

Charles M. Vest Honored with Alumni Society Medal

Charles M. Vest earned the 2004 Alumni Society Medal for his distinguished four-decade career in teaching and higher education administration. Most recently Vest served as the 15th president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He stepped down in December 2004 after a 14-year tenure. He is also a member of the mechanical engineering faculty at MIT with research interests in the areas of thermal sciences, lasers and coherent optics.

Prior to assuming the presidency of MIT in 1990 Vest was provost and vice president for academic affairs at U-M. He held the position of dean of engineering from 1986 to 1989. He joined the ME faculty in 1967, after earning both his master's and Ph.D. in ME at U-M. He received his bachelor's degree from West Virginia University and holds seven honorary doctorates.

Since stepping down as president, Vest continues to serve on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, which he has done since 1994. In early 2005, he completed service as a member of the Robb-Silberman Commission on Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction.

In fall 2005, he will visit U-M for two weeks as Towsley Policy Maker in Residence at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, where he will offer a mini-course on the impact of the events of September 11, 2001 on U.S. science policy.

Vest also works with three committees of the National Academy of Engineering and

the National Academy of Science and serves on two corporate boards. "It hasn't been the quiet year of contemplation and writing I had anticipated, but it has been very interesting, and I'm certainly learning a lot," he said.

U-M played a key role in his success. "My education, teaching and administrative experiences there and my interactions with many colleagues and friends across the University taught me how to analyze

problems, value diversity of people and ideas, and to occasionally take the 'road less traveled'."

The Alumni Society Medal is the highest honor bestowed by the Engineering Alumni Society Board of Governors. It recognizes College of Engineering graduates who have attained extraordinary achievement and who have brought distinction to themselves and the College.



Former College of Engineering Dean Stephen Director (left) congratulates Chuck Vest on winning the Alumni Society Medal.

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