

About Don L. Boyer

Don Lamar Boyer, a pioneer of physical modeling of rotating and stratified topographic flows, passed away in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 19, 2020. A visionary in and champion for geophysical and environmental fluid dynamics research, a dedicated mentor and a skilled administrator, he played an influential leadership role in the evolution of laboratory-based research in environmental flows.

Endowed Annual Lecture

In his honor, the Don L. Boyer Memorial Endowment for Excellence in Environmental Fluid Dynamics has been created to support groundbreaking, crucial lectures in the important fields of environmental prediction, risks, and sustainability. These lectures, emphasizing the fundamental dynamics of environmental flows in the spirit of the research of Don L. Boyer, will enliven the conversation around these topics in the college and beyond. This lecture will be supported annually in perpetuity by the fund.

The endowment was established by an initial gift from Dr. Dustin Boyer, Don's son. Donations to the fund can be made at [giveto.nd.edu](https://efmlab.nd.edu/don-l-boyer-memorial-endowment/).

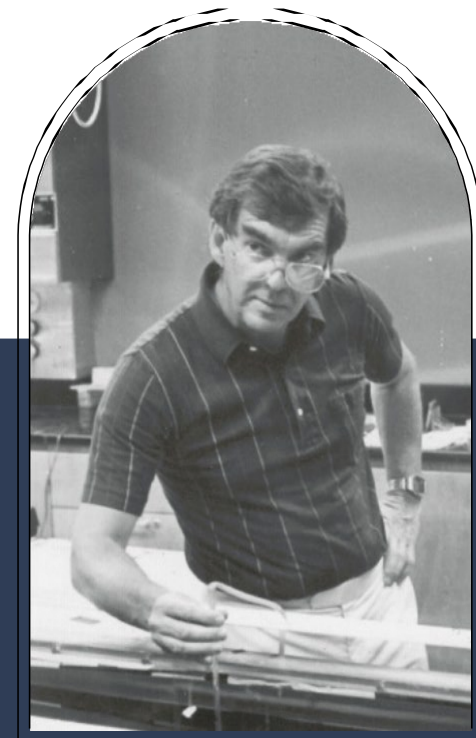
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ENGINEERING AT NOTRE DAME

Engineering at Notre Dame combines technical inquiry with a creative bent to develop innovations that can improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for all persons. Consistent with the University's Catholic mission and heritage, the College of Engineering's mission is founded on the principle that the creation and transfer of fundamental knowledge should reflect a profound and complete respect for the dignity of all persons and for the greater common good of humanity. The Don L. Boyer Memorial Endowment supports faculty, students, and the scientific community at large in the pursuit of achieving the educational mission and outreach of the University.

DON L. BOYER

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE in Environmental Fluid Mechanics



Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Lecture 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Lunch Reception 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Eck Visitors Center Auditorium

Admiral Paul Gaffney, NAE



Admiral Paul Gaffney, NAE
United States Navy, Rtd.
Naval Oceanography Hall of Fame Inductee
Former President of the National
Defense University & Former
President of the Monmouth University

American Achievements in Understanding the Natural Marine Environment

BIOGRAPHY

Paul Gaffney is president *emeritus* of Monmouth University. He is a retired U.S. Navy vice admiral having served as president of the National Defense University, chief of naval research, commander of the Navy's operational meteorology and oceanography program and commanding officer of the Naval Research Laboratory. His naval career spanned over three decades, including duty in combat, at sea, overseas, and ashore. He held six command positions. Appointed by the President to the U.S. Ocean Policy Commission, he served during its full tenure. He chaired the federal Ocean Research Advisory Panel and was the first chair of the federal Ocean Exploration Advisory Board. He has chaired four studies for the National Academies. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy; earned a Masters in ocean engineering from the Catholic University of America, where he is honored on its engineering "Wall of Fame"; attended the Naval War College, graduating with highest distinction; and holds an MBA from Jacksonville University. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering. Gaffney currently serves as a counsellor to the Dean of Engineering and Computing at the University of South Carolina. Honorary doctorates were presented to him by the University of South Carolina, the Catholic University of America, and Jacksonville University. The basketball court at Monmouth University bears his name as does an oceanic ridge in the South China Sea. He and his wife of 51 years reside in Columbia, SC.

ABSTRACT

There is some important history that led to American achievements in understanding the natural marine environment. Some, even the most basic of research advances, came from a national security need ... or maybe a vision. I will recount a couple. They form the foundation of my career and my viewpoints. They may be important again at this time. There is a natural, albeit bureaucratic, separation between researchers and operators; from those who think about the new and those carrying out the routine. In oceanography, I don't see separation. Rather, one reinforces the other. On that too you will hear my opinion. Finally, it will be important to present a few emerging, unsolved ocean-related challenges from diverse environments that the scientific and policy audience may face. I will try to avoid the topic of climate variability!