

## **Walter D. Downing, Jr., P.E.**

Walt Downing is the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Southwest Research Institute (SwRI®) in San Antonio, Texas. SwRI was organized in 1947 by founder Tom Slick as an independent, not-for-profit organization to conduct contract scientific research and to develop innovative technologies for the betterment of humankind. It has grown to be one of the world's premier research and development organizations for advanced science and applied technology.



Mr. Downing joined SwRI in 1979 as an electrical engineer. In 1981 he was promoted to Manager of Instrumentation and Control Systems. He developed and expanded his technical program into a department in 1988 and a division in 1994 when he was appointed Vice President of Aerospace Electronics and Training Systems. Mr. Downing has served as Executive Vice President since 1998 and was named Chief Operating Officer in 2016. He is also a member of the SwRI Board of Directors, the Board of Directors of Signature Science, LLC (an SwRI wholly-owned subsidiary based in Austin, Texas), and the Board of Directors of Southwest Automotive Research Center (an SwRI joint venture in Tianjin, China).

Mr. Downing is active in a variety of city, regional and national organizations. He is on the industry advisory boards for the College of Engineering and the College of Business at the University of Texas at San Antonio. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's University and serves as chairman of the Audit and Ethics Committee. He is a member of the Boards of Directors of two San Antonio economic development organizations including the Free Trade Alliance San Antonio and BioMed SA, serving as the chair of the latter organization. He is a life senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) and is an ABET evaluator for college electrical engineering programs. He also serves on the Boards of Governors of the IEEE Systems Council and the Aerospace and Electronic Systems Society (AESS) as vice president of technical operations of both groups and chairs the IEEE Central Texas Section Joint Chapter of the Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society and AESS.

Mr. Downing is a graduate of Southern Methodist University (BSEE), the University of Texas at San Antonio (MBA), and has executive certificates in management and leadership from the University of Texas at Austin and MIT Sloan School of Management. He is a registered professional engineer in the states of Texas and Florida. He and his wife Sharon are natives of San Antonio and have three children and three grandchildren all living in the greater San Antonio area.