



Memorial Tribute to

STEFAN ZUKOTYNSKI

Professor Emeritus

The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering

April 29, 2025

Be it resolved –

THAT the Council of the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering records with deep regret the death on February 8, 2025 of Professor Emeritus Stefan Zukotynski.

Stefan earned his PhD in Physics from the University of Warsaw in 1966. He joined The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, then known as the Department of Electrical Engineering, at the University of Toronto as an Assistant Professor in 1968. He rose through the ranks to become Professor, retiring in 2004. Throughout his career, Stefan was passionate about teaching and mentoring students, notably serving as Associate Chair, Undergraduate Studies from 1988 to 1993.

Stefan's research focused on the transport and optical properties of amorphous semiconductors and photovoltaic conversion. From 1970 to 2004, he led the University of Toronto's research group on hydrogenated amorphous semiconductors, authoring numerous papers and patents on the subject.

"Stefan and I worked closely together for over two decades on research projects on hydrogenated amorphous silicon," reflects John Perz, Emeritus Professor of Physics at the University of Toronto. "Stefan was ingenious in designing and implementing apparatus to produce, characterize and develop applications for this unique and important material, which is used today in many solar power devices."

Professor Ali Sheikholeslami shares, "I will always remember Stefan for his clear, articulate view of electronics. He instilled in me a view of electronics that I have cherished since I met him. In his words, 'Electronics is the art of controlling electrons for the purpose of information storage, information processing, and information communication.' I have been using this definition of electronics in all my electronic courses, and I remember him every time I repeat these words."

Stefan is remembered fondly by colleagues, students, and friends for his generosity, personable manner, and approachable nature. Professor Peter Herman recalls, "Stefan was a mentor, generous with his time, and exceptionally thoughtful—a true gentleman in every respect. His mind was brilliant, which he applied strategically to always beat me on the squash courts. His warming presence will be sorely missed!" Former graduate student, Professor Frankco Gaspari, warmly notes "Over the course of the years we became friends but even before that he was never my employer, but a true mentor and a brilliant scientist and engineer."

Professor Berj Bardakjian adds, "I remember with fondness his sharp wit, charm, and reassuring stances that he brought to our encounters."

"Stefan was a highly respected colleague, engineer and scholar," states Professor Glenn Gulak. "He had an unwavering commitment to our students and to promoting the engineering fundamentals that comprise the foundation of a distinguished department."

After retiring, Stefan continued his work as President and CEO of Torion Plasma Corporation and Sumo Software, Inc.

Stefan is survived by his daughter, Dr. Katherine Zukotynski, who is currently a professor at McMaster University. Professor Khoman Phang elaborates, "An academic family dynasty -- may Stefan's legacy live on through them."

Stefan Zukotynski was a pioneer in his field, and his passing will be deeply felt by all who knew him. His influence and kindness left a lasting impression on the students, faculty, and friends fortunate enough to have known him, and he will be dearly missed by our department.

Be it further resolved –

THAT this tribute to Professor Emeritus Stefan Zukotynski be inscribed in the minutes of this Council meeting, and that copies be sent to his family as an expression of the respect and gratitude of the members of this Council.

*Prepared by Professor Deepa Kundur, Chair of
The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering*