

Kenneth E. Case

August 12, 1944 – December 4, 2024

Kenneth Case, 80, was born on August 12, 1944, in Oak Ridge, TN, to Richard and Vera Case, and passed away on December 4, 2024, in Houston, TX. He met his future wife, Lynn Curlee, at Tulsa, OK, Edison High School when he was a senior. They married in January 1966 while both were students at Oklahoma State University. He received his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and his master's and doctoral degrees in Industrial Engineering and Management (IEM), all from Oklahoma State University. After completing his Ph.D., Ken and Lynn moved to Blacksburg, VA, where he taught at Virginia Tech for five years. In 1975, they returned to OSU when Ken joined the faculty in the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology, (CEAT). Ken served as the department head for three years although his passion was teaching and mentoring students. Ken continued to stay in touch with many of his students throughout the years and took great pleasure in their accomplishments. Ken envisioned and developed the OSU Master of Science in Engineering degree, which was an online, first-of-its-kind program offered throughout the United States. Ken also consulted extensively. He was a fellow in and served as president of both the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers and the American Society for Quality, which resulted in his receiving the highest recognition in both organizations, the Wellington Award, Holzman Distinguished Educator Award, Gilbreth Industrial Engineering Award, and the Book-of-the-Year Award. The Gilbreth award is the pinnacle award of IISE and has been given to fewer than 50 people in 61 years. In addition, Ken was one of only three OSU faculty and 21 throughout Oklahoma with membership in the National Academy of Engineering. Ken was also an active member in the International Academy for Quality, to which only 100 quality experts belong. He also was very active in the awards program of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. In addition, he received the Distinguished Service Medal and the Eugene L. Grant Medal from ASQ, the Ralph R. Teetor Award from the Society of Manufacturing Engineering, in addition to others. In 1987, Ken was named the Outstanding Engineer in Oklahoma. He held five ASQ certifications and was a Six Sigma Black Belt. In 2003, Governor Brad Henry presented him with the Quality Oklahoma Award. In 2005, from the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, he received the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in College/University Teaching. In 2013, he was honored with the Melvin R. Lohmann Medal from CEAT and was inducted into the CEAT Hall of Fame in 2015. Ken was the recipient of more than 25 recognitions for teaching, including multiple awards from the National Technological University's Outstanding (Satellite) Teacher Award. Although Ken retired from OSU in 2005, he continued to consult and engaged with the OSU community and industry. He retired in August 2024 from the Board of Directors for Webco Industries, after serving for more than 29 years. Ken and Lynn have been strong supporters of Oklahoma State University in ways that impacted hundreds of IEM alumni and colleagues throughout the world. In 2022, they established the Ken and Lynn Case Scholarship for undergraduate students. In addition,

they also endowed the Ken and Lynn Case Endowed Chair in IEM. Ken was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Robert Case. He is survived by his wife, Lynn; daughter, Kristin Case (Nancy O'Neil), granddaughter Kaelyn; son, David (Tamera), and grandchildren, Rex, Savanna, and Frances.