



In Memoriam – Professor Milton A. Jenkins

It is with great sadness that we learned that Professor Milton A. Jenkins passed away in Annapolis, Maryland on August 16, 2012. A graduate of the Information Systems Program at the University of Minnesota, he spent most of his academic carrier with the University of Baltimore, where he served as Director

of the Information Systems Research Center, Department of Management Information Systems.

Milton Jenkins developed numerous international contacts around the world, including in Slovenia. Many successful and beneficial contacts and friendly relations were established during his frequent visits to Slovenia and with Slovenians visiting the US. He is very well known to numerous educators and students, as well as to the IT community and companies in Slovenia.

Professor Jenkins came to Slovenia for the first time in spring 1978 as a visiting scholar of the University of Indiana. The visit was organized in a frame of a long-term US exchange program between the business schools in the US and Yugoslavia. For example, in Slovenia, the Faculty of Economics of the University of Ljubljana was connected with the School of Business of the University of Indiana.

From the early beginning of Professor Jenkins' visits to Slovenia, he engaged in various activities of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences of the University of Maribor. He was named a visiting professor, teaching a graduate course Research in Information Systems for many years; he was offering annual half-day seminars on latest development in information systems (IS) to a business community of the Gorenjska region. Since the third Bled eConference in 1990, he had served on the program committee of the conference and a speaker. Personally, he was very much engaged in the pre-conference two-day Doctoral Consortium organized in Otočec for several years in cooperation with the Ministry of Science of the Republic of Slovenia. The consortium was very special and most probably the first of the kind in the world, bringing together graduate students interested in eCommerce and Inter-Organizational Systems. The consortia were hosted by the Krka Pharmaceuticals company of Novo mesto. Nowadays, numerous IS professor all over the world have in their cabinets a "Krka Fellow" plaque, respectively a "Krka Scholar" plaque those having engaged in the Doctoral Consortia as mentors. The Krka Doctoral Consortia of which Professor Jenkins was the spiritus agens have contributed much to forming the Bled eCommerce community, which was very well echoed in research and action globally.

At the University of Baltimore, Professor Jenkins created and operated the IS Professors Development summer school in the mid-1990s, in cooperation with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The summer school was an advanced training program in information systems, a follow-up of a three-week basic summer school conducted by the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. For several years, already established university professors in various disciplines having interest in IS research spent three weeks in a very intensive program in Baltimore. After returning home with a box of some forty IS books provided by the publishers, many of them began teaching IS courses. Several IS professors in Slovenia have enjoyed a privilege of being invited to the Summer School program on the University of Baltimore campus based on a grant provided by Professor Jenkins.

Professor Jenkins was instrumental in opening opportunities to several IS scholars in Slovenia to teach as visiting professors for one semester at Indiana or Baltimore. With encouragement, assistance in the administrative processes, and by providing his advice and support, Professor Jenkins helped many to start teaching in the US. The hospitality of his family in opening their home to many visitors coming from Slovenia is much appreciated.

In Slovenia, we owe a particular thanks to Professor Jenkins for his contribution to our understanding of a prototype methodology and its application in teaching and research. His seminars on prototyping in Slovenia in the early 1990s and the students' projects in his IS Research class contributed to not only understanding the methodology but also to an acceptance of a new information systems development culture.

His constant message was: "For a user, it is much easier to tell what she/he does not like in an operational prototype than to explain what the application that she/he wants is". His encouragement and assistance were helpful not only in students' projects being implemented in teaching and research in Slovenia but also in numerous e-solutions being practically implemented in Slovenian organizations. They were initiated as a simplified prototypes as a part of the student's project. Due to intensive prototype development and practical implementation in business and government organizations, the eCenter of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences was invited to join the Living Labs community (nowadays the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL)) in a "first wave" in November 2006.

For his contributions to teaching and research, Professor Jenkins was awarded by the Faculty of Organizational Sciences and named Honorary Senator of the University of Maribor in 2000.

We miss Milt, our good colleague and friend!

*Jože Gričar,
Professor Emeritus, University of Maribor*