

THE UNIVERSITY RECORD ONLINE

For Faculty and Staff of the University

Updated 2:00 PM November 8, 2006

Obituary

Bernard Galler

Bernard (Bernie) Galler, professor emeritus of electrical engineering and computer science, [College of Engineering](#), died in Ann Arbor on Sept. 4, 2006. He was 77.

A native of Chicago, Galler received two bachelor's degrees—one in mathematics and one in liberal arts—from the University of Chicago. He earned a master's degree in mathematics in 1949 from the University of California, Los Angeles. In 1955, after receiving his doctoral degree in mathematics from the University of Chicago, he joined U-M as an instructor in the Department of Mathematics. He was promoted to assistant professor in 1959, associate professor in 1962 and professor in 1966. He retired from the University in 1994.

Galler is recognized as a pioneer in computer science and helped shape this emerging discipline at U-M. In the early 1960s he was active in developing the new communication science program, and in 1966 he became associate director of the Computing Center. His association with the center continued through 1991, spanning a period of tremendous growth and change in computer science and computing services.

Galler became a charter member of the new Department of Computer and Communication Sciences (CCS) in 1966 and headed the department 1973-75. The Department of Computer and Communication Sciences was one of the first of its kind in the country, and Galler was influential in the development of its software and mathematics curriculum.

In 1984 he was instrumental in negotiating the merger of CCS with the Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Department and the engineering program in Computer, Information and Control Engineering (CICE). This merger formed what is now the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) Department at the University.

Galler was noted for his vital service to the wider U-M community, serving on many Universitywide committees and task forces over the years, including as associate dean for long-range planning in [LSA](#) 1975-79. In addition to the time he devoted to administrative responsibilities and graduate student education and mentoring, he served as an undergraduate counselor for the computer science degree program for many years.

At the national level, Galler served as an officer of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) from its earliest days, including as president 1968-70. In 1980 ACM awarded him its Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to the field. Galler was a member of many other national boards and committees and was recognized by peers throughout his career with numerous awards and honors.

In recent years he was instrumental in developing a national record of the history of computing. He also founded the IEEE Annals of the History of Computing journal and founded the Software Patent Institute.

Known for his deep appreciation of music, Galler enjoyed playing the violin. Eight years ago he co-founded the Ypsilanti Youth Orchestra, helping others discover the joy of music by providing a full orchestra experience for middle and high school students who otherwise might not have access to such an opportunity. He also was a major fund-raiser for the orchestra.

"Bernie deeply touched and inspired many, both here at the University and more broadly," says Avi Rubin, professor of computer sciences at Johns Hopkins University who earned bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees at U-M. "He was an exceptional individual on many levels.

"The world has lost one of the truly great and remarkable people. Exceptionally talented, and infinitely giving. Such people come along once in a lifetime."

—Submitted by Stacie Printon

Copyright 2006 [The Regents of the University of Michigan](#)
Ann Arbor, MI 48109 USA 1-734-764-1817