. Micklus earned his Ed.D. in 1975 at New York University, an M.A. in Education in 1968 from Trenton State College, and a B.S. in Industrial Design in 1966 from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

A recognized pioneer in bringing creative problem-solving into the classroom, Dr. Micklus has received many awards for his achievements. In 1997, he was presented with the NJ Association for Gifted Children's Hall of Fame Award. He and his wife Carole were also recipients of New Jersey's Pioneer Award. In 1985, Dr. Micklus was presented with Rowan University's Management Institute Leadership Award and, in 2000, received the University of the Arts' Silver Star Alumni Award for his work with Odyssey of the Mind.

Dr. Micklus has spoken at conferences about gifted education, and technology and curriculum development in nearly every U.S. state, Washington, D.C., Australia, Canada, Belgium, China, England, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland and Russia. He has also spoken at corporate meetings for Intel, Pepsi-Cola, and IBM, where he was a featured speaker at their prestigious Golden Circle. He has appeared on numerous radio and television newscasts, talk shows and documentaries; and he has written many books, articles and teachers' manuals on industrial design and creative problem solving.