

Man of Steel

With three degrees from MSE, Bill Slye has forged a successful career in the global steel industry



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Left to right: Bill Slye, son > Milo, daughter Melisa, and wife Chris Ann

As Global R&D Director for Vesuvius, **Bill Slye** (B.S. 1992, M.S. 1995, Ph.D. 2000) leads the development of innovative refractories for steelmaking processes, managing three research centers and five support laboratories around the world. He is at the forefront of creating new technologies that help drive the global steel industry.



This successful career had its beginnings when Slye was a teenager growing up in Irwin, Pennsylvania, and was focused on long-distance cycling and competitive bike racing. “I was a passionate cyclist as a teenager and used to read all the cycling magazines. I became absolutely fascinated by how the metal chemistry and microstructure impacted the bicycle frame’s weight, design, and ultimately performance,” recalls Slye. “I was always interested in chemistry, but that was the first time I realized the real-world impact of metallurgy and materials science. I was hooked.”

Slye’s decision to attend CMU was an easy one, since his father Milo had earned a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Carnegie Tech in 1950 after he served in World War II. “I’ve always looked up to my dad, and I wanted to follow in his footsteps,” Slye says. “That desire, combined with the MSE Department’s excellent reputation, made it an easy choice.”

In fact, Slye felt so at home that he remained at MSE for almost 12 years, completing three degrees. His graduate work focused on the thermodynamics of iron-based metallic solutions, but as an undergraduate, his time was divided between classes on campus and four semesters working at J&L Specialty Steel as a metallurgical co-op.



Carnegie Mellon University



Slye with his father, Milo
(B.S. Electrical Engineering, 1950)



"I loved my co-op terms because that experience showed me the relevance of the thermodynamics and physical metallurgy we were learning in the classroom," notes Slye.

As a graduate student, Slye was also a politically active and highly visible figure on the CMU campus. He served as President of the Graduate Student Assembly, wrote the organization's bylaws, and won the University's Graduate Student Service Award in 1996.

"I apply what I learned at Carnegie Mellon every single day," Slye emphasizes. "From the practical problem-solving skills and metallurgical principles I learned in MSE to the experience of being a leader and navigating political situations, my time at CMU really helped shape my career. I wouldn't be where I am today without my Carnegie Mellon experience."

Because the University has been so important to him, Slye is committed to giving back by volunteering on the Carnegie Mellon Admissions Council for the past 16 years. Each year, he talks with a number of students who are interested in enrolling at Carnegie Mellon. He meets them in person, reviews their accomplishments, and writes letters of recommendation. "It's important to show young engineers that this is a place where you will make important personal connections," Slye notes. "I'm happy to be one of the first people that prospective students meet—and to share my own positive experience at Carnegie Mellon."

Upon graduation from MSE, Slye worked for Praxair—a leader in industrial gases—for 11 years, rising to become Associate Director for Global Applications Market Development. He joined Vesuvius in 2011. Slye lives in Perrysburg, Ohio, with his wife Chris Ann and their two children—Melisa, age 15, and Milo, who is 11.