PSU, Naming of the College of Engineering and Computer Science

Portland State University seeks Board approval of the naming of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Portland State University to the Fariborz Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science. Additionally, PSU seeks Board approval of the naming of the auditorium in the Northwest Center for Engineering, Science and Technology, when completed, as the Maseeh Auditorium. The Board’s Internal Management Directive 1.305(2) specifies “Institution presidents shall have authority to name schools and colleges, provided that the Board shall approve the naming of a school or college after a living person.”

Background
At a public ceremony on Thursday, March 18, 2004, it was announced that Dr. Fariborz Maseeh, founder and president of The Massiah Foundation, was making the largest gift in Portland State University’s history—$8 million from the Foundation to the College of Engineering and Computer Science—and that the College would, upon Board of Higher Education approval, become the Fariborz Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science.

Dr. Maseeh, a first-generation immigrant born in Iran, received both his B.S. in Structural Engineering and M.S. in Mathematics from PSU before earning a doctorate of science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1990. Maseeh is an internationally known expert in the field of micro-technology (also known as MEMS) and is the founder and former president and chief executive officer of IntelliSense Corporation, based in Wilmington, Massachusetts.

IntelliSense was founded by Maseeh in 1991 with the vision of reducing the time and expense of creating next-generation micro-electro-mechanical systems (MEMS) devices. Under his leadership, IntelliSense successfully began the first custom design, development, and manufacturing MEMS operation and became the world’s fastest-growing MEMS corporation, twice named to both The New England Technology Fast 50 and The Forbes Fast 50. In 2000, IntelliSense was acquired by Corning, Inc., after which Maseeh founded an investment management firm located in Southern California.

Maseeh has published numerous scientific articles on topics such as business strategy, fabrication technologies and design, and software for MEMS, in addition to securing a number of patents and trademarks. He currently serves on the boards of several technology firms, engineering schools—including the University of California at Irvine and the University of Southern California—and non-profit organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club of Boston and the Children’s Hospital of Orange County Foundation for Children.

The $8 million gift includes funding for the following:
- $6 million to support the construction of a new 130,000 square-foot tower and the continued refurbishment of the Fourth Avenue Building (1900 S.W. Fourth...
Avenue) that together will be known as the Northwest Center for Engineering, Science and Technology;

- $1 million to establish two professorships, one to be known as the Maseeh Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the other Maseeh professorship will be in an unnamed area of emerging technology within the College;
- $500,000, along with matching funding from Portland State, to establish five student fellowships; and
- $500,000 to endow a fund for the dean of the College. The endowment of the deanship will be known as the H. Chik M. Erzurumlu Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science. Dr. Erzurumlu is the founding dean of the College, established in 1982 at Portland State as the School of Engineering and Applied Science.

The Massiah Foundation was established and funded by Fariborz Maseeh as a platform for charitable contributions. The Foundation’s mission is to make significant improvements in education, health, arts, literature, and science.

Staff Recommendation to the Board
Staff recommends Board approval of the naming of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Portland State University to the Fariborz Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science. In addition, staff recommends naming of the auditorium in the Northwest Center for Engineering, Science and Technology, when completed, as the Maseeh Auditorium.

(Board action required.)