



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

## **Byron E. Short, Ph.D., P.E.**

*Charter Member, 1995*

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1926  
MSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1930  
MME, Cornell University, 1936  
Ph.D., ME, Cornell, 1939

*Professor Emeritus, College of Engineering*  
The University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Byron Short earned BS and MS degrees in mechanical engineering at UT Austin in 1926 and 1930. He earned a master's degree and doctorate in mechanical engineering from Cornell University in 1939. He was honorably associated with UT Austin as a student and a professor for more than 50 years. He retired in 1973 with the title of professor emeritus. He passed away on October 31, 1996 at the age of 94.

Dr. Short started work with the Texas Company (Texaco) after graduation in 1926, but came back to UT Austin as an instructor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering in the Fall of 1926. He accepted a teaching fellowship at Cornell in 1935-36 to begin work towards a doctorate. A master's thesis was written for work completed in 1936 and he received a Master's in mechanical engineering. He was back at UT Austin for the 1936-37 academic year as an associate professor before returning to Cornell and completing his doctorate in 1939. Upon his return to UT Austin in 1939, he was promoted to Professor.

During his time at UT Austin, Dr. Short twice served as chairman of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and was acting dean of the College of Engineering in the 1948-49 school year. He was director of the Engineering Research Laboratory from 1952 until 1959. He served as graduate advisor for the Department of Mechanical Engineering from 1939 to 1963.

He was chairman of the UT Athletic Council from 1945 to 1948. Expansion of the west stands and

press box was completed during his tenure. He was invited to sit in the press box, but his enthusiastic, vocal support picked up on the radio broadcast led to receiving priority, 50-yard-line seats sheltered by the press box. He took his family to all UT home games and numerous basketball and baseball games.

Dr. Short was a Life Member and Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and also the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). He was a Life Member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, the American Society of Engineering Education, and the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. He was a Friend of Alec.

In his honor, the Mechanical Engineering Class of 1940 established the Byron E. Short Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Mechanical Engineering in 1993, surprising him with the honor at a reunion at the Stagecoach Inn in Salado. Dr. Short was recognized as an inaugural 1995 Department of Mechanical Engineering Outstanding Alumnus and a 1996 College of Engineering Distinguished Graduate.

In 1937, Byron married Mary Jo F. Short, daughter of long-time Dean of Business Administration J. Anderson Fitzgerald. They had two children, Mary Aileen Short Gauntt and Byron Elliott Short, Jr. Dr. Short was an active board member for the Scottish Rite Dormitory at UT, consulting closely on mechanical renovations at the dorm. He and Mary Jo were lifelong active members of the First Baptist Church of Austin.