2026 CHAMPION OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION AWARD

Vern Campbell, DBA, P.Eng. (awarded posthumously)

Dr. Vern Campbell exemplified a lifelong commitment to learning and personal growth. After earning his Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology from Saskatchewan Polytechnic, he completed a B.Sc. degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Manitoba, followed by an MBA from the University of Western Ontario. In 2025, at a time when many might consider retirement, Vern returned to the classroom and earned a Doctorate in Business Administration from Montpellier Business School in France. His doctoral research, entitled "Industry 4.0 Applied to Low Volume High Variability Manufacturers: Critical Success Factors and Barriers to Adoption," focused on supporting Manitoba manufacturers and demonstrated his continued dedication to strengthening local industry through applied research and innovation.

Vern's professional career reflected both breadth and depth. Throughout his career, he contributed to organizations including Manitoba Hydro and Northern Blower. He earned his Master Black Belt in Lean/Six Sigma, established his own consulting practice, and became widely respected across Canada and beyond for his expertise in operational excellence and continuous improvement. In 2012, Vern joined the Price Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba as an Engineer-in-Residence, a role he held until his passing in March 2026.

Over more than 13 years at the University of Manitoba, Vern worked with hundreds of students and industry professionals through the Operational Excellence (OpEx) Program. His leadership, mentorship, and teaching helped build operational excellence capacity across a wide variety of Manitoba organizations. The impact of this work is reflected not only in measurable improvements within industry, but also in the confidence, skills, and professional growth of the many students and professionals he mentored.

Vern truly embodied what it means to be an educator. Deeply passionate about student success, he consistently went above and beyond to support learners, often making himself available during evenings and weekends to guide, encourage, and mentor students. He created learning experiences that were practical and meaningful, and he had a unique ability to connect theory to practice, inspiring students to see engineering not only as a technical profession, but as a way to improve systems, organizations, and people's lives. Where others saw problems, Vern saw opportunities for improvement, innovation, and efficiency gains. His optimism, curiosity, and generosity left a profound impression on colleagues, students, and industry partners alike, and his legacy will continue to live on through the many students, professionals, colleagues, and organizations he taught, mentored, and supported throughout his career.

In recognition of his leadership and lasting contribution to engineering education, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, together with the Price Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba, are pleased to posthumously present the 2026 Champion of Engineering Education Award to Vern Campbell, DBA, P.Eng.