For Immediate Release

Oscar Barton, Jr., Ph.D., Honored for Outstanding Contributions in Engineering Education at ASME Foundation Gala

WASHINGTON (April 2, 2024) —The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) has awarded the 2024 Edwin F. Church Medal to Oscar Barton, Jr., Ph.D., dean of the Morgan State University Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., School of Engineering, an ASME Fellow, and a member of the ASME Foundation board of directors. Established in 1972, the medal is awarded to "an individual who has rendered eminent service in increasing the value, importance and attractiveness of mechanical engineering education."

Sonya Smith, Ph.D., chair of the ASME Foundation, presented the medal to Barton at the Foundation's second annual celebration of its progress toward achieving equity in engineering, a VIP event entitled "Reinventing the Future – Diversity Driving Innovation," on March 21 in Washington. In addition, the Foundation announced it has established the Dr. Oscar Barton, Jr., Endowed Scholarship Fund to help lower financial barriers for community college students of color pursuing a four-year engineering degree.

"Thank you for understanding that what you do is so much larger than who you are," said Morgan State University President David Wilson, Ph.D. to Barton from the podium at the event. "Your leadership has impacted so many and will continue to impact generations of Black engineers yet unborn. You give hope to all of us in the fight for a more diverse and inclusive world."

Before his appointment as dean of engineering at Morgan State, Barton served as professor and founding chair of the department of mechanical engineering at George Mason University's Volgenau School of Engineering, which he joined in 2014 after a 22-year career at the U.S. Naval Academy, where he served as chair of the mechanical engineering department. His research focuses on the development of approximate closed form solutions for linear self-adjoint systems, those that govern the responses of composite structures, and the analysis of dynamic systems. The author of more than 60 journal and conference articles, Barton is a national leader in academic engineering program assessments.

George Mason University President Gregory Washington, Ph.D., delivered a keynote address on the polarized state of higher education and the increasing need for greater equity in the sector. Other speakers included ASME Executive Director/CEO Tom Costabile and Stephanie Viola, executive director of the ASME Foundation and managing director of philanthropy for ASME. Award-winning journalist Michele Norris served as the event's host.

Attendees included current and prospective donors to The ASME Foundation's Campaign for Next Generation Engineers, ASME's five-year, $50 million capital campaign to support its philanthropic work. The Foundation funds ASME's array of high-impact programs in education, workforce development, and innovation support aimed at increasing equity in the engineering profession and advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

“This year marks our second-annual Reinventing the Future event celebrating the promise of equity in engineering,” said Viola. “Through the ASME Foundation’s power philanthropic programs, we’re opening doors and creating opportunities for those with remarkable talent who might otherwise be left behind. We’re leveling the playing field with focused investment and proven methods of support. Together, we can define a better future. Diverse next generation engineers will provide the new imagination to move us all forward.”

The Church Medal was established from a bequest of Edwin F. Church, Jr. (1879-1964), loyal member of ASME, devoted supporter of ASME student activities, dedicated teacher, and for 32 years professor of mechanical engineering and head of the department at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.

About ASME
ASME helps the global engineering community develop solutions to real world challenges. Founded in 1880 as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ASME is a not-for-profit professional organization that enables collaboration, knowledge sharing, and skill development across all engineering disciplines, while promoting the vital role of the engineer in society. ASME codes and standards, publications, conferences, continuing education, and professional development programs provide a foundation for advancing technical knowledge and a safer world. In 2020, ASME formed the International Society of Interdisciplinary Engineers (ISIE) II & III LLC, a new for-profit subsidiary to house business ventures that will bring new and innovative products, services, and technologies to the engineering community. For more information, visit www.asme.org.

About the ASME Foundation
The ASME Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, supporting an array of programs in three core pillars: engineering education, career engagement, and global development. With the goal of empowering tomorrow's technical workforce, the ASME Foundation advances equitable access both to professional opportunities and to engineering innovations that improve quality of life. For more information, visit www.asmefoundation.org.

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Pictured above: ASME Fellow, ASME Foundation Board Chair, and Howard University Professor of Mechanical Engineering **Sonya Smith, Ph.D.** (left) with fellow ASME Foundation Board Member and ASME Edwin F. Church Medal Awardee **Oscar Barton, Jr., Ph.D.,** professor and dean of the Morgan State University Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., School of Engineering

Pictured above, left to right: ASME Foundation Director of Major Gifts **Keith Miles**, ASME Foundation Executive Director / ASME Managing Director of Philanthropy **Stephanie Viola**, U.S. Dept. of Defense Assistant Secretary of Defense for Science & Technology **Aprille Ericsson, Ph.D.**, and ASME Executive Director/CEO **Tom Costabile**

Pictured above, left to right: George Mason University President **Gregory Washington, Ph.D.**, Alabama A&M Professor of Mechanical Engineering **Aaron Adams, Ph.D.**, honoree **Oscar Barton, Jr., Ph.D.**, and Morgan State University President **David Wilson, Ph.D.**