

Richard Campbell '58

ROBERT H. GODDARD AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Richard Campbell is remembered as a Renaissance man whose work in acoustical engineering spanned space shuttles to concert halls. Although the WPI community was saddened to lose this distinguished alumnus in 2012, we are proud to honor him today among his family and friends.

At WPI, he majored in electrical engineering and began designs for what would become a specialty: voice communication systems for environments with high ambient noise. He went on to design headsets for potato chip factories and the landing decks on Navy aircraft carriers, and the voice communication systems for the Gemini mission and for Apollo missions to the moon. He designed intercom systems for manufacturing plants of the C5 and B1 bombers and created communications systems for rock concerts, the 1976 Democratic National Convention, and the National Football League.

A deep love of music led Mr. Campbell to become involved in the acoustical design of concert halls, devising computer models that showed how sound works in a specific hall and how to correct it. An engineer who served the public, he joined acousticians at Bolt Beranek and Newman to make a bank of these models available for free on the web. Frustrated by a lack of standardization of parts used in acoustical equipment, Mr. Campbell wrote a white paper about it and then helped form a National Standards Committee that developed the present international standards for audio equipment on aircraft.

From 1981 to 2008, Mr. Campbell was also an adjunct professor of electrical engineering at WPI. For many years, he worked seven days a week—teaching at WPI, designing voice equipment at David Clark Company in Worcester, developing innovations at his own company, Bang-Campbell Associates, and pursuing his passion for boating at the Woods Hole Marine boatyard, which he owned with two partners.

Mr. Campbell's intellectual curiosity drove him to pursue many other projects outside of acoustical engineering. He designed the first carbon dioxide scrubber for the U.S. Navy's SEALAB capable of diving to 1,200 feet and a de-icer for snow-making equipment on ski slopes. He worked on solar energy projects for USAID in Mali, Malaysia, and Morocco. He was a fellow of the Acoustical Engineering Society, wrote many technical and popular papers, and chaired or co-chaired many technical committees.

Mr. Campbell was a devoted father and community member. He served as president of the Associated Scientists of Woods Hole, chair of the Curriculum Committee of the Woods Hole Science School, and chair of the Falmouth Economic Development and Industrial Corporation.

Today we remember and honor Richard Campbell for his many contributions to his field and his role as a teacher, researcher, and leader. His work in engineering and beyond has touched countless lives.



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