
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

NEWS RELEASE

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NEW SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPROVED AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

FAIRFAX, VA., MARCH, 1985---The nation's first School of Information Technology and Engineering has been established at George Mason University with the approval of the University's Board of Visitors. Intended to bypass the conventional arrangements of old-line engineering schools, George Mason's newest academic unit is a direct response to the needs of high tech business and the information age.

The new school includes three departments--computer and information sciences, electrical and computer engineering, and systems engineering--established last year under the College of Arts and Sciences. The school offers the nation's first Ph.D. degree in information technology, master's degrees in computer sciences, information systems, electronics engineering, operations research and systems engineering, and two undergraduate degrees. The departments now serve over 1,600 students.

"This is a great step forward for the University and for the business and industrial community," says Earle Williams, president of BDM International, Inc. "In my view, none of the goals of our industry or of Virginia's economic development can be achieved without the steady development of George Mason as a special world-class educational institution."

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The development of George Mason's high tech and engineering programs is the result of a close partnership between the Northern Virginia business community and the University. Over \$500,000 has been contributed by local businesses to George Mason to support five endowed chairs for the new school. This funding has enabled the University to bring in such experts in high technology fields as John N. Warfield, former Burroughs Corporation senior executive and chairman of the Department of Electrical Engineering at the University of Virginia; Andrew P. Sage, former chairman of the University of Virginia's engineering science and systems department; Mervin E. Muller, former senior advisor and director of computer services at the World Bank; Edgar Sibley, former executive vice president of Alpha Omega Group and chairman of the University of Maryland's Department of Information Systems; and Dr. Gerald Cook, former chairman of Electrical and Biomedical Engineering at Vanderbilt University.

At George Mason, Warfield directs the Institute for Information Technology, George Mason's link with Virginia's Center for Innovative Technology (CIT); Sage is the First American Professor of Information Technology and serves as acting associate vice president for academic affairs; Muller is the George Mason Institute Professor of Computer and Information Sciences; Sibley is University Professor of Computer and Information Sciences and Cook is the Earle C. Williams Professor of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering.

"Only in Virginia could things come together this quickly," said University President George W. Johnson. "The close interaction of George Mason University and business, the establishment of CIT and encouragement of our engineering programs, the steady support of our political representatives--all of these have been essential ingredients in this dramatic build-up."