



"I feel very fortunate that the foundation for my run through life was the Naval Academy. Most important, it established a set of personal values. Receiving this award makes me all the more aware of the great debt I owe to the Naval Academy, my classmates and to the Navy, so I want to thank them all."

DR. BRADFORD PARKINSON '57

Growing up in Minnesota, Dr. Bradford Parkinson '57 was very active in the Boy Scouts, achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. He entered the Naval Academy with the Class of 1957, and upon graduating he accepted a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force. In 1961 he earned a master of science in aeronautics and astronautics at MIT, followed by a doctorate in aeronautics and astronautics at Stanford in 1966. In 1972, he became a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Naval War College.

Throughout two decades of service in the Air Force, Parkinson held a variety of positions, including U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School academic instructor and chief of the simulation division; was on the team of developers for the modern AC-130 Gunship and later was one of the first to deploy with the new aircraft. His military decorations include the Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medals and a Presidential Unit Citation.

In his final assignment in the Air Force, Parkinson directed the effort to develop the Global Positioning System (GPS), a worldwide satellite-based navigation system. He not only designed the system but also led the fight to gain Department of Defense approval. His program went above and beyond proving

the accuracy and capabilities of GPS and for this Parkinson was awarded the Defense Department Superior Performance Award as the best program director in the Air Force. Parkinson continues his pioneering work with GPS, which is now implemented by more than one billion users.

Upon retiring from the Air Force as a colonel in 1978, Parkinson held several positions in academia at Colorado State University and Stanford University, as well as multiple president and CEO positions in the private sector, including PlantStar and Trimble Navigation.

An appointed member of the Presidential Commission on Air Safety and Security by President Bill Clinton, he is a fellow of multiple societies and institutions and his work has also earned him numerous awards and commendations, including the Draper Prize of the NAE, sometimes called the Engineer's Nobel. The Naval Academy midshipmen-built satellite, ParkinsonSat, is named in his honor. He is also a member of the Naval Academy Foundation's Robert Means Thompson Society and the Superintendent's Society, as well as a lifetime member of the Naval Academy Alumni Association.

He and his wife, Virginia, live in San Luis Obispo, CA. Nearby in California are their six children: Leslie, Bradford II, Eric, Ian, Bruce and Jared.