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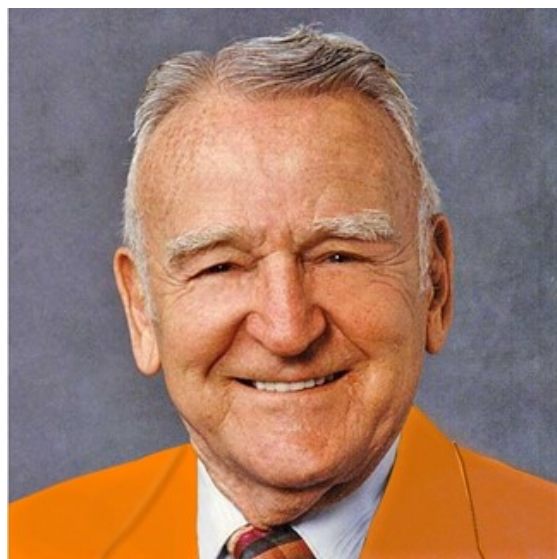
Special Edition



John J. McKetta Jr.

October 17, 1915 ~ January 15, 2019

In Remembrance



On January 15, 2019, the South Texas Section of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and the chemical engineering profession lost one of the greatest: Dr. John J. McKetta Jr. at the age of 103. Over the years, Dr. McKetta was a mentor and friend to many chemical engineers in the STS-AIChE, and he will be missed by all of us.

Known by his colleagues and associates as "Johnny" and by his family as "Djiedo", he was born to John and Mary Gelet McKetta on October 17, 1915, in Wyano, Pennsylvania, and grew up in a series of western Pennsylvania coal towns, speaking only Ukrainian until completing the first grade.

After graduating from high school, he mined coal for two years and also became a regional Golden Gloves welterweight champion. His coal mining career ended at age 20, when he applied to 55 colleges that taught chemical engineering. He attended Tri-State College (now Trine University) in Angola, Indiana, the only college that both admitted him and offered him a job to pay his tuition.

For 67 years, Johnny was married to and very much in love with Helen Elisabeth Smith McKetta, nicknamed "Pinky", whom he met in graduate school at the University of Michigan and married on his birthday in 1943. Austin became their home when Johnny came to teach at The University of Texas as a young Chemical Engineering professor in 1946. Johnny and Pinky are remembered as a deeply generous couple who opened their Austin lakeside home to students and who welcomed everyone they met into their family.

At UT Johnny was known for practical jokes, throwing chalk at sleeping students, writing his weight on the chalkboard when he was trying to go on a diet, flashing peeks of his burnt orange underpants (the official school color), and inspiring his students to become the best people and engineers possible. His goofy sense of humor, open ways of expressing affection (his alma mater calls him "The Hugster"), and work ethic have touched and inspired thousands of students and colleagues.

In his long career he had many roles: he was one of the world's foremost energy experts, Dean of UT's College of Engineering, UT's Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, an energy advisor to five U.S. presidents, Chair of the National Energy Policy Committee, Chair of the Southern Interstate Nuclear Board, Chair of the Texas Atomic Energy Advisory Committee, editor of a 68-volume chemical engineering encyclopedia, author or editor of 20 other books, and author of 400 technical papers. Johnny was one of the most widely known and respected professors in his field.

Johnny was elected chair of the STS-AIChE in 1954 while Austin was still a part of the STS-AIChE. His peers then elected him president of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers in 1962 and he was also awarded the 1962 South Texas Section Distinguished Service Award. In 1989, Johnny was awarded the Hoover Medal, which recognizes great, unselfish, non-technical services by engineers to humanity. This past fall, Dr. McKetta was recognized as the outstanding academic chemical engineer member at the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the STS-AIChE.

Above all, he dedicated his life to his students, whom he phoned each year on their birthdays.

Thousands of his former students raised more than \$28 million to celebrate his contributions to their lives and to chemical engineering; and in 2012, The University of Texas at Austin rechristened his home department the McKetta Department of Chemical Engineering. UT's Texas Exes named Johnny first on its 2013 list of the Top 10 Best and Most Inspiring Professors. Trine University, where Johnny served as trustee for 50 years, named its Chemical Engineering department after him in 1997 and also named Johnny to be the "Patronus Sanctus Facultatis", Patron Saint of the Faculty.

Johnny's journey from coal miner to noted leader in chemical engineering has been the subject of hundreds of articles and interviews, a biography, and a documentary film. More information about Johnny and his legacy to chemical engineering can be found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMOEvCN40X8>.

Memorial Services and Obituaries

A memorial service will be held at The University of Texas at Austin at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, February 9, 2019, in the Zlotnik Ballroom on Level M1 of the AT&T Conference Center, 1900 University Avenue, Austin, with a reception following from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Memorial gifts may be directed to a charity of one's choice or to Johnny's favorite universities:

The University of Texas at Austin

(Online at <https://giving.utexas.edu/McKettaMemorial>; by mail to McKetta Memorial, 200 E. Dean Keeton St., Stop C0400 Austin, TX 78712; or by phone 512-471-3263)

Trine University

(Online at <https://www.alumni.trine.edu/s/1842/interior.aspx?sid=1842&gid=2&pgid=399>; or by mail to One University Avenue, Angola, IN 46703).

The McKetta family's obituary and memorial guestbook are available online at:

http://wcfish.tributes.com/obituary/show/John-J-McKetta-106749754?utm_campaign=CH EE FY18-19_FullAnnouncementJJM_EML&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Eloqua

Other obituaries or announcements for Dr. John J. McKetta Jr. may be viewed at the following URLs.

The University of Texas at Austin:

http://app.econnect.utexas.edu/e/er?utm_campaign=CH EE FY18-19_FullAnnouncementJJM_EML&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Eloqua&s=1740541080&lid=9742&elqTrackId=5AA1EB9545A3F54441A66AA2B1880E2C&elq=c1082497adf645a5afb17aeb859ba54f&elqaid=10873&elqat=1

Trine University (formerly Tri-State University):

<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20190115/WEB/190119928>

University of Michigan:

<https://che.engin.umich.edu/people/john-j-mcketta-jr/>

Texas State Cemetery:

https://cemetery.tspb.texas.gov/pub/user_form822.asp?pers_id=11785

Austin American-Statesman:

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/statesman/obituary.aspx?n=john-j-mcketta&pid=191271615>