



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

**Richard (Rick) D. Relyea, P.E.**  
*Distinguished Mechanical Engineer, 2008*

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1970  
MBA, The University of Texas at Austin, 1983

*General Partner*  
Relyea Partnerships, LLC

Mr. Richard “Rick” Relyea is a 2008 recipient of the Mechanical Engineering Academy of Distinguished Alumni Distinguished Mechanical Engineer Award. Mr. Relyea has been a business leader in the Austin community for more than four decades. He served as a member of the External Advising Committee for the Department of Mechanical Engineering from 2001-2004. Mr. Relyea was one of the initial donors and supporters of ME Operation Phoenix, UT’s 6-year renovation program bringing UT’s world-class department much needed facility improvements.

After earning his BSME, Mr. Relyea worked for ten years in the oil and oil drilling support industries, where he had the opportunity to live in many parts of the world (Africa, Asia, South America and Canada). This is where he authored and was awarded his first patent for Blow Out Preventer Controls. He was also a lecturer on oilfield tools and products in China.

Mr. Relyea was the chief engineer on three offshore drilling vessel construction contracts. His first project was a 300-foot Jackup drilling rig designed for the Gulf Coast. The second rig, where he served as the chief engineer during construction, was a semi-submersible rig built for worldwide use. His last project was a drillship named Taineron that was built and fitted while Mr. Relyea lived in Hong Kong. This drillship is currently drilling off the coast of Vietnam and the Philippines.

In 1981, Mr. Relyea returned to UT Austin and in 1983 graduated with an MBA. From this point on, he was an entrepreneur. He started a company and earned a patent for “virtual” reality in motivational exercise equipment. He also began consulting with and assisting companies in financial trouble. In 1987, he started Educare Community Living Corporation of America, a business primarily serving people with mental retardation and foster children. The company grew to 3300 employees and over \$50 million in revenue. Educare was named to the INC 500 for three consecutive years, achieving the ranking of number 15 in 1995. Educare was sold to a publicly held company in 1997. Educare still operates coast to coast under its original name.

Since 1998, Rick has worked as an investor in startup companies. He is an ex-officio member of a homeless shelter in Austin, serving the underprivileged. He is a founding member of The Rise School of Austin, and has had a long-term affiliation with UT. He and his wife, Miriam (who serves on the Director’s Council of UT’s Theatre and Dance Department), have provided multiple need-based scholarships to academically qualified students through UT’s Ex-Student’s Association, the Texas Exes. Rick is also a member of The University of Texas Alumni Longhorn Band.