

ALUMNI  
OF  
INFLUENCE

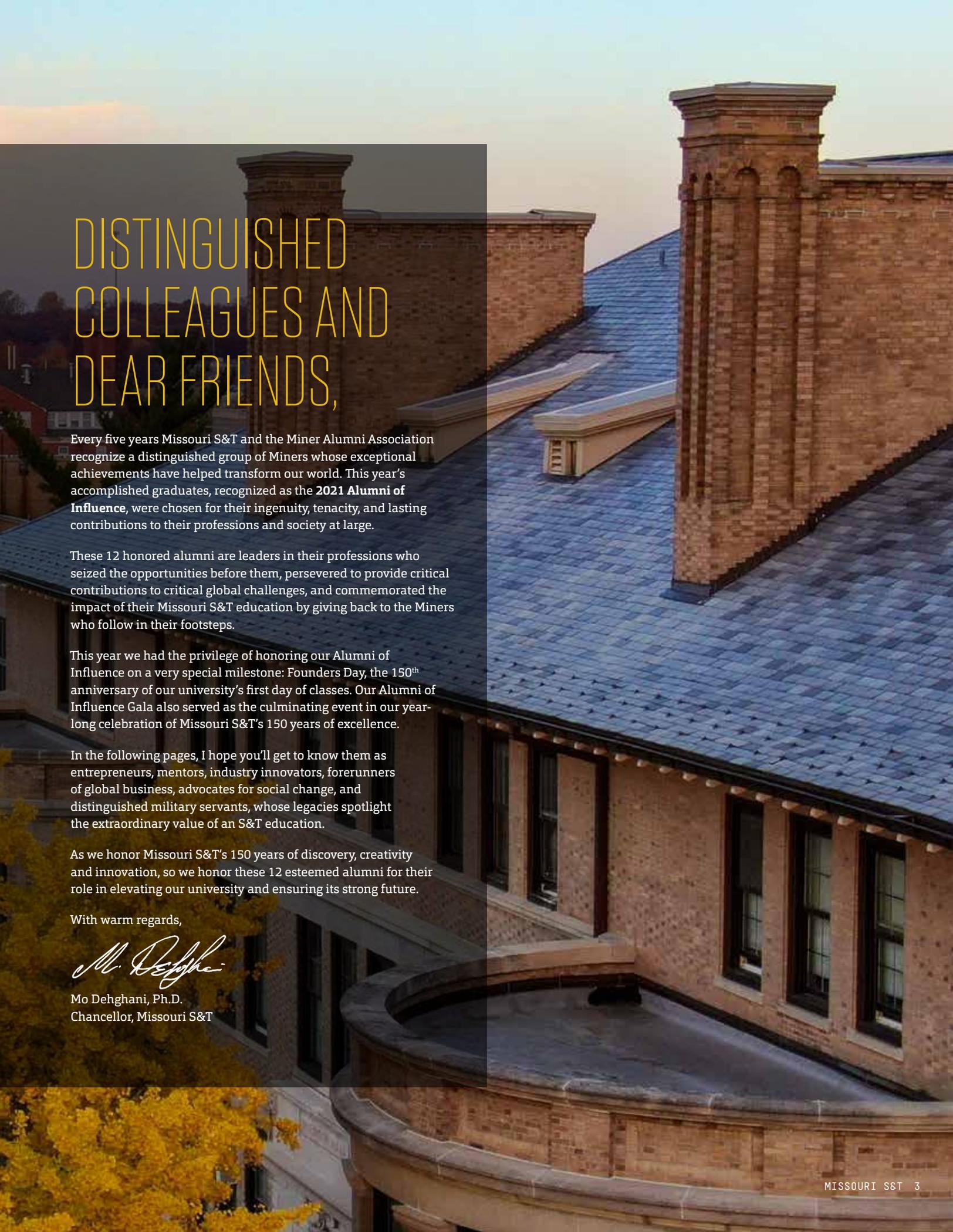


PARKING  
Reserved for  
Faculty & Students









# DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUES AND DEAR FRIENDS,

Every five years Missouri S&T and the Miner Alumni Association recognize a distinguished group of Miners whose exceptional achievements have helped transform our world. This year's accomplished graduates, recognized as the **2021 Alumni of Influence**, were chosen for their ingenuity, tenacity, and lasting contributions to their professions and society at large.

These 12 honored alumni are leaders in their professions who seized the opportunities before them, persevered to provide critical contributions to critical global challenges, and commemorated the impact of their Missouri S&T education by giving back to the Miners who follow in their footsteps.

This year we had the privilege of honoring our Alumni of Influence on a very special milestone: Founders Day, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our university's first day of classes. Our Alumni of Influence Gala also served as the culminating event in our year-long celebration of Missouri S&T's 150 years of excellence.

In the following pages, I hope you'll get to know them as entrepreneurs, mentors, industry innovators, forerunners of global business, advocates for social change, and distinguished military servants, whose legacies spotlight the extraordinary value of an S&T education.

As we honor Missouri S&T's 150 years of discovery, creativity and innovation, so we honor these 12 esteemed alumni for their role in elevating our university and ensuring its strong future.

With warm regards,



Mo Deghani, Ph.D.  
Chancellor, Missouri S&T

# INFLUENCE

## TO THE POWER OF 12

From their exemplary professional achievements to their commitment to the success of future Miners, our 2021 Alumni of Influence have elevated the reputation of Missouri S&T far beyond our campus. As visionary entrepreneurs, innovators, and global business and military leaders, these honorees pursued their passions with a commitment to the greater good. They forged their futures in our university's classrooms and labs, rose to the challenges before them, and persevered to become the exponential influencers they are. For decades, they have given back to Missouri S&T with extraordinary advocacy, service and support. Now we have the privilege of honoring them as we conclude our university's 150th anniversary celebration. Their continuing influence is a mainstay and inspiration to us all, and we thank them for their exceptional contributions to our university and our world.



