



The Goal

- » **Support** outstanding first-year graduate students, regardless of financial need.
- » **Help launch** the next generation of leaders in information and decision systems.
- » **Honor the legacy** of an extraordinary teacher and mentor.

Inside The Michael Athans Fellowship Fund

SUPPORTING FIRST-YEAR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

The impact and influence that Michael Athans has had on theory and practice in systems and control, on the promotion of the field through his service and research activities, and on education and mentoring, is profound. All in this broad domain—both in academia and industry—owe Michael a great debt. With this history in mind, the Michael Athans Fellowship Fund has been established to honor him.

Michael's accomplishments are so many and so influential that a complete listing is not possible, but here are some highlights:

- Michael helped spearhead the development of what was then called *modern control*, and with P.L. Falb co-authored the classic text, *Optimal Control*, which served as the launching point for generations of students.
- He produced nearly 70 videotaped lessons on modern control that were critical to the training of hundreds of practicing engineers.
- He was the first recipient of the prestigious Donald P. Eckman Award, given to the outstanding young control researcher under the age of 30 by the American Automatic Control Council. This was followed by many more honors, including the R.E. Bellman Award.

Giving Opportunities

» **Support for the Michael Athans Fellowship Fund** is welcome at any level. Our goal is to award the inaugural Athans Fellowship to a first-year student for the 2014-15 academic year. To date, alumni and friends have contributed more than two-thirds of the \$500,000 needed to support an annual, one-term fellowship in perpetuity. In the longer term, we hope to increase the endowment to \$1 million, to provide a full (two-term) fellowship each year.

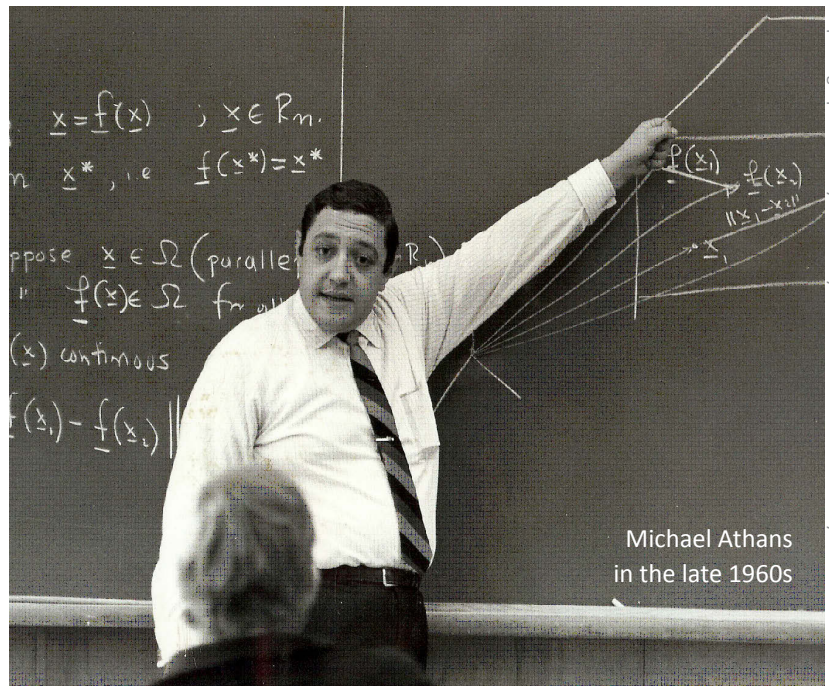
For More Information

» **Ralph V. Scala**

Assistant Dean of Engineering for Development
rscala@mit.edu
617.324.8500

» **Alan Willsky**

Edwin Sibley Webster
Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and Director, Laboratory for Information and Decision Systems
willsky@mit.edu
617.253.2356



All photographs courtesy Laboratory for Information and Decision Systems.

- Michael led the charge in academia in advanced applications of emerging methods in modern control. That experience led to his initiating, with students and colleagues, the field of robust control, which has turned the theory of modern control into today's powerful methods for the practical design of control systems.
- He demonstrated his intellectual and professional leadership once again in heading and renaming MIT's Laboratory for Information and Decision Systems (LIDS). His instincts for being at least one step ahead of the crowd—in this case seeing the future needs for adapting control methods to large-scale systems and for blending ideas from communication, networks, optimization and control to tackle large problems of profound importance—are still impressive. The course he set is still active today.
- Together with several colleagues, Michael co-founded and for many years served as chairman of the board at Alphatech (now BAE Systems Advanced Information Technologies), a company that remains known both for its cutting-edge research and development, and for its ability to deliver information and decision systems of the highest quality.
- And of course, Michael has educated – mentoring and supervising the theses of more than 100 graduate students who have gone on to distinguished careers in industry and academia – and has influenced the thinking of many, many more.

In short, Michael Athans has been a remarkable leader in the field of control and, more broadly, information and decision systems. The Michael Athans Fellowship recognizes and honors Michael's many contributions by providing support for new generations of professionals as they begin their graduate education. We hope that you will join in honoring Michael and, at the same time, contributing to the future of the disciplines to which he has devoted his professional life.