



Leon Lasdon

January 29, 1939 - January 31, 2024

Leon Lasdon, revered University of Texas Professor, died January 31, 2024 at Christopher House in Austin, Texas following a long battle with cancer.

Leon was born on January 29, 1939 in Schenectady, New York.

His distinguished career in higher education began when he received his B.S. from Syracuse University and his M.S and Ph.D. from the Case Institute of Technology where he taught until he received an invitation to teach at the University of Texas Business School.

He joined the faculty at the University of Texas where he taught MBA, Engineering and Ph.D. level courses in nonlinear programming and large-scale systems optimization. He held the David Bruton, Jr. Chair in Business Decision Support Systems and retired as Professor Emeritus in the Red McCombs School of Business.

Professor Lasdon was a pioneer in optimization research. His notable achievements in the field included being part of a team that created Solver, a popular Excel add-in used in business schools worldwide. His text book is still one of the most widely cited in the world.

Professor Lasdon and wife Laraine are well known for their support of the arts

and are particularly proud of their association with The Blanton Museum of Art, Butler School of Music, Harry Ransom Center, Austin Classical Guitar, Shalom Austin and Temple Beth Shalom.

Leon is survived by his wife Laraine, his children, Erica Lasdon, Sasha Lasdon, his sister, Naomi Lasdon, Claire Benedikt (Britton); grandchild Kira Lasdon DeLuca; and brother-in-law Malcolm Rosenfeld.

A celebration of Leon's life will be held sometime in the future.

In memory of Leon, contributions to Austin Classical Guitar and Temple Beth Shalom would be appreciated.

Tribute Wall

CD

“ I'm grieved to hear of Leon's passing. I only met him in passing. I was trying to do a project at the Blanton museum and he happened to be on the staff at the time as a docent. He was incredibly generous and kind and informative. It was a pleasure and an honor to meet him. Here is the video that features a bit of Leon's thoughts on art: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdr3PzCAomo&list=UUttsBzHSBlSxQ7PitpfhNCA>

Chidsey Dickson - February 28 at 07:26 PM

JB

“ My condolences to his family. I met Leon in 1974 when I was a graduate student at Case Western Reserve University. He and Chandrashekran and Teunis Ott were to top 3 professors in the department. He left for UT Austin the next year and I went to UT Dallas with Chandrashekran and Ott. When I graduated from UTD with my PhD, Leon was kind enough to write a recommendation for me and I was hired as a professor at SUNY Buffalo. Leon's work in non-linear optimization is a classic in the field and he will be missed.

John N Barrer - January 14 at 02:54 PM

JW

“ I roomed with Leon his first year at Syracuse University. As an African American growing up between Harlem, New York and Columbia, South Carolina, rooming with Leon, a conservative Jewish up state New Yorker was quite a jolt to my system. Leon was clearly bright; very much a loner at the time, and so we did not spend very much time getting to know each other. I transferred to NYU the following year and totally lost track of Leon until a few days ago when I asked, "Gee, I wonder whatever happened to Leon Ladsen?" Well now I know. His academic achievements are no surprise. I wish his family and all who did know him well, nothing but the best. (al wakefield. al@wakefield-global.com

james wakefield - December 11, 2024 at 03:08 PM

RG

“ Leon and I were high school friends, though I am 2 years younger than he. Our friendship developed from playing golf together during summer vacations. He was a student of the game of golf and I learned a lot from him about the mechanics of the golf swing. He was clearly a genius and reflected the intelligence and compassion of his mom and dad. His father owned an electrical supply business in our home town, Schenectady, NY. He had to carry a huge inventory in order to service his customers. He told Leon and me that it was best to carry your inventory in your head intellectually rather than physical material inventory. Ben and his wife were devoted Zionists long before most of us realized the importance of the State of Israel.

Robert Silverman (Atlanta, GA) - April 01, 2024 at 10:41 AM

KS

“*Laraine is right. Leon had the most generous spirit. Besides all of his and Laraines generous contributions to the arts, he always encouraged me with my work and he shared his love and profound knowledge of Japanese porcelains with me, letting me examine his treasured vases with a magnifying glass --each of us marveling over the beautifully intricate work. I will treasure those moments.*

Kathleen Frank Stafford - February 21, 2024 at 05:03 PM

LA

“*Leon was my inspiration for everything- he was loving, kind, brilliant and had the most generous spirit you will ever find. I will always love him. Always.*

larainelasdon - February 10, 2024 at 03:38 PM