

Lorenzo M. Smith, Ph.D.



Dr. Lorenzo M. Smith graduated from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, in 1991, earning his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. Soon afterward, he accepted a full-time engineering position at Ford Motor Company where he primarily engaged in research and development in the fasteners engineering section. While a full time employee at Ford Motor Company, he worked on his M.S. in Mechanical Engineering at Wayne State University, graduating in 1993. Following his long-term plan, Dr. Smith left Ford Motor Company to pursue a Ph.D. in Engineering Mechanics at Michigan State University. After completing all required course work by 1996, Dr. Smith accepted a sheet metal formability analyst position at General Motors Corporation. While at General Motors, Dr. Smith completed his dissertation titled “Solid Finite Elements for Sheet Metal Forming Simulation” and graduated from Michigan State University, earning his Ph.D. in 1999.

Dr. Smith joined Oakland University’s Mechanical Engineering Department as a tenure-track, assistant professor in 2000, and in 2006 was appointed to a tenured associate professor rank, earning two teaching awards along the way. From 2006 – 2010, Dr. Smith continued as a teacher-scholar in the Mechanical Engineering Department. Dr. Smith next served as associate dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science at Oakland University from 2010 – 2014, earning a full professor rank along the way.

Dr. Smith’s main research has been in the field of sheet metal experimental mechanics. Most of his recent work revolved around the design of laboratory tooling to be used for evaluating forming limits, surface distortion, and draw bead behavior for sheet metal. As a research scholar, Dr. Smith contributed 57 publications and secured \$3.5M as sole-PI (\$5M if co-PI is included) from funding sources such as Pacific Northwest National Labs, Ford Motor Company and Chrysler Group LLC. He graduated seven Ph.D. students, two of whom now are full-time professors. Dr. Smith served as co-chair for the 2005 NUMISHEET Conference, an international technical conference typically hosting 200 – 300 participants. He served on the International Scientific Review Committee for NUMISHEET, and has maintained a leadership role, most recently as secretary and regional program director, for the North American Deep Drawing Research Group. Dr. Smith’s new research field, “green technologies” for consumer households, is funded by both the California Energy Commission and the U.S. Army.

With respect to pre-college programs, Dr. Smith served on the board of directors of DAPCEP, one of the nation’s premier non-profit organizations for promoting STEM careers for under-represented pre-college students. Additionally, he played a leadership role in developing and delivering curriculum for pre-college students over the course of many years. Complimenting his contributions to pre-college programs, he also provided leadership in the area of undergraduate student success. He was, for example, director of the Chrysler Learning and Innovation Center (CLIC-form), a highly successful, undergraduate engineering student, work-ready program that was financed through his fund raising efforts. In addition to his pre-college and undergraduate programs, Dr. Smith provided leadership in the area of graduate education. As coordinator of four Ph.D. programs and co-manager nine M.S. programs, he lead faculty in the affairs of program policy. Toward the conclusion of his time at Oakland University, Dr. Smith played a central role in advancing dialogue with regard to an agreement with Polytecnico di Torino (Italy), FIAT Automotive and Chrysler in order to establish a joint master’s program.

Now, as Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at California State University – Sacramento, Dr. Smith is working with his faculty on 1) executing their revised strategic plan, 2) developing stronger relationships with local industry, and securing additional resources for his college, all in close consultation with the faculty. Coming to the state of California with him are his wife, Angela, and his two sons, Lorenzo II and Giovanni.