



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

## **Ronald T. Nixon**

*Distinguished Mechanical Engineer, 2016*

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1978

*President*

The Catalyst Group, Inc.

Ron Nixon was born and raised in Houston, Texas and began his working career with TRW Mission Manufacturing Co. as one of two freshman students selected to be participants in an engineering training program. The program moved him from research and development to production engineering, then to application engineering in the field, and he ultimately became a product specialist in the centrifugal pump product line. Two years after graduating from the UT Cockrell School with a BS in mechanical engineering, Ron joined The Brandt Group as an application engineer working with the sales department in product training and sales support. Then, at 26 years old, he founded a centrifugal pump manufacturing company that ultimately became part of National Oilwell Varco. He received his Registered Professional Engineering License from the state of Texas that year as well. In 1990, Ron co-founded The Catalyst Group, Inc. to provide expansion capital to companies in a variety of midmarket industries. Catalyst, with offices in Houston and Austin, has managed 9 separate investment funds from 1990 to present, with well over 100 transactions spanning 70+ industries.

Ron is currently a member of several private family boards as well as serving on the board of publicly-traded LHC Group. His privately-held company boards currently include Auberge Resorts, Superior Plant Rentals, Rochal Industries, Axio Energy Services, YPS Anesthesia, and others. Ron serves on The University of Texas Cockrell School

of Engineering Advisory Board as vice chairman, on The University of Texas System Chancellor's Advisory Council, and previously served on the visiting committee of the mechanical engineering department. His nonprofit boards have included organizations such as Teach for America, Houston; Epilepsy Foundation; YES Prep Schools; The Karl Young College Baseball League and others.

Ron has been married for 39 years to the love of his life, Ginny Reardon Nixon, a UT graduate in education, and has three fabulous children, Burke, Brett and Ali, who have all been involved in the field of education and have blessed Ron and Ginny with eight grandchildren. Burke is a UT Honors English graduate and now a professor at Rice University, and his wife June is a Texas A&M graduate and a stay-at-home mom for their four children, Ramsey, Cole, Maeve and Addie. Brett is a Kansas University graduate and high school teacher and head basketball coach at Fulshear High School, and his wife Kate is a Texas Tech graduate in nursing and is at home with their daughter, Piper. Ali is a UT graduate in Special Education and her husband Trevor is a Cockrell Scholar in electrical engineering and works at Raytheon in Austin, while Ali stays home with their three children, Kennedy, Logan and Chloe. A former high school and junior college baseball letterman, Ron has enjoyed watching and supporting UT Athletics for many years. The University has been a big part of his family.