Michael W. ’85 and Lauren Michele Jones Endowed Scholarship

Michael W. ’85 and Lauren Michele Jones had considered making a commitment to establish an endowment at Cornell Engineering for several years.

Cornell Engineering was a complete game-changer for me. I literally had no idea what was ahead of me when I left Hampton, VA in 1981 and walked onto the Cornell campus for the very first time—in truth, I’m not sure I really understood the significance of Cornell on the world stage. As I reflect, the academic rigor of the chemical engineering program coupled with the commitment of playing varsity football was both the single greatest challenge and windfall of my life. When I graduated Cornell Engineering, I did so knowing I was well prepared for life and the road ahead. My career has been constantly fueled by the lessons learned in the classrooms of Olin Hall and on the field at Schoellkopf and driven by the intellectual curiosity instilled in a young engineer’s mind to always ask ‘why’. I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to attend such a great academic institution and contribute to the collective excellence that endures in the quality of students, professors and the Institution.

- Michael W. Jones ’85

In late 2016, Michael and Lauren established an endowment for Cornell’s College of Engineering to support students from Michael’s home region of Tidewater, Virginia, an area that encompasses the coastal communities of Hampton, Newport News, Williamsburg, Norfolk and Virginia Beach. It was important to focus on this area of Virginia because of Michael’s family roots as well as his commitment to increase the affinity for the Big Red from the region. Moreover, it was important to Michael and Lauren that they enable any, and all qualified students to attend Cornell Engineering by eliminating the financial burden of attending Cornell Engineering. This is their way of giving back—to secure a student’s ability to attend Cornell and join the next generation of engineers willing and able to change the world.
Michael W. Jones ’85 graduated from Cornell University with a degree in Chemical Engineering and received an M.B.A. from New York University’s Stern School of business in 1991. In between classes, labs, and work, Michael was a letterman and linebacker on Big Red’s varsity football team. Lauren Michele Jones graduated from Columbia University with dual degrees, one in Economics and a second in Mechanical Engineering. Ms. Jones also has an M.B.A. from Harvard University. They met while working for Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., in New York City where they both had extensive and successful careers providing strategic insight to Aerospace, Defense and Industrial clients.

Mr. Jones retired from BAH after 23 years, as a Partner and Executive Vice President, after having had the opportunity to start and lead several successful strategy practices/business units. He spent the last six years leading BAH’s re-entry into the international market by launching and scaling the strategy and analytics businesses into both the Middle East & North Africa region as well as the South-East Asia region.

Today, Mr. Jones is Managing Director of MW Jones & Co. a strategy consulting, advanced analytics and investment company that creates shareholder value in the Aerospace, Defense and Industrials marketspace.

Michael and Lauren return to Cornell when they are not busy with work, family life and travel and always look forward to CU gatherings to reunite with close friends, whether at 5-year reunions or Big Red Football, Lacrosse and Hockey games.