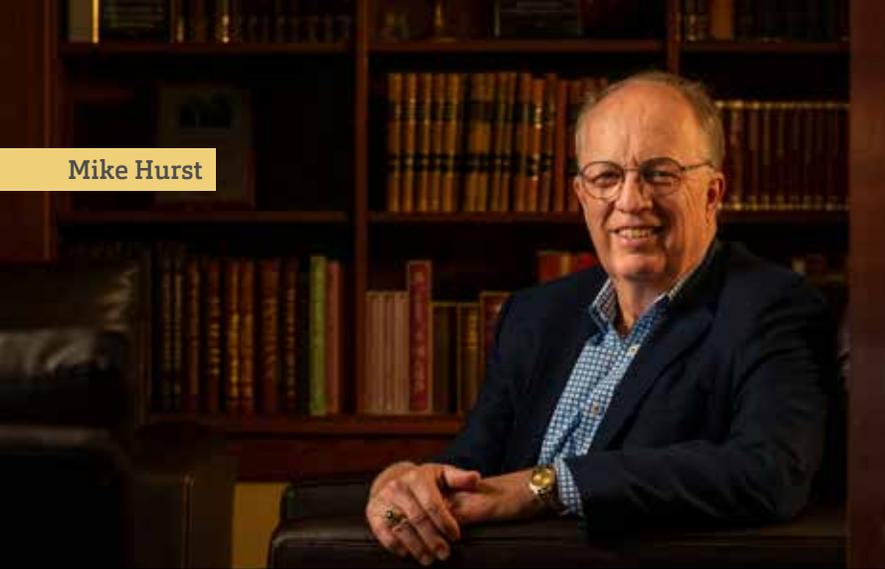
Ray Betz



Tim Bradley



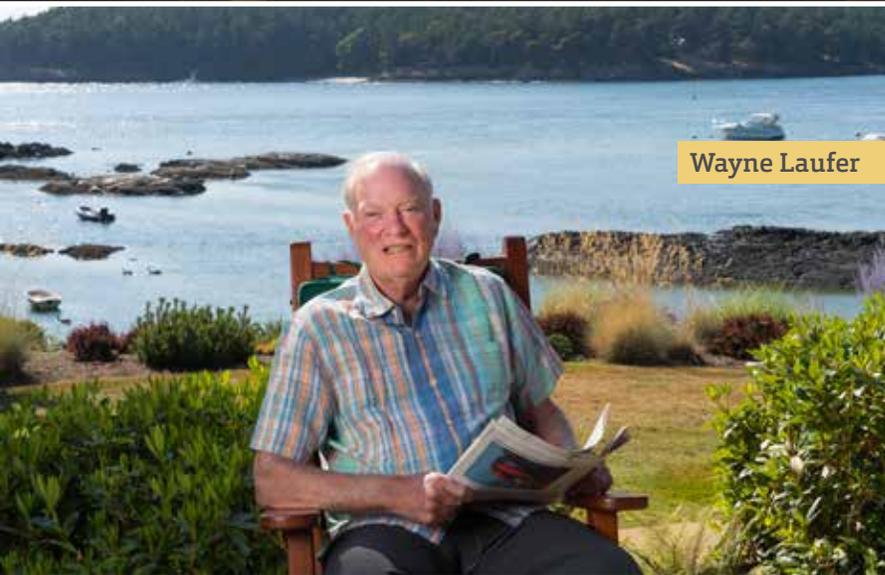
Mike Bytnar



Mike Hurst



John Lovitt



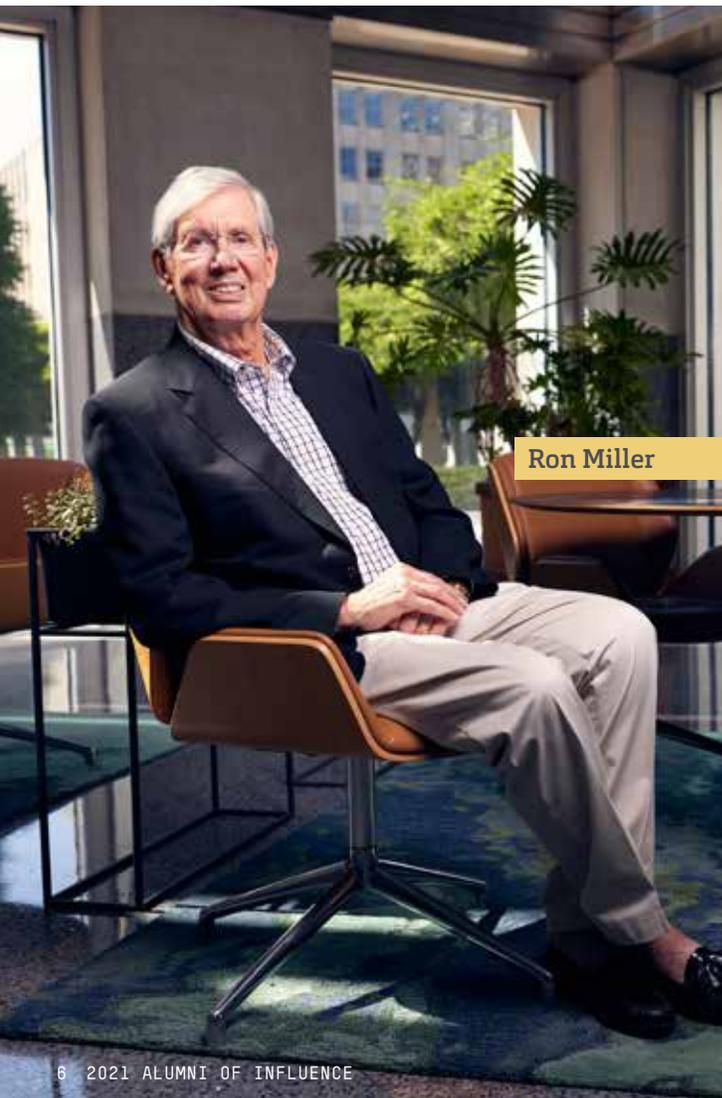
Wayne Laufer

# HONOREES

- 8 Ray Betz:** engineer, entrepreneur, real estate developer
- 10 Tim Bradley:** petroleum engineer, industry innovator, strategic thinker
- 12 Mike Bytnar:** mechanical engineer, manufacturing leader, champion of experiential learning
- 14 Mike Hurst:** civil engineer, builder, solution-seeker
- 16 Wayne Laufer:** engineer, oilman, energy advocate
- 18 John Lovitt:** technology navigator, visionary thinker, tireless mentor

# MEET THE HONOREES

- 22 Ron Miller:** company man, global executive, production wizard
- 24 Peggy Montana:** chemical engineer, energy executive, leader across borders
- 26 Steve Rector:** petroleum engineer, oilman, entrepreneur
- 28 Gerald Stevenson:** engineer, executive, team builder
- 30 Tom Voss:** electrical engineer, power guru, community leader
- 32 Keith Wedge:** retired general, geologist, global leader

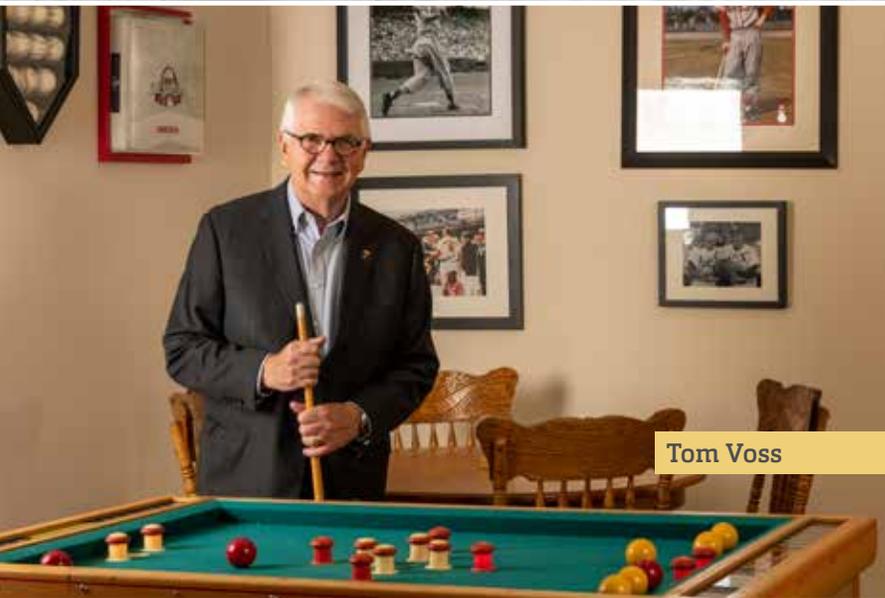




Gerald Stevenson



Keith Wedge



Tom Voss

## OUR ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE

Missouri S&T launched a new tradition in 2011 when we honored our inaugural Alumni of Influence. After receiving dozens of nominations from alumni, faculty, staff and students, a selection committee determined our honorees. This process has continued to guide us every five years, as our university community nominates alumni and a selection committee — now made up of past honorees — makes the final determination. We thank those who served on our selection committees and salute our full delegation of 2011, 2016, and 2021 honorees for their exceptional achievement, inspirational leadership and dedicated service to Missouri S&T.

