



**Human  
Factors  
and  
Ergonomics  
Society**

## FELLOW PROFILE

**Name:** **Kenneth Ronald  
Laughery, Jr. (Ron)**

**Degrees, certifications,  
etc.:** BS, MS, and PhD in  
Industrial and Systems  
Engineering from the State  
University of New York at  
Buffalo. PhD received in  
1982

**Current status:** Retired



### **Biography (How you got involved in the field, your major career activities and milestones):**

My dad has a long history in the field of human factors and ergonomics and I worked for him during several summers in high school. In addition to this experience piquing my interest in human factors, I also worked with computers and in developing rudimentary simulations, all of which played significantly later in my career.

After completing my BS and while working on my PhD, I took a full-time job working in the field with an aerospace company. Most of my early experience was in the area of simulation, both for training and for analysis. In 1984, at the age of 30, I launched off on my own and created Micro Analysis and Design, Inc. which I ran for 23 years. During this period, I worked on a wide variety of projects for government and industry, largely centered on the integration of the fields of operations research (primary computer modeling and simulation) and human factors. Along the way, I was part of a great team of individuals that did, I believe, some pioneering work in modeling human performance that ran the spectrum from basic research to applied systems engineering. Eventually, the company grew to over 100 people and had in excess of \$27M in sales. In 2006, the company was sold to Alion Science and Technology at which point I was transitioned to the job of Chief Scientist. I retained this role until 2008 when I retired.

### **Employment History (List top 5 positions):**

Chief Scientist, Alion Science and Technology from 2006 to January 2008

President, Micro Analysis and Design from 1982 to 2006

Senior Systems Engineer, Calspan Corporation from 1975 to 1984.

**What were your significant contributions to the field?**

Advancing the state of the art in human performance modeling, as is best known in the set of modeling tools linked to our commercial modeling and simulation product, Micro Saint.

Through the development and use of engineering-based tools aimed at addressing the human component of systems, we were able to address human factors issues in a timely and cost-effective manner. This almost universally elevated the relevance of human factors and ergonomics to real-world design teams as well as enhancing the influence of human factors input. The net result of this approach was that human factors input was almost always welcomed as part of the systems engineering process.

**Did you receive any notable awards or recognition during your career?**

HFES Jack Kraft Innovator award

MANPRINT Foundations Award

**What advice would you give someone considering HF/E as a profession?**

Relevance is far more important than scientific purity. Think engineering.