

The engineering community mourns the loss of one of its most notable members, Anwar E.Z. Wissa, ScD, PE. Dr. Wissa was the epitome of a working Principal. As President and CEO of Ardaman & Associates Inc., from 1973 until his recent passing, Dr. Wissa held the overall management responsibility for a 400 to 500 person geotechnical and environmental engineering consulting company with offices throughout Florida and Louisiana. Dr. Wissa provided critical technical insights and management expertise on numerous major projects involving phosphogypsum stack systems, earthen dams and impermeable synthetic and natural liners.

Dr. Wissa was involved with over 95% of the designed phosphogypsum disposal stacks in the world, located on six continents. He was also involved with over 100 tailings dams throughout North America.

Dr. Wissa had graduated with engineering honors from Oxford University from where he also received a Masters of Art degree. He then went on to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he was awarded a Doctor of Science Degree in civil engineering. He was a true educator and researcher, having served on the faculty of MIT for many years. But beyond his formal teaching experience, Dr. Wissa was always ready to share his expertise with his colleagues in the engineering community, and he routinely accepted invitations to lecture internationally at seminars, technical conferences and at major universities in the U.S. and worldwide.

He extended the state-of-the-art in geotechnical engineering by making very unique contributions in the field of instrumentation, and through the development of the first fully instrumented geotechnical laboratory data acquisition system, and he was the inventor of specialized testing devices including the Piezometer Probe, Piezocone and Constant Rate of Strain Consolidation Test. These have become standard methods of the profession for evaluating soils in the field and laboratory.

Dr. Wissa also voluntarily served his profession and his community. He assisted the state of Florida in rewriting its rule on earthen dams for the phosphate mining and fertilizer processing industry, which have been in effect since 1972. Dr. Wissa served on several other Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) technical advisory committees and boards and helped the state in its rule promulgation. He was appointed by the Governor to represent the state of Florida on the Board of Consultants that investigated the Florida Power and Light Martin County dam breach and was a member of a FDEP committee that drafted general dam safety rules for potential implementation by the state. Dr. Wissa served on the technical advisory group that helped the FDEP revise the Solid Waste Management Facilities rule which was promulgated in 1994 and on the Technical Advisory Forum that re-evaluated Chapter 62-672 in light of the 1994 Payne Creek and Hopewell settling area dike breaches.

A true renaissance man and a visionary, Dr. Wissa was fluent in several languages and was as comfortable in the opera house as he was on a landfill site.

Dr. Wissa's career was marked by a passion towards technical excellence and uncompromised professionalism. What was his passion now becomes his legacy.