### 2011

**Thomas Akers**  
Math'73, MS Math'75

**Dick Arnoldy**  
CE'69, MS EMgt'73

**Keith Bailey**  
ME'64

**Robert Bay\***  
CE'49

**Jerry Bayless\***  
CE'59, MS CE'62

**Jon Bereisa\***  
EE'67, MS EE'70

**Jim Bertelsmeyer**  
ChE'66

**Philip Chen**  
MS ME'65

**Delbert Day**  
CerE'58

**Farouk El-Baz**  
MS GGph'61,  
PhD GGph'64

**John Fairbanks**  
EE'71

**Gary Forsee**  
CE'72

**Gary Havener**  
Math'62

**Thomas Holmes\***  
MinE'50

**Vernon Jones\***  
CE'53

**Fred Kummer\***  
CE'55

**John Mathes**  
CE'67, MS CE'68

**George Mueller\***  
EE'39

**Zebulun Nash**  
ChE'72

**Mariana Rodriguez**  
CE'80

**Richard Stegemeier**  
PetE'50

**Steve Sullivan**  
EE'89

**Cindy Tang**  
Econ'85

**John Toomey\***  
ME'49, MS ME'51

**Ed Tuck\***  
EE'53

**Ted Weise**  
EE'67

**Gary White**  
CE'85, MS CE'87

**Joan Woodard**  
Math'73

### 2016

**Joe Ballard**  
MS EMgt'72

**Bob Brackbill\***  
MinE'42

**Bob Brinkmann**  
CE'71

**Matt Coco**  
CE'66

**Roger Dorf**  
ME'65

**Bipin Doshi**  
ChE'62, MS ChE'63

**Don Gunther**  
CE'60

**Sandra Magnus**  
Phys'86, MS EE'90

**Dick Vitek\***  
MS Chem'58

**Roy Wilkens**  
EE'66

\*deceased



# RAY BETZ

## ENGINEER, ENTREPRENEUR, REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER

**Ray Betz**, CE'66, describes himself as someone who believes in the American dream. And he credits his parents with laying the foundation for his success.

"They taught me to work hard and always do the right thing," he says.

Betz grew up in St. Louis in a four-room flat heated by an oil stove and spent his summers operating forklifts and degreasing machines.

"My uncles got me jobs in factories," says Betz, who also spent a summer with a slide rule calculating water flow volumes for the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District. "I was raised by wonderful German-American parents with eighth-grade educations who wanted more for their children."

For Betz, that meant coming to Rolla.

"I knew I needed a degree so I could make something of myself," says the student who spent his downtime between classes in the library. "This was key to keeping up with my workload and graduating in four years."

Betz made time to serve in leadership roles for Theta Xi fraternity, compete on the ROTC Pershing Rifle Drill Team and participate in intramural sports. By his junior year, he knew he wanted to enrich his civil engineering background with a business degree. He chose Purdue University's master's program in industrial

administration, graduated with 13 job offers and went to work for Deloitte's management consultancy.

"It wasn't the job with the highest salary, but it offered the broadest exposure to business," says Betz, who took leave to complete his Army service as a lieutenant at Fort Belvoir and in Vietnam. Upon returning to Deloitte, he relocated to Houston "because of the tremendous growth potential."

Five years later, Betz gathered a small group of investors, bought a few tracts of land and went into business for himself in 1976. He also traded in his 1960 Chevy II for a new car.

"I had to look a little more successful," he says.

Betz has been developing commercial real estate ever since, riding booms, weathering downturns and making the most of both.

"When the real estate recession hit in the late '80s and early '90s, I began to see a new opportunity with FDIC and Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC) liquidations," says Betz, who bought land for 10–20 cents on the dollar and waited for the market to come back.

"With patience, that worked out quite well."

The Betz Companies grew, built a headquarters, and expanded into industrial, retail, medical, storage, hotel, and residential real estate in Houston, Austin and San Antonio. Along the way, a number of employees Betz hired and mentored launched their own companies.

"I'm very proud of the fact that many people who worked for me went on to become successful entrepreneurs," says Betz, who also takes pride in his company's reputation for maintaining strong relationships, in good times and bad.

"I had some semi-unfriendly discussions with bankers after the financial collapse in 2008," he says. "But we are a well-respected company and that has meant a lot. I've been blessed with a loyal investor base that has been with me for decades."

Nearly half a century after his first acquisition, Betz is still making deals and giving back to the philanthropic causes he supports with his wife, **Susan**. A Missouri S&T trustee emeritus, member of the Academy of Civil Engineers, and donor to many university initiatives, he also encourages out-of-state students through the Raymond and Susan Betz Endowed Scholarship.

"I value what the university has meant to me and the foundation my education provided," says Betz. "The discipline and problem-solving approaches you learn in engineering courses will serve you well in any career. Add an entrepreneurial mindset and the doors are wide open."



# TIM BRADLEY

## PETROLEUM ENGINEER, INDUSTRY INNOVATOR, STRATEGIC THINKER

A classic theme weaves throughout **Tim Bradley's** career — “recognize opportunities and be prepared to act.” When the competitive swimmer and high school salutatorian who was accepted to MIT and Rice University decided to enroll at Rolla, he recognized his first opportunity shortly after arriving on campus.

“I didn’t know what kind of engineer I wanted to be until I found out that petroleum engineering had scholarships and summer jobs available,” says Bradley, PetE’77. “I was putting myself through school and needed both.”

Bradley competed on the Miner swim team, joined Kappa Alpha fraternity and spent summers working for Shell Oil Co. in Texas. His junior year, another opportunity shaped the course of his career. Petroleum Engineering 417 was an enhanced oil recovery survey course taught by Dr. **Leonard Koederitz**, ChE’68, MS PetE’69, PhD PetE’70.

“Toward the end of the semester, we learned about CO<sub>2</sub> injection and I was sold,” says Bradley.

“This was what I wanted to specialize in. As fate would have it, my first assignment at Shell focused on how to improve coring operations in a CO<sub>2</sub> injection pilot test.”

Bradley advanced to manager of Shell’s enhanced oil recovery operations, which

soon included offshore operations in the Gulf of Mexico. In 1989, however, Shell moved him into a lower profile role as manager of CO<sub>2</sub> marketing.

“Instead of leading a team of 50 engineers and technicians, I was only supervising myself,” says Bradley, who made the most of what felt like a career setback. “I learned about building contracts, marketing strategies and negotiating deals with other companies,” he says. “Then it dawned on me that I wasn’t in engineering or operations anymore. I was learning the business side of the industry.”

Shell CO<sub>2</sub>, a \$360 million joint venture between Shell and Kinder Morgan, launched in 1998 with Bradley as president. When Shell sold its share, Bradley became president of Kinder Morgan CO<sub>2</sub>. He grew the company into the largest carbon dioxide producer, transporter and marketer in the United States, while expanding with the acquisition of a speculative oil

field. Under his leadership, production increased by more than 300 percent, from 8,200 barrels a day to 35,000. Two years later, Kinder Morgan acquired another highly successful field.

“To put these acquisitions in perspective, only 10 oil fields in the United States had produced over a billion barrels,” says Bradley. “We operated two of them. Using CO<sub>2</sub> injection to increase production, Kinder Morgan became the second largest oil producer in Texas.”

Bradley retired in 2013, and he and his wife, **Kay**, moved to Austin. Longtime supporters of Missouri S&T, the Bradleys established a fellowship endowment in petroleum engineering in 2014 and were the first donors to the university’s new Arrival District with a major gift that will reconfigure University Drive from I-44 to campus. They have also supported scholarships and the Kappa Alpha house expansion.

In December 2019, Bradley, a member of the S&T Board of Trustees and the Academy of Mines and Metallurgy, received an honorary doctorate and delivered the commencement address, which touched on the mantra that guided his career.

“Seneca, the ancient Roman philosopher who educated Nero, is credited with saying, ‘Luck is the intersection of preparation and opportunity,’” Bradley told the new graduates. “S&T has done a remarkable job preparing you for the first phase of your professional careers. Continuing to be prepared is now up to you.”



