

Vojislav (Voya) Latinovic Retires as Chair of the Student Design Committee

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Dr. Vojislav Latinovic

At the AGM this year in St. John's, Dr. Vojislav Latinovic announced his retirement from Concordia University, in Montreal, where he has been a faculty member for the last 20 years. Sadly, he also announced his retirement as Chair of the CSME Student Design Competition, a responsibility he has maintained since 1994.

The Student Design Competition originated in 1976. The task of organizing the Competition is significant. Department endorsed design projects are solicited from undergraduate mechanical engineering student design teams at Canadian universities. The initial submissions are evaluated and the selected finalists are invited to present their designs at the Competition, which usually takes place at CSME sponsored conferences, such as the CSME Forum. A panel of three independent judges assesses the efforts of the students. All finalists receive certificates of merit from the CSME, while the first three in order of merit receive cash, or in-kind prizes. Dr. Latinovic worked tirelessly at not only maintaining the high standards against which the designs are judged, but at maintaining corporate sponsorship for a portion of the prizes.

Dr. Latinovic obtained his Dipl.Ing. degree from University of Belgrade, an M.Sc. degree from University of Calgary and his D.Eng.(Ph.D.) from Concordia University, all in mechanical engineering. His experience in industry and university teaching extends over 40 years. He taught at the University of Belgrade, the State University of New York and, for last 20 years, at Concordia University. His primary interest is in design of mechanical systems and in manufacturing, particularly in metal cutting. He has published extensively in journals and conference proceedings. His major research contribution has been in deep-hole machining where his contributions have been widely cited and frequently reviewed by industrial magazines.

Dr. Latinovic has been member of the CSME, ASME and SME and served for 12 years on the CSME Board of directors in the capacity of Production and Design Division Chair (5 years) and Student Design Competition Chair (7 years). He was the founding Student Advisor to the Student chapter of the SME and Affiliate Representative for Concordia University. He has been recognized for his service in various capacities. Most recently he has been made a CSME Fellow and given the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science of Concordia University Outstanding Contribution to Student Life award.

On a personal note, I first met Voya at a breakfast table at the CANCEM conference at McMaster in 1999. My partner, Susan, and our then two-and-a-half year old son, William, were looking for a table. With the young lad, we were wary of disturbing anyone's quiet time, or of disrupting any early-morning scientific discussions. Voya saw us hunting for a suitable free table, and invited us to sit with him. My son, as well as Susan and I were immediately taken with his warmth and kindly, generous spirit. Voya patiently spun great yarns keeping William enchanted the whole time we were there. This gave Susan and I a chance to relax and begin the day, and the conference, with an extremely positive outlook. Dr. Rama Bhat, a long-time colleague of Voya's at Concordia, who supplied me much of the information needed to compile this article, reminded me of that first encounter. He told me that at a CEAB visit in 1994, the Concordia mechanical engineering students were unanimous in their opinion that Voya is a father figure to them. They were not shy in impressing this opinion on the visiting committee.

The reality of an engineering career, and life in general, is that times change and people move on. Voya has made a lasting contribution to the CSME, and mechanical engineering in Canada in general, through his work as an engineer, educator, and as Chair of the Student Design Competition. As the curtain falls, the audience makes its verdict with its applause. In my imagination, the volume is deafening as he makes his curtain call. Thanks Voya, what a show!