

Mechanical Engineering
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

P. Barry Niland, P.E.

Mechanical Engineering Hall of Fame, 2004



BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1940

General Manufacturing Manager
Ford Tractor Division
Ford Motor Company

Patrick Barry Niland, a Galveston, Texas native, earned a Mechanical Engineering degree from UT Austin in 1940. He was on active duty as an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve during WWII. Mr. Niland had many hobbies and interests centered on his large family and many friends, and a very diverse career path – highlighting that a Mechanical Engineering degree from The University of Texas prepares you to be successful in various careers.

After WWII, he and a partner created a firm, Nichols & Niland, consultant engineers and manufacturing agents in Houston, Texas. In 1947, after leaving the partnership, he began a 30-year career with Ford Motor Company of Michigan, entering as a project engineer and rising to several senior managerial positions, ultimately General Manufacturing Manager / Western Hemisphere at world headquarters for Ford Tractor, with seven plants reporting to his office – five in the U.S., one each in Mexico and Brazil.

After retiring from Ford, Barry worked for seven years as a self-employed real estate agent and investor in Birmingham, Michigan. He moved to Austin in 1984 where he served as Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors for Pharmaco Dynamics Research, a contract research organization providing clinical research services to large pharmaceutical companies. He was also Pharmaco's Facilities Director for all new building projects until he retired in earnest in 1992 at age 74.

In 1992, he and his wife, Betty, sold their Austin, Texas home and bought a new motor home and small station wagon and spent almost three years traveling coast to coast, Gulf of Mexico to Canada several times visiting children in Boston, Rochester, N.Y., Seattle, San Antonio, and Austin as they explored our country. When they tired of traveling, they landed back in Austin, Texas and built a new home.