



Irvin Glassman

Professor Emeritus, Princeton University

In recognition of his profound impact on the application of combustion science and engineering to propulsion research and the successful development of propulsion systems.

Known affectionately by his colleagues as the “Grand Old Man of Combustion,” Glassman educated and inspired today’s aerospace engineers and scientists while making influential contributions to the fields of combustion and propulsion.

“If future historians were to write the impact of chemical propulsion and fundamental combustion on humanity in the second half of the 20th century, Professor Glassman would be the singular person who represents the coming of age of the discipline, particularly the robustness of combustion chemistry,” noted one nominator.

While Glassman’s contributions to the aerospace industry are clear, his ability to teach, advise and mentor students is truly outstanding. Glassman allowed students to learn from their mistakes and didn’t dictate what should be done and when it should be done. Instead, he gave students the chance to use their own creativity, knowing that a bad idea can often lead to the correct solution.

Glassman retired from Princeton in 1999 after 49 years, joining in 1950 as an assistant professor and achieving tenure in 1958. Promoted to full professor in 1964, Glassman was appointed as the Robert H. Goddard Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering in 1988. He was elected a Member of the National Academy of Engineering in 1996.

He is an AIAA Fellow and member of the New York Academy of Sciences and was elected Outstanding Educators in America. He was the advisor to numerous universities, NASA, the Army, NATO, ONR, NIST, the State of New Jersey, and many industries, most notably United Technologies Corporation where he chaired two of their Scientific Advisory Committees.