LONG-TIME MECHANICAL ENGINEERING CHAIR TO RETIRE

ATLANTA — Ward Winer, the Eugene C. Gwaltney, Jr. Chair of Georgia Tech’s George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering and Regents’ Professor, will retire later this year after nearly two decades as chair and 38 years at Tech. School of Electrical and Computer Engineering Chair Gary May is heading the search committee to find a new chair.

“Ward Winer has been an advocate, teacher, colleague, friend and a leader for the Woodruff school,” said College of Engineering Dean Don Giddens. “We owe him a great debt for his effective leadership and stewardship of mechanical engineering. The Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering has flourished under Ward’s watchful eye to being in the top ten programs in the country.”

Under Winer’s leadership, Tech’s mechanical engineering program has grown exponentially to become the largest in the country (in addition to being the largest undergraduate program at Tech), and is consistently ranked as one of the best in the country by U.S. News & World Report. The school’s rank has moved from between No. 26 and No. 30 in the early 1980s to No. 6 and No. 7 this year for its mechanical engineering undergraduate and graduate programs, respectively. The Woodruff School endowment has increased from $3 million in 1988 to $100 million this year including the $65 million George W. Woodruff endowment.

When Winer joined mechanical engineering (ME) in 1969, the school had 25 faculty members. Now, it is over 100, including research faculty and academic professionals. When he became chair (then called director) in 1988, the school had two endowed chairs and three professorships; now the school boasts 10 endowed chairs and 5 professorships.

“I am very pleased to have played a role in the Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech,” said Winer. “I consider my greatest achievement as chair to have been my ability to hire and retain excellent faculty and staff. It is these people who attract outstanding students, which results in outstanding alumni, which, in turn, makes the reputation of the school.”

As chair, Winer also helped oversee the establishment of cornerstone mechanical engineering programs at two new campuses, Georgia Tech Savannah and Georgia Tech Lorraine in Metz, France.

“During his time as chair, the school and its programs have soared, so that he now hands off the leadership, it is clearly recognized as one of the finest in its field,” said Ronald Rousseau, chair of the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. “I have often watched with admiration as he brought grace to countless events, always knowing just the right thing to say in introducing a guest, asking a difficult question or presenting a point of view.”

Winer cam to Georgia Tech from University of Michigan in 1969 as an associate professor of mechanical engineering and was named director of the mechanical engineering school in 1988, the same year he was elected to the National Academy of Engineering.

[Reprinted from The Whistle May 7, 2007]

TO A HELLUVA ‘N ENGINEER

Ward came to Tech, in ‘69, A helluva ‘n engineer. With P.E. and two Ph.D.’s; Promoted in two years. Regents’ Prof, Director, And then came Gwaltney Chair. He ran the School for nineteen years; At Tech, that’s rather rare.

Tribology, Rheology, In these, Ward did excel. He wrote some books, he got some grants. His Ph.D.’s did well. Quals, exams, advising, Getting hooded could be tough. But when they left ole Georgia Tech, His students knew their stuff.

Ward gathered frequent flyer miles. He traveled ‘round the globe. Accolades, awards, and such, Quite a “Fellow” we’ve been told. ASME and NAE, Just to name a few. He’s world-renown, in good repute. You know he’s peer-reviewed.

So, now it’s time to say farewell, And end this little song. Our doors are always open, Ward. Don’t stay away too long. We thank you for your service, Lo, these many years. So to a hell-uva ‘n engineer, We end this verse with “Cheers!”

The Ramblin’ Wreck Song
With permission from Georgia Tech
New Lyrics by Sherron Lazarus
Singers from the Woodruff School Glee Club

WOW Dinner - April 29, 2007

Ward with some of his former Ph.D. students: Rick Cowan, Toshi Aikawa, Yutaka Shimazaki, Ward Winer, Scott Bair, Jørgen Jakobsen, John Tichy, Dave Sanborn, and John Novak.