

College mourns loss of Dean Emeritus Dr. Nino Masnari

May 21, 2018 | Jennifer Jackson Cox

Dr. Nino A. Masnari, distinguished professor of electrical and computer engineering and dean emeritus of the College of Engineering at North Carolina State University, passed away on May 19, 2018.

Born in Three Rivers, Michigan, September 20, 1935, Nino Antonio Masnari was the second son of Antonio and Giovanna (Lupato) Masnari. He is survived by his wife, Judy, their three children Michael, Jeffrey and Maria and grandchildren.

Masnari received his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, all in electrical engineering, from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1958, 1959 and 1964, respectively. His research interests were in the areas of silicon processing technologies and solid-state electronic devices. Following graduation, he began his career as a lecturer and research associate at the University of Michigan from 1964 to 1967. In 1967, he joined General Electric in Schenectady, New York, as an electronics engineer in research and development. In 1969, he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan as an associate professor, later being promoted to professor and director of the Electron Physics Laboratory.

Masnari joined NC State in 1979 as the head of the Department of Electrical Engineering. During his tenure as department head, the Department of Electrical Engineering was renamed in 1983 as the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, reflecting the growth and influence of computing. Other milestones included the hiring of the first woman faculty member in the department as well as the establishment of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Center for Communications and Signal Processing, the Microelectronics Center for North Carolina, and the Electric Power Systems Research Center.

In 1988, after nine years of leading the department, he was awarded leadership of a prestigious NSF Engineering Research Center (ERC) and became the founding director of the NSF ERC on Advanced Electronic Materials Processing and the SEMATECH Center of Excellence on Advanced Single Wafer Processing, both at NC State.

In 1996, Masnari was appointed dean of the College of Engineering at NC State, a position he held from August 1996 through June 2006, when he returned to the faculty of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

During his tenure as dean, the College of Engineering experienced a new era of growth and accomplishment. In 1997, the College held the grand opening for the Engineering Graduate Research Center, now the Monteith Research Center, and established the Women in Engineering Program. With the passage of a bond referendum in November 2000, the College began its move to NC State's Centennial Campus. Masnari oversaw the construction of the first two academic engineering buildings to be constructed at NC State since 1964. Engineering Buildings I and II opened in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Funding was secured and construction began on Engineering Building III under Masnari's leadership and opened in 2010.

With Masnari at the helm, the College of Engineering grew into the third largest producer of engineering and computer science degrees in the nation and research expenditures in the College nearly doubled to more than \$90 million annually. Scholarship funding more than quadrupled, with total endowments growing to more than \$51 million. The College received its largest gift from a single individual, a \$10 million endowment in support of industrial engineering. As a result, the Edward P. Fitts Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering became the first named academic department in the history of the university. In addition, the College established the joint Department of Biomedical Engineering with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and added a bachelor's degree in paper science and engineering. The College also became a leader in distance education, ranking as one of the best online degree programs in the nation and adding 2+2 programs that serve students across the state.

Under Masnari's direction, the quality of entering freshmen increased, national recognition of faculty members and research by NSF tripled and four new centers and institutes were created. The College also grew in the number of programs for minorities and women, and the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program was established. The first woman associate dean was appointed during Masnari's tenure as dean. Masnari also instituted an aggressive recruiting program. The quality of entering freshmen improved, 112 new faculty members were hired, and national recognitions by NSF tripled. The College and two faculty members received three prestigious Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM). In addition, a novel orientation program for new

faculty members was initiated, four new centers and institutes were created, and a number of other major research initiatives began.

A Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Masnari holds a patent for Process for Manufacturing Inertial Confinement Fusion Targets and Resulting Product. He served as chair of the American Society for Engineering Education Engineering Deans Council and was a member of the Materials Research Society, Sigma Xi, Phi Kappa Phi, Tau Beta Pi, and Eta Kappa Nu.

In November 2006, NC State's College of Engineering named the main entrance to what will become the engineering building cluster on Centennial Campus the Nino A. Masnari Engineering Gateway in recognition of "his many contributions to educational and research program development at North Carolina State University and for vision and leadership in moving the College of Engineering to Centennial Campus." In 1997, he and his wife, Judy, endowed the Nino and Judy Masnari Scholarship in support of engineering undergraduate education.

A visitation with the family will be held at 10 a.m., immediately followed by the funeral at 11 a.m. on Friday, May 25, 2018, at St. Raphael Catholic Church on Falls of the Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC. Arrangements are being made by Brown-Wynne Funeral Home in Raleigh. His obituary is posted at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/raleigh-nc/nino-masnari-7856179> (<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/raleigh-nc/nino-masnari-7856179>).

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