Earle C. Williams, chief executive officer of BDM International, Inc., received his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Auburn University. After graduation, he held positions with the U.S. Army, Standard Oil of Indiana, and Sandia Corporation before joining BDM, a McLean, Virginia-based company, in 1962. Mr. Williams became president of BDM in 1971. Under his leadership, the company's annual sales have skyrocketed from approximately $8 million in 1972 to more than $300 million today.

Mr. Williams has distinguished himself in the international technical arena and has demonstrated business acumen on a worldwide basis. His adroitness in the global business environment has been the key catalytic agent catapulting BDM to a preeminent position in the industry.

A member of the Auburn University Research Advisory Council since 1986, Mr. Williams has, along with his wife, generously contributed to programs in engineering and business at the university. He is known as someone who consistently proves to be as much a caring humanitarian as he is a successful professional, having worked diligently to support a multitude of professional and philanthropic organizations. In recommending Mr. Williams' inclusion in the Engineering Hall of Fame, former secretary of defense Frank C. Carlucci, who is now vice-chairman of the Carlyle Group in Washington, D.C., called him "an institution in BDM."

"Seldom has a company been fortunate enough to have a gifted member with the vision and stature that Earle Williams enjoyed," said Mr. Carlucci. "He guided the company through its years of extraordinary growth and difficult times. He was always sure-footed, knowledgeable, and committed.

He instilled a culture of quality long before that became fashionable," Mr. Carlucci continued. "As a result, BDM today enjoys a reputation as one of the premier companies, if not the premier company, in its industry. Earle is a rare combination of engineer, manager, visionary statesman, and community leader."

Other laudatory endorsements of Mr. Williams came from the leaders of major corporations such as Martin Marietta Corporation, Electronic Data Corporation, and Cincinnati Milacron; from the presidents of Auburn University and George Mason University; and from the chancellor of the University of Texas System.

Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a recent visiting scholar at the Brookings Institution, said Mr. Williams has been "a significant force in civic life in Virginia and Washington, D.C., and makes major contributions to regional, national, and international professional organizations. He thus enjoys an excellent reputation as an innovative and vigorous business executive in a leading-edge technical enterprise, as well as a person with genuine commitment to serve the broad public interest."

Mr. Williams was awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Auburn University in 1991.