



## Note from the Editor-in-Chief

We are publishing the following appreciation from their colleagues to commemorate the lives of Professor Liviu Librescu and Professor Kevin Granata, who were killed in the shootings at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, USA on 16 April 2007. The editorial team wishes to record that both were valued reviewers, and Professor Librescu had recently accepted appointment as a member of the JSV Editorial Board.

### **In memory of Professor Liviu Librescu, 1930–2007**

Professor Librescu died as he lived, devoted to his students and to his profession. Professor Librescu loved his position as professor. A prolific researcher and wonderful teacher, he devoted himself to the profession, solely for the love of it. His son, Joe, says it best: “He was a scientist who did not work for money, but for the pleasure he got from his occupation.” Always available for students, a caring teacher and devoted advisor to graduate student researchers, his last act was to sacrifice himself to save the students in his classroom. He blocked the door and ordered his students out the window. He saved all but one of the 23 students in his class.

Professor Librescu survived the Holocaust and earned his Ph.D. in the Academy of Sciences in Romania (1969), where he rose to academic prominence. True to his beliefs, he emigrated to Israel from Romania during the communist regime with the help of the Prime Minister (then Menachem Begin). Fortunately for us at Virginia Tech, he chose to spend his sabbatical (1985) in our Engineering Science and Mechanics Department, where he stayed and continued his research in aeroelasticity, thermal stresses and in composites. He recently published a book (*Thin-Walled Composite Beams: Theory and Application*, with O. Song, Springer, 2005) and has published more journal articles and conference papers than anyone else in the field.

He was a devoted colleague. He was always ready to talk about research with anyone; he was always available to students. His attitude towards the profession was total devotion to knowledge. He would help anyone. Most of us will remember him as the most polite person we have ever known, always having a kind word to say, always thoughtful. He was selfless to the end.

We will miss him greatly.

*his colleagues and friends from Virginia Tech*

**In Memory of Professor Kevin Granata, 1962–2007**

Professor Kevin Granata was a man with a sharp intellect who answered a call to serve the cause of scholarship and higher education. He died protecting students after he shepherded them into his office in order to safeguard them, and after he went to investigate and intervene.

Professor Granata was born and raised in Toledo, Ohio and received his undergraduate degrees from the Ohio State University in Electrical Engineering and Physics. He later earned his Master's degree in Physics from the Purdue University. Thereafter, he worked in the Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland. He received his doctoral degree in Biomedical Engineering from the Ohio State University and then worked in the Department of Orthopedics at the University of Virginia, where he was the Director of the Gait Laboratory.

Professor Granata's international research profile was recognized through service as a reviewer for the *Journal of Sound and Vibration*. He developed innovative methods to quantify low back stability that are considered cutting edge by other leaders in the field. He also served as mentor for numerous students and junior professors. When Dr. Granata was promoted to the rank of professor, a colleague testified "Countless times he has provided me with valuable guidance on research-related matters such as student advising, experimental issues, and manuscript preparation."

Leaders in the field of biomechanics referred to "often finding themselves quoting from Dr. Granata's papers", and described him as "among the top five biomechanics researchers in the country working on movement dynamics in cerebral palsy", "nationally recognized for his research", and "an internationally outstanding scholar and educator".

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*his colleagues and friends from Virginia Tech*