# MIKE BYTNAR

## MECHANICAL ENGINEER, MANUFACTURING LEADER, CHAMPION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Early in his career, **Mike Bytnar**, ME'68, MS EMgt'73, worked in the machine shop at the Nooter Corp., where fabricating massive pressure vessels for chemical plants taught him metallurgy — and figuring out how to deliver them taught him logistics.

Bytnar remembers a Boeing contract for a NASA and Department of Energy wind turbine project on Oahu. Creating the turbine's 200-foot steel column — the world's largest at the time — was one thing, but delivering it was another.

"Transporting it from St. Louis to Seattle was a challenge," says Bytnar, whose team customized a trailer for the turbine's trip to the West Coast, where it boarded a barge for Hawaii.

After fabricating two 100-ton vessels for a global chemical company, Nooter needed to transport them to England and Taiwan.

"We chartered the Antonov-124," says Bytnar, referring to a Russian super-cargo plane big enough to haul a dump truck or locomotive. "Things were never dull."

In a career with Nooter spanning 40 years, Bytnar held positions from foreman to president. The St. Louis native began his education by almost flunking out of junior college.

"I became a great bridge player and a terrible student," says Bytnar, whose

girlfriend and future wife, **Joyce**, told him she wasn't going to marry someone without a college degree. Bytnar enrolled at Rolla and buckled down. "I had no idea what I wanted to major in but I liked taking car and lawn mower engines apart, so I chose mechanical engineering."

Bytnar lived off campus and worked as a dishwasher at his eating club in exchange for free meals. After graduation, he accepted an offer at Nooter, where he worked as a production engineer for a year until he lost his occupational deferment and subsequently joined the Marine Corps Reserve.

After serving six months of active duty, Bytnar returned to Nooter as a foreman in the machine shop and earned a master's degree in engineering management. He advanced to department head, superintendent, plant manager and vice president before becoming president in 2002.

"Nooter was the go-to fabricator for chemical companies around the world," says Bytnar. "We would have 40–50 projects going

on at the same time with 700 welders and fitters working on them."

Under Bytnar's leadership, the company diversified.

"My greatest challenge was overseeing growth in a way that was sustainable," he says. "We saw the future of fabrication diminishing due to foreign competition, so acquisitions helped us diversify into plant construction, maintenance and repair."

Bytnar is a member of the S&T Board of Trustees and a past president of the Academy of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineers. The Bytnars were major donors to the renovation of Toomey Hall and the Kummer Student Design Center, where they supported the original build-out as well as the later expansion. They also supported the construction of Hasselmann Alumni House and are contributors to the Arrival District.

They have established three endowments: the Michael and Joyce Bytnar Professorship of Product Innovation and Creativity, the Michael W. Bytnar Endowed Scholarship for Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, and the Paul T. Dowling Memorial Endowed Scholarship, which honors a 1940 S&T metallurgical engineering alumnus and longtime Nooter president.

Bytnar praises S&T graduates as "job ready" and credits experiential learning with shaping their skill and solution-orientation.

"They know how to apply book knowledge," he says. "When I was a student, I memorized facts and formulas to pass tests. Students today know their facts and formulas, but they also know how to find a solution to anything."



# MIKE HURST

## CIVIL ENGINEER, BUILDER, SOLUTION-SEEKER

**Mike Hurst**, CE'74, credits a lifetime of mentors with going the extra mile for him. One of the earliest was Sister Marcella Ewers, his science teacher at St. Vincent High School, who told him point blank that he could do a lot better than ranking in the bottom quartile of his class.

"By the time I graduated, I was eighth in my class," says Hurst, who grew up on a farm where corn, soy beans and livestock supported the family. "My two older brothers went into agriculture but my mother wanted me to be an engineer."

Hurst had just begun his freshman year at Rolla when adulthood arrived.

"I found out that **Barbara** and I were going to be parents," says Hurst, who went to his advisor, Dr. **LeRoy Thompson**, CE'56, MS CE'65, and told him he would have to quit school to support his family. "Dr. Thompson said I needed to stay in school. He helped us find a place to live. He and his wife had us over for dinner many times. His daughter babysat for us. He was a great friend."

As a student, husband and father, Hurst still found time to be active in campus organizations, honor societies and Sigma Phi

Epsilon fraternity. He also started planning for life after graduation.

"I had a number of interviews and my two finalists were McCarthy and Procter & Gamble (P&G)," he says. "I talked with Barb about how McCarthy was smaller and riskier while P&G was huge and stable. About 10 years later, P&G eliminated its construction management department — so much for my risk analysis."

Hurst's first McCarthy project was a student center for Southeast Missouri State University. When he showed up on the job, the construction superintendent asked, "What are you supposed to do?" Hurst remembers his answer: "I've never been an engineer before. I have no idea."

The superintendent put him to work as a carpenter.

"It was a good way to learn what construction is all about," says Hurst. "After

a few months, he made me a foreman in charge of three carpenters."

Over the next two decades, Hurst managed many construction projects and spent 14 years working for McCarthy's Southwest division, eventually as executive vice president of operations. In 1994, he met his biggest challenge — constructing a \$350 million chip fabrication plant for a contentious client with a 12-month schedule.

"It was the kind of project where stress levels were so high that people broke down and cried," says Hurst. "At one point, I was pretty sure we'd be fired. When Mike McCarthy said it was time for me to become company president in 1995, I asked what convinced him. He said it was that project."

Hurst served as president and COO of McCarthy until his retirement in 2007. He helped to lead many changes over 33 years with the company, including the transition from a family-owned to employee-owned company and the implementation of safety improvements that have been adopted industrywide.

The Hursts established the Hurst-McCarthy Professorship in Construction Management in 2008 in partnership with McCarthy.

"More than 40 percent of S&T's civil engineering graduates work in construction, so it made sense to create an endowment supporting excellence in the field," says Hurst, who serves on the S&T Board of Trustees. "Civil engineers are builders and solution-seekers. They get things done."



# WAYNE LAUFER

## ENGINEER, OILMAN, ENERGY ADVOCATE

When **Wayne Laufer**, CE'67, explains how he got into the oil business, the story begins in metallurgical engineering, detours to electrical engineering and ends up in civil engineering.

"After one semester in metallurgical and three in electrical, I switched to civil because it wasn't as narrow," he says. "You have hydrology, steel design, concrete design, soil mechanics — lots of variety and real-world applications."

Laufer knew his major would provide a good foundation for whatever he did. But the story took another twist as he was about to graduate.

"I interviewed with three construction companies but didn't get a job offer," he says. "A fraternity brother recommended I look at oil companies. I interviewed with Shell, Gulf (now Chevron) and Humble (now ExxonMobil) and got offers from all three. They were looking for warm bodies with decent grades and a willingness to be trained."

Laufer chose Shell Oil Co. and moved to New Orleans as a production engineer.

"It couldn't have been a better experience," he says. "I had a lot of responsibility from the start." After three months in a Shell training program with about 200 other new hires, he

spent a year as a field foreman "learning what makes an oil field tick because you don't learn that sitting in an office."

After 10 years with Shell, Laufer co-founded a petroleum engineering consulting firm with a former Shell colleague on the faculty at Texas A&M University.

"My business partner was a well-known guru in reservoir computer analysis and fracture stimulation design," says Laufer. "It was theoretical, cutting-edge stuff that stretched me. I'm more of a hands-on guy."

Laufer sold his interest in 1980 and worked for small oil companies before co-founding Bois d'Arc Energy in 1983.

"I learned how to drill wells, finance wells, and handle the land and legal aspects of wells," he says. "I needed a geologist or geophysicist, but I could do everything else. Our first two wells were highly successful, otherwise I'd be selling shoes today."

When the oil industry went into a tailspin in the 1980s, Laufer took advantage of the downturn to begin aggressive acquisition.

"We bought leases from people who wouldn't have sold them to us before 1983," he says. "Many people were fearful about the future of the industry, but we didn't know any better, so we kept acquiring drilling areas for next to nothing."

Over the next two decades, Laufer steered Bois d'Arc into continued growth — and took the company public in 2005.

"My greatest challenge was building a small oil and gas exploration company from the ground up," he says. "The culmination was ringing the bell on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange the day of our initial public offering."

The company sold in 2008 and Laufer retired, although he continues to invest in entrepreneurial ventures and oversees the Wayne Laufer Charitable Foundation with his wife, **Gayle**. The Laufers support many philanthropic causes and in 2009 established the Wayne and Gayle Laufer Endowed Chair in Energy at Missouri S&T. A member of the Academy of Civil Engineers, Laufer remembers his Rolla years for their academic rigor — and the one week in March when no one cracked a book.

"I have good memories of Rolla, my Sigma Pi fraternity brothers and St. Pat's," he says. "We spent hundreds of hours making cudgels and stuffing crepe paper into chicken wire holes to make floats. The rest of the year there was a lot of peer pressure to study. We didn't slack off. If I applied today, I'm not sure I'd be admitted."



# JOHN LOVITT

## TECHNOLOGY NAVIGATOR, VISIONARY THINKER, TIRELESS MENTOR

When **John Lovitt**, MS CSci'70, was an undergraduate majoring in aeronautical engineering at Wichita State University, he worked nights as a computer operator for Beech Aircraft, running data encoded on punch cards.

"This was the 1960s, when mainframe computers were performing calculations formerly done on slide rules," says Lovitt. "I worked evenings running card decks so the engineers had their printouts first thing the next morning. When errors caused the program to run incorrectly, I knew enough Fortran to debug it. Debugging is what hooked me on computing. It also made me really popular with the engineers, who in turn mentored me."

After graduation, Lovitt joined McDonnell Douglas, where he programmed flight simulators while earning a master's degree in computer science through Missouri S&T's distance education program in St. Louis. His career accelerated in a new direction when he joined Hewlett Packard (HP) as a systems engineer, a technical liaison between the sales team and customers, most of whom were defense contractors and electronics manufacturers.

"The HP job had a huge influence on my career because that's when I first saw the gap between technology developers and users," says Lovitt, whose responsibilities shifted over 13 years with the company

from customer interface to the internal demands of management.

"I no longer had the in-depth technical engagement with customers that I enjoyed because I was managing more than 100 people," says Lovitt, who left HP in 1986 to join Silicon Valley startup Rational Software.

"As software became a critical part of any business, there was a great deal of work to be done helping customers use the technology," says Lovitt, who served as senior vice president for worldwide customer engagement. "We pioneered a collaborative team model focused on customer success."

When IBM acquired Rational Software in 2003, Lovitt aided the transition, then turned to consulting and startup ventures. He served as CEO of Pattern Insight, a data mining company, and now focuses on accelerating the application of technical innovations for social change and economic development.

"The thread throughout my career has been the development of new technology and the capability people need to apply it," says

Lovitt. "Getting from raw technology to actual results is a challenging process. Collaboration, communication and team skills are critical."

Lovitt's influence is evident in the leaders he has nurtured. More than 40 former employees have become CEOs of technology companies, a legacy he calls his most important contribution. He has mentored next-generation leaders as Entrepreneur in Residence and National Science Foundation I-Corps mentor at Missouri S&T, the Sam Bloomberg Visiting Engineer at Wichita State and a mentor at Santa Clara University's Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship.

Lovitt and his wife, **Diane**, established S&T's John Lovitt Internet Computing Graduate Research Fund and were the lead donors to the Daniel St. Clair Chair in Computer Science. They are active in social benefit projects around the world with their children, Jennifer, Angela and Chris.

In a career defined by visionary thinking with a pragmatist's grasp of limitations, Lovitt, a member of the S&T Board of Trustees and Academy of Computer Science, encourages students today to develop a talent for teamwork and the ability to discern what constitutes value in any project.

"Getting to value — to results that matter — is about more than capturing, encoding and replicating knowledge," says Lovitt. "It's about firsthand experiences and real-time feedback that lead to radical change. It's about people, processes and purpose coming together. You can't get to value unless you understand what it is."

Before the Alumni of Influence gala, the honorees gathered for a group photo and a cocktail reception in the Chancellor's Residence. Chancellor **Mo Deghani**, with **Joan Nesbitt**, vice chancellor for University Advancement, gave a toast to honor the 2021 Alumni of Influence.

From left: **Mike Hurst**, CE'74; **Steve Rector**, PetE'72, MS PetE'73; **Mike Bytnar**, ME'68, MS EMgt'73; **Wayne Laufer**, CE'67; **Gerald Stevenson**, ChE'59, MS ChE'63; **Ray Betz**, CE'66; **John Lovitt**, MS CSci'70; **Peggy Montana**, ChE'76; **Keith Wedge**, GGph'70, MS GGph'71, PhD GGph'73; **Tim Bradley**, PetE'77; **Ron Miller**, ChE'64; **Tom Voss**, EE'69.



# ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE



# POWER OF 12 LEVEL ONE



# RON MILLER

## COMPANY MAN, GLOBAL EXECUTIVE, PRODUCTION WIZARD

When **Ron Miller**, ChE'64, graduated from Rolla, he had six job offers. He chose the one with a strong management path — Procter & Gamble.

Over the next three decades, in a career that took him to manufacturing plants worldwide, he says his greatest challenge involved the most basic of baby necessities ... diapers.

"It was a time of product design change with the shift from rectangular to shaped diapers," says Miller, who was division manager overseeing the company's diaper manufacturing plants. "We were behind the curve and had to catch up. We converted 80 manufacturing lines around the world in 18 months at a cost of about \$1 million for each conversion."

Growing up in western Kentucky, Miller thought he would major in the subject he loved most — chemistry. But an aunt convinced him that chemical engineering was the way to go. After two years at Murray State University, Miller transferred to Rolla and moved into the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity house as a transfer member. His fiancé, **Janice**, stayed at Murray State to finish her elementary education degree.

Miller spent his junior year catching up after losing some credit hours with his transfer.

"I took 23 hours my first semester and 24 my second," he says. "I didn't have a lot of time to get into trouble." He and Janice were married before the start of his senior year, and she began teaching second grade in Rolla.

"We were poor but happy," says Miller, who remembers collecting soda bottles for the refund money until they had enough to buy hamburgers at Ramey's, a popular student hangout. After Miller accepted the job with Procter & Gamble (P&G), he and Janice celebrated by buying their first new car, a red 1964 Skylark. They moved to St. Louis, and Miller began his career as a shift supervisor at a plant that manufactured Tide and other cleaning products.

Over the next 35 years, Miller oversaw the production of many billion-dollar P&G brands. The achievement he is proudest of is the turnaround of a plant in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

"The plant was underperforming," says Miller, who began his tenure as plant manager by meeting with each of his 1,200 employees. "Pretty soon you gain some

credibility but it takes time to change. We turned things around by creating a leadership culture that involved everyone."

After the plant's successful turnaround, Miller became a division manager at the company's headquarters in Cincinnati. That led to an assignment in Brussels as the manufacturing head of laundry products for Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, followed by responsibility for laundry products manufacturing worldwide. Miller retired in 2000 as general manager and vice president to begin a phase of life that wasn't spent on airplanes.

He refers to this phase as giving back. He and Janice tutor at-risk students, volunteer for many nonprofit organizations and serve on community boards. They also established the Ron and Janice Miller Scholarship for Academic Access, an endowment supporting Pi Kappa Alpha scholarships.

Miller is a past president of the Missouri S&T Board of Trustees. During his 2006 commencement address, when he received an honorary doctorate, he encouraged graduates to live a balanced life, maintain integrity, deliver beyond expectations and give back.

"Rolla graduates are blessed with very good jobs," says Miller, remembering his own path from rural Kentucky to executive leadership with one of the world's largest multinational companies. "Giving back is a way to come full circle."



# PEGGY MONTANA

## CHEMICAL ENGINEER, ENERGY EXECUTIVE, LEADER ACROSS BORDERS

**Peggy Montana**, ChE'76, was a Rolla undergraduate when federal Title IX legislation opened the door to intercollegiate athletic competition for female students. Her junior year, she was in the inaugural group of women to compete as Miner athletes.

"I played on Rolla's first intercollegiate volleyball team, even though I am only a few inches over five feet," says Montana, who remembers seeing her first biscuits and gravy on a team trip when they stopped for breakfast at a rural diner. "All I could think was 'what in the world is that?'"

Born in Massachusetts, Montana, along with her five siblings, moved often with their father's work in petrochemical plant construction.

In Rolla as a resident assistant in McAnerney Hall, Montana remembers the first year the women's dorm achieved 100 percent occupancy — a milestone on a campus where men outnumbered women 10 to 1.

By taking summer classes, she graduated in three and a half years and joined Shell Oil Co. as a production engineer at the company's Deer Park Refinery in Houston. Her future husband and fellow Miner, **Duane Montana**, CE'75, was already in Houston working as a civil engineer.

Over the next two decades, Montana advanced from refinery production into management.

In 2001 she moved to Singapore as general manager of Shell's distribution operation in Asia and the Middle East.

"Most of my work was in Pakistan, Malaysia and the Philippines," says Montana, who faced the formidable task of turning around a division with the company's worst safety record. "Fuel truck drivers didn't have the right training or vehicles, and many countries had no safety regulations. We overhauled how we contracted with drivers and initiated audits. We improved our safety record to zero fatalities and became the leader, even helping countries implement industry regulations."

Montana returned to the United States in 2004 to oversee Shell's fuel terminals and transport as vice president of global distribution. In 2014 as CEO of Shell Midstream Partners, she led the initial public

offering of the first midstream assets spinoff for an international oil company.

"It was different from anything else in my career," says Montana, who spent a year forming the company and then pitching it to potential investors. "We might see four investment firms in a day on our roadshow. In the end, we raised a billion dollars."

Montana pounded the closing gavel at the New York Stock Exchange in October 2014 and retired the following June. With Duane and her sister, Andrea Cahill, she established the Montana Cahill Foundation, which awarded a \$500,000 challenge grant to the S&T chapter of Engineers Without Borders in 2017, launching a campaign that raised \$1 million.

"EWB was a good fit with our foundation's focus on breaking the cycle of poverty," says Montana, a member of the S&T Board of Trustees and Academy of Chemical Engineers. "Students use their engineering skills to make a difference in rural communities while gaining hands-on experience and cultural immersion."

Although biochemical engineering has emerged as a growth focus for the department, Montana encourages students not to ignore energy.

"If you want to be at the forefront of the two biggest challenges the next generation will face — the rapid growth of developing countries and climate change — go to work in the energy industry."



# STEVE RECTOR

## PETROLEUM ENGINEER, OILMAN, ENTREPRENEUR

**Steve Rector**, PetE'72, MS PetE'73, says the summer jobs he held as an undergraduate in Rolla ignited his passion for the oil and gas industry.

"I had never been farther from home than my grandmother's house in Kansas," says the Lebanon, Mo., native, who worked for Standard Oil in southern California, Mobil in western Oklahoma and Texaco in New Orleans.

"My parents owned a greenhouse and nursery, so growing up I worked before school, after school and weekends — mostly at the end of a shovel," says Rector, who excelled in math and science in high school. When it was time to apply to college, he considered only Rolla, where his brother was majoring in civil engineering.

"I asked my brother what department had the most money for scholarships," remembers Rector. "He said 'that's easy, petroleum engineering.' I didn't know a thing about it but I knew I needed a scholarship."

Rector says those summer jobs instilled in him a passion for the industry.

"I worked as a roustabout on an Oklahoma oil field in 1970," he says. "The crew gave

me a set of wrenches and nicknamed me Schoolboy. Pretty soon I was one of the gang."

After completing a master's degree in petroleum engineering, Rector joined Shell Oil Co. where he launched his career evaluating oil wells in Utah, New Mexico and Montana. Then, as a reservoir engineer, he used water flooding recovery methods to revitalize fields in the Rockies and Alaska.

"From a career perspective, it was a great time to be in the oil and gas business," says Rector, who then led planning and implementation of a carbon dioxide injection operation in West Texas. "We had a geological engineer, reservoir engineer and production engineers on the project. This team approach wasn't as prevalent back then and it taught me management skills."

Rector joined Petro-Lewis in 1981 as an engineering manager and later became vice president of its Gulf Coast region.

"I learned the business side of the industry," he says. "I had accountants, landmen and engineers working for me."

Following the collapse of oil prices in 1986 and the industry fallout that followed, Petro-Lewis was acquired by Freeport-McMoran and Rector went into business for himself.

"I bought some oil and gas properties I knew really well and started S&S Energy, a small regional company that's still around today," says Rector, who co-founded RIM Operating in 1991 and went on to acquire oil and gas properties in Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, Colorado and Texas.

"Our footprint went where the opportunities were," says Rector, who has weathered the volatility of the industry. "I've been through many booms and busts, from 1986 and 2008 to 2020." Rector also used his strategic skills as chair of the Miner Alumni Association's finance committee during the planning and building of Hasselmann Alumni House.

Rector and his wife, **Susan**, established a scholarship endowment in 2007 that supports 30 to 40 students in petroleum and geological engineering every year. When on campus for alumni association meetings, Rector has met with his scholarship students.

"The scholarships I held meant everything to me," says Rector, a former member of the S&T Board of Trustees. "It was an easy decision to provide opportunity for future generations. I advise students to prepare themselves for ups and downs. Petroleum engineering is a good career, but it's not for the faint of heart."



# GERALD STEVENSON

## ENGINEER, EXECUTIVE, TEAM BUILDER

Long before the global workplace became commonplace, **Gerald Stevenson**, ChE'59, MS ChE'63, was using his chemical engineering degrees to build processing plants all over the world. There was nothing he enjoyed more than seeing a global team come together.

"It was a great thrill to arrive at a collegial decision with fellow board members and others from India or Venezuela or Ireland," says Stevenson, a native of Salem, Ill., who attended Rolla at the recommendation of a family friend who was a Texaco executive and Rolla graduate.

Stevenson was active as president of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, served as a Student Council officer, and found a mentor in Dr. **Frank Conrad**, an influential chemical engineering professor.

"He had worked in industry so he brought practical experience to the classroom," says Stevenson. "He was a mentor and friend. A lot of alumni share my feelings about him."

After earning a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, Stevenson began his career with Shell Oil Co., then returned to Rolla to earn a master's degree before joining International Minerals and Chemical Corp. (IMC), where he helped develop phosphate mining and processing operations in Florida — and eventually in India.

When a former IMC colleague founded a consulting group in Canada and England, he asked Stevenson to join the company. During his time with Davy International, later Davy McKee Corp., Stevenson grew the company's chemical plant contracting services. He also expanded his circle of professional peers through the Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program, in addition to taking graduate business courses at INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France. These international experiences laid the groundwork for the rest of Stevenson's global career.

"A lot of the value at Harvard and INSEAD was in getting to know people from all over the world," he says. "There were 160 in my Harvard class, half from the U.S. and half from other countries."

Stevenson joined Jacobs Engineering Group in 1984 and served in leadership roles including group vice president of two U.S. divisions, senior vice president of operations,

and senior vice president of worldwide sales and marketing.

"It was a pretty Herculean task at the time," says Stevenson, who helped grow the company's footprint as a global leader in technical and construction services. After retiring from Jacobs, Stevenson founded Summit Prairie Corp., a venture capital company with investments in farmland, oil wells and medical technology.

Throughout his career, Stevenson made giving back a priority. He served on the charter executive board of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers' Engineering Construction Contracting Division, and on the boards of the United Way of Central Florida and the University of South Florida, in addition to many corporate boards.

His Missouri S&T leadership roles include serving on the Board of Trustees, the Miner Alumni Association board of directors as president, and as a founding member of the Academy of Chemical Engineers. He received an Award of Professional Distinction in 1981 and an honorary doctorate in 2003.

The Miner Alumni Association endowment Stevenson and his wife, **Jeannie**, established — the Gerald L. and Eugenia Bradford Stevenson Endowed Scholarship — encourages out-of-state students to attend S&T and major in chemical or biochemical engineering.

"It's an investment in the future of our country and the world beyond our borders," says Stevenson. "Companies hire Rolla graduates because they are problem-solvers with hands-on experiences who can make the transition to the real world immediately."



# TOM VOSS

## ELECTRICAL ENGINEER, POWER GURU, COMMUNITY LEADER

**Tom Voss**, EE'69, grew up stocking shelves in his father's grocery store in St. Louis, a job he continued to do on weekends when he was a student in Rolla.

"I was the first in my family to go to college," he says. "I didn't know much about engineering but I knew I loved math. When I learned that electrical engineering had the most math, I majored in it."

Voss joined Union Electric, later Ameren Missouri, after graduating and returned to the company following four years in the Air Force, where he worked on engineering projects including the gyroscope for the F-4 fighter plane.

Over the next four decades at Ameren, he learned the ropes of public utility life, from operations to customer service.

"By the time I became CEO, I had worked in every area of the company," says Voss, who put his crisis management skills to work in 1993 when a massive flood submerged a swath of the Midwest.

"It was 90 days of intensity," he says. "My wife saw me more on TV than she did at home."

Throughout his career, Voss brought an engineer's love of process to every position

he held. He developed a reputation among power industry CEOs as the go-to guy on generation and transmission.

"I taught courses to executives on how the whole system works," he says. "When I served on the EEI (Edison Electric Institute) executive committee, most of the other CEOs were trained as accountants or lawyers. I was the engineer in the bunch."

Voss says his greatest career challenge was learning to be a CEO.

"You really don't know what the job is when you start," he says. "Then you realize it's about more than decision-making because capable people are already making decisions. I ended up focusing on safety and diversity. I believed diversity would make us a better company and I knew we had to improve our safety record."

Under Voss's leadership, Ameren went from more than 200 work accidents a year down to 20. He also led initiatives to increase the number of women and minority engineers at Ameren.

The company continues to recognize employees annually with the Thomas R. Voss Diversity Award.

Voss was about to retire in 2014 when California-based startup Smart Wires approached him about consulting. For the past six years, he has served as chairman of the company, which develops and markets groundbreaking technology used to control power grid flow.

Throughout his career in a 24/7 industry, Voss has always made time to give back. He and his wife, **Carol**, have chaired fundraising campaigns for many causes including AIDS, Alzheimer's disease and cancer research, homelessness, early childhood development, and education and the arts.

"Carol and I are strong supporters of many organizations dedicated to making the world better," says Voss, who chairs the S&T Board of Trustees and previously served on the University of Missouri Board of Curators. Voss received an honorary doctorate in 2018. He and Carol received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice of Metropolitan St. Louis in 2020 for their commitment to building a community culture of inclusion and understanding.

If Voss were to offer advice to today's college students, he would emphasize that learning never ends.

"Whatever major you choose, once you go into the field, it's what you keep learning that's important not what you already know."



# KEITH WEDGE

## RETIRED GENERAL, GEOLOGIST, GLOBAL LEADER

The advice **Keith Wedge**, GGph'70, MS GGph'71, PhD GGph'73, shares with students today bears a striking resemblance to his own decisions as a young Army officer.

"Accept difficult assignments and seek leadership positions," he says. "Read history and learn from the past."

The retired brigadier general and three-time Missouri S&T graduate embodies his own advice. As a geology and geophysics major, he stepped out of his rock-and-mineral comfort zone to serve as editor-in-chief of the *Rollamo*. The yearbook he edited won top honors from the national Associated Collegiate Press.

"Not bad for a bunch of science and engineering students," says Wedge, who has always been game for a new challenge or horizon. Growing up in Affton, Mo., he'd hop a train in St. Louis and head west. "My dad worked for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, so I had a train pass. I'd go on trips by myself to Colorado to rock hunt."

After completing his Ph.D., Wedge headed to the Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Va. Throughout his 34-year career, he used his geological training on field assignments

all over the world — locating North Korean infiltration tunnels along the Demilitarized Zone, drilling for water in Egypt, and building roads in Jordan, to name a few projects. He also spent six months in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War.

While his work became administrative as he advanced in rank, he always maintained that his grounding in geology was the key to his success.

"I've traveled to six continents in my work for the Army," he says. "My education made it possible to get those assignments."

Wedge's last duty post was at Fort Hood, Texas, where he commanded a five-state brigade of more than 2,600 soldiers. After retiring from the Army, he worked as a senior military analyst and program manager for Advancia Corp., a military contractor, and taught graduate classes in environmental management for Webster University at Fort Leonard Wood. He also worked for the Missouri Division of Geology and Land

Survey as chief of information services, and later as chief of geotechnical services, retiring from this civilian job in 1999.

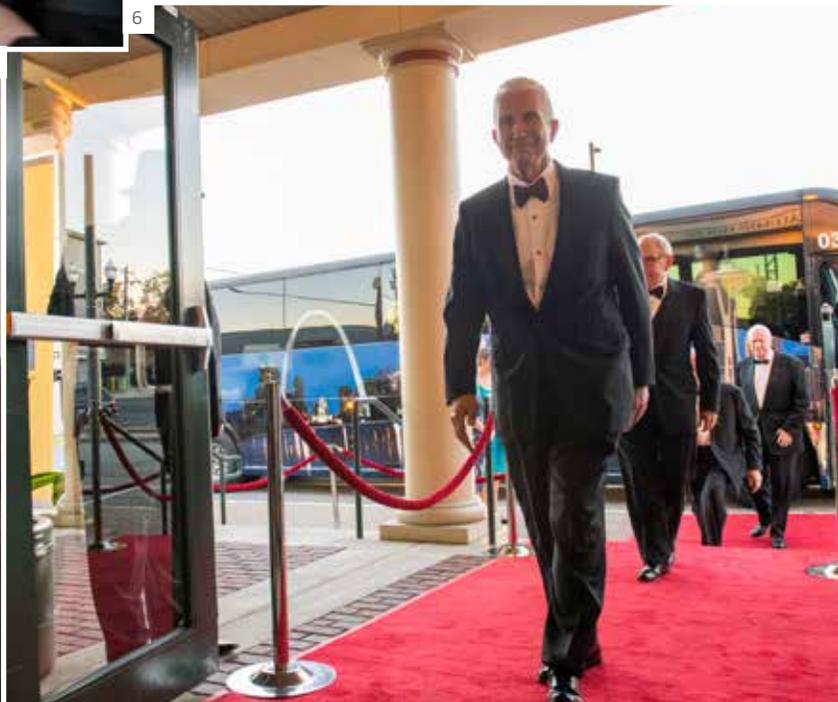
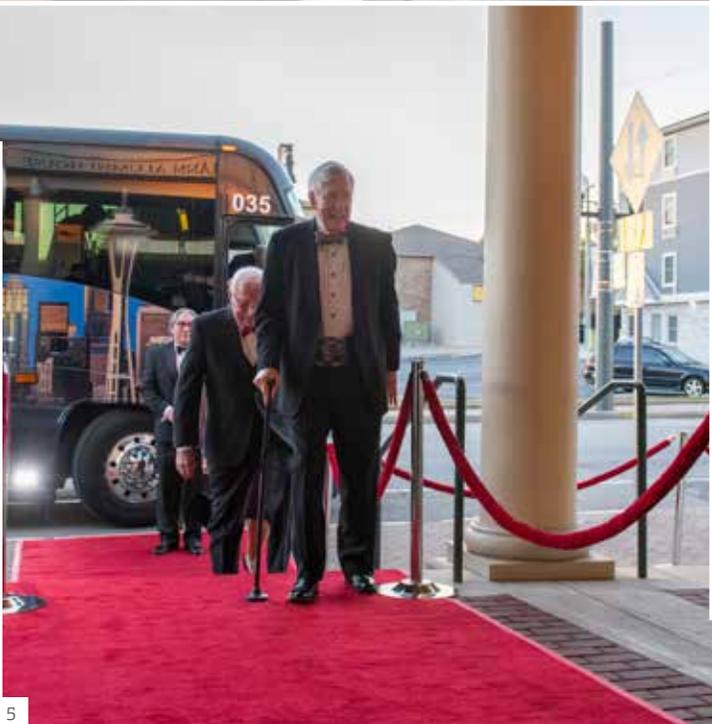
Keith and his wife, **Bobbie**, have been Rolla residents and community volunteers since 1970. Wedge is treasurer of the Miner Alumni Association board of directors and has been a board member for 18 years. He is president of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity's Alpha Kappa Educational Foundation, and a past president of the Academy of Mines and Metallurgy and the Fort Leonard Wood-Mid-Missouri Chapter of the Association of the United States Army.

The Wedges are long-time supporters of geological sciences, the Miner Alumni Association and Pi Kappa Alpha. They have established scholarship endowments supporting all three.

"As a student, I depended on scholarships and financial aid," says Wedge. "Bobbie and I believe it's vital to invest in young people."

For Wedge, scholarships also inspired an enduring friendship.

"I was fortunate to have had several McNutt Scholarships including one to study in Germany during part of my senior year," he says. **Amy McNutt**, widow of pioneering oilman **V.H. McNutt**, MinE 1910, MS MinE 1912, came to Rolla twice a year to take her scholarship students out to dinner, and we developed a friendship. After Bobbie and I were married, we honeymooned at the McNutt Ranch near San Antonio."



## 2021 ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE GALA

The 2021 Alumni of Influence honorees returned to campus on the 150th anniversary of the university's first day of classes (Saturday, Nov. 6). They gathered for a toast in the Chancellor's Residence before the gala began, where they were joined by Missouri S&T Chancellor **Mo Deghani** and **Joan Nesbitt**, vice chancellor for University Advancement.

Following the private gathering at the Chancellor's Residence, the honorees were shuttled to Hasselmann Alumni House for a red-carpet reception and gala.

1. Honoree **Wayne Laufer**, CE'67, (left) and other honorees visit with Chancellor **Mo Deghani**.
2. Honorees **Tom Voss**, EE'69, (right) and **John Lovitt**, MS CSci'71, visit following a toast.
3. Honorees **Peggy Montana**, ChE'76, **Mike Bytnar**, ME'68, MS EMgt'73, (center), and **Keith Wedge**, GGph'70, MS GGph'71, PhD GGph'73, catch up.
4. Honorees **Gerald Stevenson**, ChE'59, MS ChE'63, (left) and **Steve Rector**, PetE'72, MS PetE'73, visit with each other.
5. **Ron Miller**, ChE'64, and other honorees entered the gala on a red carpet.
6. Honoree **Ray Betz**, CE'66, leads the group of honorees into the Hasselmann Alumni House.
7. Honoree **Tom Voss**, EE'69, (center) visits with guests at the reception.
8. 2016 Alumni of Influence Honoree **Joe Ballard**, MS EMgt'72, (center) visits with guests during the reception.
9. Honoree **Mike Hurst**, CE'74, visits with guests during the reception.
10. 2016 Alumni of Influence Honoree **Bipin Doshi**, ChE'62, MS ChE'63, (left) visits with Chancellor **Mo Deghani**.





1  
4



## 2021 ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE GALA

The gala featured a formal dinner and recognition ceremony in Kinyon-Koeppel Grand Hall. Following dinner, S&T students and recent graduates introduced themselves, recognized the honorees, and spoke about the impact the honorees had on their lives.

1. **Joan Nesbitt**, vice chancellor for University Advancement, led the evening's festivities.
2. The tables were set in a polished theme with silver, gold and white accents.
3. **Ashley-Ann Davis**, EMgt'21, and one of S&T's first Kummer Doctoral Fellows in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, escorts honoree **Tim Bradley**, PetE'77.
4. **Megan Proper**, a senior in civil engineering, escorts honoree **Mike Bytnar**, ME'68, MS EMgt'73.
5. **Jessie Maass**, ChE'19, a production engineer at Tate & Lyle and recipient of the Stevenson Scholarship, escorts honoree **Gerald Stevenson**, ChE'59, MS ChE'63.
6. **Abigail Schneider**, CE'21, and civil engineering graduate student, escorts honoree **Steve Rector**, PetE'72, MS PetE'73.
7. **Israel Velazquez**, a senior in electrical engineering and recipient of the Voss Scholarship, recognizes honoree **Tom Voss**, EE'69.
8. **Ashley-Ann Davis**, EMgt'21, recognizes honoree **John Lovitt**, MS CSci'70.



3 4



5 6



7



8



## 2021 ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE GALA

1. Elegant white floral arrangements adorned the dining tables and stage in Kinyon-Koeppel Grand Hall.
2. Honoree **Ron Miller**, ChE'64, poses with his wife, **Janice**.
3. Honoree **Peggy Montana**, ChE'76, poses with **Megan Proper**, a senior in civil engineering and president of the S&T chapter of Engineers Without Borders.
4. Honoree **Tim Bradley**, PetE'77, poses with his wife, **Kay**.
5. Honoree **John Lovitt**, MS CSci'70, poses with his wife, **Diane**.
6. **Robert Brockhaus**, ME'62, poses with his wife, **Joyce**.
7. Honorees **Wayne Laufer**, CE'67, **Ray Betz**, CE'66, (center) and **Mike Hurst**, CE'74, celebrate together.
8. 2016 Alumni of Influence Honoree **Roger Dorf**, ME'65, (left) and his wife, **Sandra**, pose with **Brad Hornburg**, CE'69, and his wife, **Connie**.
9. Honoree **Keith Wedge**, GGph'70, MS GGph'71, PhD GGph'73, poses with his wife, **Bobbie**.



6



7



8



8



HASELMANN ALUMNI HOUSE

ALUMNI



AHEAD

ALUMNI

HOUSE





OF INFLUENCE

1100

ANIMALS OF INFLUENCE



ENGINEER, ENTREPRENEUR, ENGINEER, PO  
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER EXECUTIVE, CO  
MECHANICAL ENGINEER, EXECUTIVE, CO  
MANUFACTURING LEADER, TEAM BUILDER  
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ELECTRICAL ENGINEER, PET  
CIVIL ENGINEER, POWER SURVEYOR, IND  
BUILDER, S... LEADER, STR  
TECHNOLOGY  
PECKER, RE... BUILDER  
ONARY TH... LEADER  
LESS MENTOR ENGINEER, OILMAN,  
ENTREPRENEUR, SEEKER  
TE DEVELOPER, COMPANY MAN,  
TEAM ENGINEER, GLOBAL EXECUTIVE, EN  
ENTREPRENEUR, PRODUCTION WIZARD

**ALUMNI  
OF  
INFLUENCE**