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Alumnus William H. Baker Jr. Presented McCulloch Lifetime Achievement Award

Honor recognizes contributions to Association for Manufacturing Excellence

APRIL 25, 2017 BY EDWIN SMITH

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William H. 'Bill' Baker Jr. is the 2016 Mac McCulloch Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Submitted photo

Adding to many accolades during his career, William H. "Bill" Baker Jr. (ME 63) received the 2016 Mac McCulloch Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Manufacturing Excellence.

Established in 2004, the McCulloch Award not only recognizes service to the association but also honors an individual's character, integrity and leadership. Recipients are nominated and selected by the AME Awards Council and presented the prize at the annual AME International Conference, which took place in Dallas, Texas, last year.

"After being a volunteer for 27 years, I am humbled to be given this recognition for my service," said Baker, a Jackson native. "I've had many career highs over the years, but this one definitely tops the list."

Baker retired in 2004 from Raytheon Co. and Texas Instruments Defense Systems (which Raytheon acquired in 1997). He is president and CEO of Speed to Excellence, a consulting company based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is also a prolific writer who has contributed articles to the National Productivity Review, Quality Progress and AME's Target Magazine (of which he is now chairman of its editorial board).

He has co-authored best-sellers that include "Winning the Knowledge Transfer Race" with Michael English (McGraw-Hill, 2006) and "Lean for the Long Term" with Ken Rolfes (Productivity Press, 2015).

"Never dreamed I would be a writer and editor," he said.

Baker's other AME volunteer activities include serving as chairman of the 2005 international conference in Boston, where he had the opportunity to introduce the keynote speaker, Gov. Mitt Romney.

George Saiz, AME president and CEO, described Baker as "a tireless continuous improvement practitioner in his professional career (who) has brought that same spirit of improvement to his work at the organization.

"By adding his expertise to everything from AME publications all the way up to the most prestigious level of recognition through the AME Excellence Award, Bill has enabled thousands of continuous improvement practitioners to come together to share, learn and grow," Saiz said.

Baker entered the University of Mississippi as a student-athlete and was on the freshman tennis team. He recalls Mechanics and Thermodynamics as a favorite engineering course.

"I liked the theories that I could visualize and enjoy," Baker said.

As a mechanical engineering student, Baker also went through Air Force ROTC, where he was wing operations manager. He was also president of the student chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and was selected for the Arnold Air Society and Scabbard and Blade honorary ROTC groups.

"This helped me be one of the first USAF rocket-propulsion engineers, who helped launch satellites from 1963 to 1967 and evaluating contractors' performance," Baker said.

Following graduation, Baker began a career in manufacturing engineering at Texas Instruments Defense Systems with responsibility for delivering missiles, night vision equipment and geophysical exploration equipment. He later spent two years as manufacturing manager at the University of Texas at Dallas, building mass spectrometers for Apollo 15, 16 and 17.

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Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

"The last one of moon exploration, Apollo 17, I physically helped build," he said. "It is still on the moon."

A frequent speaker on benchmarking, performance measurement, knowledge management, Raytheon Six Sigma and the Lean Enterprise, Baker has been instrumental in assisting several companies and organizations in pursuit of their strategic objectives. A senior Shingo Prize examiner and AME Excellence Award examiner, he was a key design contributor to the Lean Certification process developed by AME-Shingo-SME (Society of Manufacturing Engineers) and launched in 2006.

Baker, who also earned an MBA from Southern Methodist University in 1973, was responsible for knowledge management and benchmarking at both Texas Instruments and Raytheon from 1990 to 2004. Earlier in his career, he was the manufacturing manager on several high-profile missile/electronic systems, including Shrike, Paveway, Harpoon seeker, TOW Night Sight, HARM and Tacit Rainbow. Baker was the U.S. Air Force engineering chief, responsible for evaluating satellite launches at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

Baker and his wife, Martha Rea, who attended Ole Miss for three years, have three sons: William, Mark and David.

"I assist Martha, who is an accomplished artist," Baker said. "And I love to spend time with our four grandchildren: Cas, Ruby, Bodhi and Charan."

Baker also enjoys playing competitive tennis in Santa Fe.

For more about Speed to Excellence, visit <https://billbakerste.com/> For more about the UM Department of Mechanical Engineering, go to <https://engineering.olemiss.edu/mechanical/>. For additional information about the Association for Manufacturing Excellence, see www.ame.org.

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