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John D.C. Little honored with Buck Weaver Award for outstanding contributions to marketing

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John D.C. Little, Institute Professor at MIT Sloan School of Management, was honored today with the Fourth Annual Buck Weaver Award for Marketing. This award was established by MIT Sloan in 2003 and is sponsored by General Motors Corp. to honor individuals who have made important contributions to the advancement of theory and practice in marketing science.



MIT Sloan Institute Professor John D.C. Little (center), with Glen Urban (left), dean emeritus and professor of marketing at MIT Sloan, and Rene Coppens, manager, global information center & business management activities at General Motors.

The award was presented by Glen Urban, dean emeritus and professor of marketing at MIT Sloan, and Rene Coppens, manager, global information center & business management activities at General Motors.

Little, who has had a distinguished career spanning five decades, was the unanimous choice from a list of 25 nominees from business and academia. A pioneer in marketing science, his work has been recognized by the INFORMS Association as one the ten most influential pieces of research in the last 50 years in Management Science and Marketing.

Little has conducted research on a broad set of modeling and decision support issues, including models of individual choice behavior, adaptive control of promotional spending, and marketing mix models for consumer packaged goods, along with pioneering a methodology called “Decision Calculus” to combine rigor and relevance in models that managers actually use.

In operations research, he is best known for his proof of the queuing formula L = lambda x W, commonly known as Little's Law. He is co-editor of The Marketing Information Revolution, (HBS Press 1994).

In addition to his continuing interest in consumer packaged goods, he is currently conducting research on marketing automation in Internet retailing.

“I am a dreamer with a New England conscience,” says Little. “It is great to have ideas and visions of what might be, but come Monday morning, you better figure out how to make them happen.”

Henry Grady “Buck” Weaver was a pioneer in marketing research and market-based decision making in the 1930s. Working for General Motors, he was the first known director of marketing research.

His contributions to the field were noted by Time Magazine in the 1930s and then were recently uncovered by GM's Vince Barabba, now retired. Barabba and Urban developed the concept for the annual award, which is held in conjunction with an annual conference.