



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

**J. Parker Lamb, Ph.D., P.E.**  
*Honorary Mechanical Engineer, 2015*

BSME, Auburn University, 1954  
MSME, University of Illinois at Urbana, 1958  
Ph.D, ME, University of Illinois at Urbana, 1961

*Professor Emeritus*  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
The University of Texas at Austin

A native of Alabama, Parker Lamb grew up in Meridian, Mississippi during World War II, graduating from high school in 1951. After receiving a BS degree in mechanical engineering from Auburn University, he served as an Air Force officer from 1955-57 in Dayton, Ohio. He then enrolled in the University of Illinois (Urbana) in September 1957 where he received MS (1958) and Ph.D. degrees (June 1961).

After completion of his graduate studies, he moved to Raleigh, North Carolina as an assistant professor of engineering mechanics at North Carolina State University. He moved to the Department of Mechanical Engineering of The University of Texas at Austin in 1963 at the same rank. With many of the ME faculty approaching retirement, he was soon asked to assume administrative duties, beginning in 1965 as director of graduate student programs (graduate advisor).

In 1970 he was appointed chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and served for 6 years, after which time he became associate dean of engineering for academic affairs. Four years later he was appointed chair of the Department of Aerospace Engineering & Engineering Mechanics, and served there for 7 years (1988). He then returned to the ME faculty in a purely teaching/research role. However, external circumstances

resulted in his resumption of the chairmanship in 1996 on an ad interim basis, which was made a regular appointment from 1997-2001.

Recognizing the importance of practical experience as well as his role as ambassador for UT engineering, Parker participated in a wide range of off-campus activities during his career in Austin. These included a trip in June 1974 to Sao Paulo, Brazil, where he served as an advisor to the mechanical engineering program in their *Ecole Polytechnic*. As a result of UT's national role, he also was a member (1976-78) of the New York-based National Fund for Minority Engineering Students. Within Texas, he had a major role in developing UT's first minority engineering program at UT Pan American in Edinburg, Texas between 1992-94. In 1995-96, he was a consultant in the startup of an engineering program at UT Tyler.

His off-campus technical work included stints at Vought Aircraft in Ft. Worth, US Air Force Arnold Research Center in Tennessee, and the Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, NM, where he collaborated with one of his early graduate students who had also taught briefly at UT.

Parker's 38-year career at UT Austin ended with his retirement in February 2001.