

LSU professor Macari elected to National Academy in Mexico

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BATON ROUGE - Six days after LSU civil and environmental engineering professor Emir Macari was born in Mexico City, a major earthquake shook the city. His parents had just moved to Mexico City after attending LSU in the early to mid 1950's. Macari keeps a picture on his website of his father at Tiger stadium from his days at LSU.

This summer, Dr. Macari was inducted into the Academy of Engineering of Mexico. Macari will be a liaison between the Mexican and U.S. National Academies of Engineering.

"To me, it is a great honor," he said. "My father and mother, both attended LSU. They met and married here in Baton Rouge and my older sister was born here as well. Then they moved to Mexico, where I was born and I studied there through high school. It's also a great honor because I knew how proud my family would be." Election to the Academy requires a 90 percent positive vote.

But Macari has wasted little time with adjusting to this new honor. He's been in contact with Dr. William Wulf, president of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering, and will meet with the foreign secretary of U.S. NAE. His goal is to establish partnerships between the two academies, exchange ideas and researchers and possibly unite academies from countries through out Latin America.

All part of a day's work for a man whose research interests are in computational and experimental geomechanics. Macari returned to LSU last year from a detail in Washington, D.C. at the National Science Foundation where he was program director of the Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology. He also spent this past summer at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center as a faculty fellow, working with the Mechanics of Granular Materials team – a collaboration he's been a part of since the early 80s.

Macari received his Ph.D. in 1989 from the University of Colorado at Boulder where he worked with NASA's MGM project. In 1992, he received the Presidential Faculty Fellowship award from President George Bush for his NASA-related research. In 1996, Dr. Macari helped draft President Bill Clinton's science policy document, "Science in the National Interest" and was

quoted saying, ***“In conjunction with developing international partnerships the United States must lead the way in training engineers and scientists to meet the challenges of economic development in a global marketplace. We must begin to produce a new breed of engineers and scientists with a broadened view of technology and service to society.”*** From 1999-2001, Dr. Macari was the Chairman and Bingham C. Stewart Distinguished Professor in LSU’s Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

This past spring, Macari lectured in several cities in Mexico on topics ranging from geo-environmental engineering to virtual reality in education – he developed a virtual reality geotechnical engineering laboratory where students can actually conduct *“real-time and hands-on”* experiments and be able to set up a wide variety of *“what if”* scenarios that will lead them to a better understanding of soil behavior.



From left to right: Dr. Emir Jose Macari, Dr. Ki-Jun Lee, President of South Korean Academy of Engineering, Dr. William Wulf, President of U.S. National Academy of Engineering, and Dr. Raul Flores-Berrones, Secretary General of National Academy of Engineering of Mexico at the 2003 Academy of Engineering Congress in Mexico.

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