



For Immediate Release

ASME Foundation Announces Two New Board Members

NEW YORK (August 31, 2022)—The ASME Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, today announces the addition of two distinguished engineering leaders to its board of directors. Sonya T. Smith, Ph.D., professor of mechanical engineering at Howard University, and Oscar Barton, Ph.D., P.E., professor and dean of the Morgan State University Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., School of Engineering, joined the six-member board effective August 30.



In 1995, Smith was the first Black woman to earn a Ph.D. in mechanical and aerospace engineering from The University of Virginia. She joined the faculty of Howard University that same year as its first female professor in the department of mechanical engineering. Smith established the Applied Fluids-Thermal Research Laboratory (@FTERLab), an interdisciplinary theoretical and computational research laboratory at Howard. Her expertise is in developing customized simulations for a variety of engineering applications, including thermal management of electronic packaging in fixed wing, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and space vehicles, and modeling and simulation of biomechanical systems. She is an ASME Fellow and a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), the American Meteorology Society (AMS), the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and the Society of Women Engineers (SWE). In addition, Smith serves as president of Women in Engineering Proactive Network, Inc. (WEPAN), a national organization that serves as a catalyst for change by advancing cultures of inclusion and diversity in engineering higher education and workplaces.



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 also an ASME Fellow and a national leader in academic engineering program assessment.

“We are so fortunate to have the insight and guidance of such distinguished engineering leaders informing our philanthropic work,” said Tom Costabile, ASME’s executive director/CEO and member of the ASME Foundation board. “Their commitment to advancing equity in engineering will be critical to our goal of empowering a more diverse next generation of engineers to build a more sustainable world.”

Smith and Barton succeed two longtime ASME leaders, Robert T. Simmons, P.E., who is retired from the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, and will remain involved as an emeritus member of the Foundation board; and Rudolf E. Landwaard, P.E., formerly of Consolidated Edison of New York, who will focus his efforts to support ASME’s philanthropic initiatives in his role as a member of ASME’s Philanthropy Committee. Frank Adamek, a consultant who retired from GE, is the ASME volunteer who chairs the Foundation Board. In addition to ASME Executive Director/CEO Tom Costabile, other members of the Foundation Board are ASME Managing Director of Philanthropy and Executive Director of the ASME Foundation Stephanie Viola, and ASME Managing Director and Controller, Finance, Tom Meehan.

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) LLC, a new for-profit subsidiary to house business ventures that will bring new and innovative products, services, and technologies to the engineering community, and later established the holding company, Global Knowledge Solutions LLC. In 2021, ASME launched a second for-profit subsidiary, Metrix Connect LLC, an industry events and content platform to accelerate digital transformation in the engineering community and an agent for the Mechanical Engineering® brand of media products. 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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