

## Memorial resolution for Dr. Bob Montgomery from the School of Engineering Education



Robert "Bob" Elba Montgomery, 74, passed away on January 13, 2021 at University Hospital in Indianapolis. He was born on December 27, 1946, in Columbus, OH, to the late Forrest and Myrtle (Ellis) Montgomery. Bob attended Paris American High School in Fontainebleau, France. After high school, he earned his Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Purdue University, followed by his Master's degree from the University of Maryland, and a PhD from Iowa State University. On December 27, 1968, he married Janice Harden in Indianapolis. Bob was a loving husband to his wife of 52 years, as well as a devoted father and grandfather.

Bob was a professor at Purdue University for over twenty-two years. Known as "Dr. Bob" to his students, he was part of the Department of Freshman Engineering established in 1953 and precursor to the program now known as First-Year Engineering in the School of Engineering Education. Bob was the first tenure-track faculty member hired directly into Freshman Engineering. Previously, faculty were transferred from the schools of engineering to the department. Bob was the first faculty member dedicated to teaching, advising and recruiting first-year students. He helped lay the groundwork for who we are today as a school with a permanent faculty and a scholarly mindset in engineering education. Bob was active within the American Society for Engineering Education community, serving on committees and publishing on the first-year engineering program, computer programming course, and honors program. As a senior colleague, he collaborated writing papers with many of the new faculty who founded the School of Engineering Education and encouraged them to engage in the larger engineering education community.

Bob will also be remembered for his leadership skills for implementing, directing, and teaching the first-year engineering honors program. What is now part of the Honors College, the first-year engineering honors program began under the Department of Freshman Engineering with Bob leading the way. It was in his persistent pursuit to recruit top engineering students that he created the Seminar for Top Engineering Prospects (STEP). With only a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is still offered today with the same week-long summer residential opportunity for rising high school seniors to explore the many disciplines of engineering.

Bob was the recipient of numerous Best Counselor and teaching awards at the department and college level during his tenure at Purdue. He was beloved by many students and colleagues alike. His motto "students first, no matter what" inspired our school's mission that can be found on our website, to above all else seek to put students first in all we do.

Bob retired from Purdue and continued to serve the state as the Technical Services Director for the Indiana Department of Transportation in Crawfordsville. He enjoyed mentoring Purdue interns and full-time engineers. Bob was a member of Redeemer Lutheran Church and participated in many of the musical programs there. He had a passion for music, playing guitar, bass, and trombone. In addition, he played in a bluegrass group at St. Andrews United Methodist Church, and was a member of the Lafayette Dulcimers.