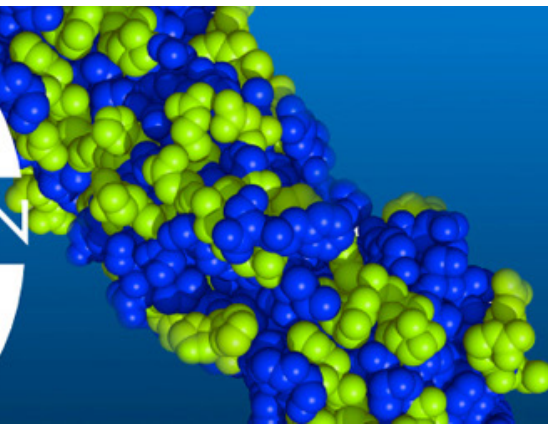


100 YEARS OF INNOVATION



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Thomas J. Tarka's '96 professional work has helped advance the national energy industry. Currently employed at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) in Pittsburgh, PA, he has been instrumental in the development of alternative transportation fuels from coal, natural gas and biomass.

Tom resumed his chemical engineering career in 2003 after spending several years as a software engineer at dot-com companies. Inspired in part by the California electricity crisis of 2000 and 2001, he decided to seek a career to address those challenges and was hired by Energetics Inc. as an entry-level analyst.

Tasked with supporting NETL's efforts, he evaluated conceptual and bench-scale carbon capture technologies for power plants, among other consulting roles. In 2007 he became a NETL employee, joining the Office of Systems Analyses and Planning and later transitioned to the division of Strategic Energy Analysis and Planning.

After making the switch, Tom became lead analyst on the production of alternative transportation fuels and presented his findings at conferences around the nation. In 2009, he received the Bronze "Excellence in Government" Award for Outstanding Professional Employee in recognition of his invaluable work.

From 2012 to early 2014 he worked for U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) on a Legis Congressional Fellowship, advising him on energy issues and helping to develop policy initiatives that provide a path to environmental stewardship and economic growth. He returned to NETL shortly thereafter.

Tom's other accomplishments include earning a Certificate in Public Leadership from the Brookings Institution, and becoming a licensed engineer in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He is also a member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE).