The Distinguished Brooksian Award was created to recognize and promote from the Brooks family those individuals whose life and contributions to society exemplify the nobility of character and usefulness to humanity embodied in the spirit of the school. The late Dr. Joseph Sherer, Class of 1937, and a 2012 recipient of this award, presented the first Distinguished Brooksian Award to the school’s founding headmaster, Frank Davis Ashburn, on May 27, 1991.

We determined a number of years back that celebrating this award at this occasion with all of us gathered together at once was the right and best way to pay tribute to honorees who have done so much in so many ways throughout their lives to strengthen the school by virtue of their relationship with it. I take great pride in leading a school with so many worthy candidates to consider, and the fact that we have not been able to have an occasion like this for three years has us eager to make up for some lost time and recognize two members of our community who personify what this award seeks to honor.

Tonight’s first honoree graduated from Brooks in 1972 and is here this weekend celebrating his 50th reunion with classmates. He attended the school in the final years of Mr. Ashburn’s truly extraordinary 46-year tenure as Headmaster, and at a challenging time in boarding schools, in particular, and in the country, in general. I occasionally wonder how Mr. Ashburn did what he did for that length of time while continuing to leave such an indelible mark on all who attended the school through those many years. In the case of this first Distinguished Brooksian, I have heard it said by some who are close to him that what he has been and continues to be in his life might have mildly surprised Mr. Ashburn given some of the
recipient’s inclination to be occasionally mischievous and a bit disagreeable when he was a student here. But what is true beyond a shadow of doubt, is that what he has been and continues to be would have filled Mr. Ashburn with immense pride for both what he has done with his life, and, perhaps more importantly, how he has done it.

After graduating from Brooks, he went onto Rollins College where he earned his bachelor’s degree in 1976. From there, he joined the United States Marine Corps and served as an H-46 (Phrog) pilot until 1981 when he left active duty. At that point, his career in investment banking took shape and he worked in that field for many years, serving as President of Crossroads Investment Management, LLC, before joining Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., as Vice-Chairman and Chief Financial Officer. He then went on to serve as Managing Director at Fall Creek Management, LLC - always leading, always successful, and always improving the performance and integrity of any outfit he was a part of.

While his career in investment banking stands on its own merit as exceptionally noteworthy by any objective or relative measure, it is also true that his service in the Marine Corps, indeed, his identity as a marine, has been and will always be core to who he is. He is a patriot in the best sense of the word - an important distinction, in my opinion, and service to country is in his DNA. Over the course of his life and during his full and whole career in investment banking, he remained committed to serving in any way he could. His board service is legion: He has served on the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, located in the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Virginia, which he played a lead role in bringing to life. He has served on the Veterans Campaign Center for Second Service, a non-partisan, non-ideological organization whose mission is to encourage, mentor and prepare veterans for a “second service” in civic
leadership. He has served on the Defense Business Board and the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel. And more.

More recently, he was sworn in as the 76th Secretary of the Navy on August 3, 2017, a position he held until November 24, 2019, and he served as Acting Secretary of Defense for eight days in the summer of 2019. I have had the privilege of getting to know him through his generosity of time and support of a Winter Term course I taught with a colleague here for a number of years - The Complexity of War was the title. The course included a trip to Washington and this Distinguished Brooksian helped us at every turn - hosting students for lunch at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, gaining us access to amazing briefings given by foreign policy experts at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and Center for a New American Security. And, while serving as Secretary of the Navy, he hosted us at The Pentagon for a tour, visit and some discussion about the importance of public service. We all have his Secretary of the Navy coin to prove it!

At one point, he was sharing with me how he came to be Secretary of the Navy in a circuitous fashion that speaks to the kind of leader and citizen he has been throughout his life. While I might be a bit off on the facts, and prone to some embellishment, I do know he was serving on a civilian defense advisory board tasked with making recommendations to the incoming Trump administration about potential Secretary of the Navy nominees. After some time deliberating, the group turned to him at one point and said we have our selection. He said, great, who? They said - you. True to form, he accepted because his country called, he was needed, and that is who he has been in his life.

While I certainly cannot claim to know him in ways that his classmates who both
admire and nominated him for this honor do, I have a strong hunch that I would have those who do know him well nodding in agreement when I underline his integrity and honor as primary attributes among the many he possesses that are palpable, and of a standard and at a degree realized by very few.

Two of his classmates wrote about the stand he took against the Trump White House when he refused to overturn the results of a court martial proceeding that had found a Navy SEAL guilty of misconduct in the field. In a resignation letter to President Trump, he wrote, “Unfortunately, it has become apparent that . . . I no longer share the same understanding with the Commander in Chief who appointed me. I can no longer in good conscience obey an order that I believe violates the sacred oath I took to support and defend the constitution of the United States.”

When I referenced earlier my firm belief that Mr. Ashburn would feel immense pride in what he has done with his life, and how he has done it, I think this principled position his classmates highlighted in their nomination would be at the top of the list.

In ways that will surprise no one who knows him, the first thing he asked me when I shared with him our decision to make him a Distinguished Brooksian was why we had not chosen another member of his class that he had nominated. This lifelong commitment to service, to putting others before self, is why he is so deserving of this award, along with our profound thanks for what he has given to this country.

Thus, with deep admiration for all he has done in his life, it is my privilege to present the first of two 2022 Distinguished Brooksian Awards to the Honorable
Richard V. Spencer, Class of 1972, and invite him forward to receive a gift from the school and congratulations from all of us.

I have had a few different openings over the past few months to try to share the depth of my gratitude with tonight’s second Distinguished Brooksian honoree, and every time I have spoken or written something, I have felt like I have come up short of the mark. The reason for that, I think, is that it is very difficult to encapsulate and capture all this member of the Class of 1985 has meant to the school during his 14 years on the Board of Trustees, the last six as President. Whatever adjectives we come up with to try convey the strength and importance of his leadership, or the transformative impact of his work ethic and belief in this school, or his always, and I mean always, being there for the school through thick and thin, are insufficient. I don’t think I have the words.

What I do know is that he grew up in North Andover as the sixth of seven children and his family owned and ran the hardware store in town. He considered Brooks on something of a whim with his mother, he claims, using him as a guinea pig to apply ahead of his one younger sibling who she felt had it what it takes to earn acceptance - not him, apparently. Thankfully, he only applied to Brooks, and, thankfully and sensibly, the admission office at the time made the right decision to accept him and offer the financial aid he needed in order to attend. Once here, he found his footing and routes to navigate his way through a school and culture that was quite unlike what he had experienced to that point in his life. He played football, basketball and baseball, made the kinds of connections with what are now lifelong friends that are a core part of why all of us are here tonight, and drew from mentors like Skip Perkins who met him at his level and did what great educators do - ensured he was known and cared for.
After graduating from Brooks in 1985, he moved onto the University of New Hampshire where his eventual career path began to take shape through his interest in accounting, stocks and investing. With some summer internships at brokerage firms under his belt, he graduated from UNH in 1989 and went directly to work answering the phones for MFS Investment Management in Boston. In fairly short order, he started work on his MBA at nights at Boston College, and eventually earned a one-year position in MFS’ equities department. He excelled in that role and was then offered a job as an analyst. From there, his career took off and he has played lead roles in both the London and Boston MFS offices through the years while on his way to becoming a Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager. Over these now 33 years he has spent at MFS, he has become a leader in his industry.

As his career continued to ascend in the 2000s and he returned from some time in the MFS London office, he sought ways to get more involved with the school by first joining the Alumni Board and then the Board of Trustees in 2008. Upon reflecting on that decision in a piece about him in The Bulletin a number of years ago, he remarked, “I am very much of the belief that to whom much is given, much is expected. I’m happy to contribute in any way I can.” His notion of the responsibility we have to pay forward the support and help we receive in our lives is much more than lip service in his case, and he played a lead role in ensuring that Brooks School families hardest hit by the recession in 2008 would have financial support to bridge unanticipated financial gaps in their lives. This was the first of many such gifts that have both secured and deepened countless student experiences at our school.

About six years into his tenure on the Board of Trustees, it was clear that his predecessor, Nick Booth, Class of 1967, would be stepping down as President
before too long. The search within the board to replace Nick was comprehensive, but not all that complicated, as it turned out. I asked Steve if he would join Jim Hamilton and me for a Patriots game in December of 2014. We got to Gillette Stadium a bit on the early side, and were having a beer when I raised the idea about this Distinguished Brooksian taking over for Nick at the end of the 2015-2016 school year - a year and a half away. I had a whole series of compelling and carefully crafted arguments to make in order to get him to say yes, but I had barely had my first sip of that IPA and he said he would do it - best beer I ever bought and I’m pretty sure he bought it. From that point forward, and as he transitioned to taking the reins in July of 2016, the trademark work ethic that has made him an unparalleled success at MFS reached new heights. He hit the ground running that summer as we moved further into The Campaign for Brooks, which yielded the Center for the Arts we are now four years into enjoying - the finest building of its kinds anywhere in New England in my subjective opinion. In his first year as President of the Board, he shared this in the same Bulletin piece I referenced earlier:

“I think the beauty of Brooks is that nobody can get lost. Everybody is known and given that level of individual attention. The Brooks Community has the ability to take students, wherever they are in their lives, move them forward in dramatic ways in such a transformative period of their lives, and give them all the character traits that transcend what you learn in the classroom. That capability to connect with great faculty on the field, in the classroom, in the dorm, to be known across multiple levels, is such a special level of education that few institutions have the opportunity to provide. We have a legacy of doing that for 90 years now; I view it as our responsibility to ensure that continues for another 90 years.”

As he prepares to step away from a role that he has given so much to over these
14 years, with the last six of them spent in charge of it all, I hope and trust he rests assured that the difference he has made at Brooks School is without equal, and our ability to continue building on this legacy as the school approaches a second century is due in large measure to him, and his wife, Dodie, and two children, Oliver and Brigitte, both Brooks School graduates, who shared him with us over these many years. I would concede that I can be prone to hyperbole. Not this time, however, yet the words still don’t seem to suffice.

Before presenting this award, I have one more anecdote to share. In the 2015-2016 school year when he was transitioning to be President of the Board, he spoke at a trustee dinner about the kind of leader and trustee he wanted to be. The school had lost Joe and Anna Trustey in a tragic plane accident the previous summer, and he said that night that he hoped to be a “Trustey Trustee” in a nod to the exceptional board service Joe Trustey had provided prior to his passing. As he leaves this role at the end of the month, we would be awfully fortunate to find a long line of Gorham Trustees in the school’s future. Perhaps that is too much to ask, but his bar is one we will always do well to aim for. Good thing his mother used him as that guinea pig way back when.

With all of this in mind, I am honored tonight to award our second Distinguished Brooksian Award, and to announce that Steven R. Gorham, Class of 1985, will become trustee emeritus at Brooks with a term that will run for the rest of his life - you can’t get away that easy. Please join me in thanking him for his exemplary service and dedication to Brooks School as he makes his way to the stage to receive this award.
Mother

Super person

Oliver ‘17
Brigitte ‘21
Loyal and hard working

Trustee Emeritus
Steve Gorham Remarks
June 11, 2022

Generous in every way imaginable
Most transformative benefactor the school has ever had
Always there, solid as a rock with a deep affinity for the school
To a degree, this is how our school has evolved for generations, but this year’s comings and goings feel a bit weightier than most. And, that is before taking into account an additional departure that would likely go unnoticed if he had his way.

Steve Gorham '85 started his 14-year tenure on the board of trustees in 2008 - the same year I started as Head of School. Little did I know then how consequential his service and leadership would prove to be - especially his six years as president. The task of adequately capturing all that Steve’s leadership has meant to the school will require much more than a few words in this edition of The Bulletin. For now, let it suffice to say that his departure at the end of June will mark the end of as distinguished a tenure on our board as any the school has ever known. Steve’s character, humility, selflessness and unabashed belief in Brooks School has lifted our work with students over the past decade. It is not hyperbole to suggest that the progress we have made would have been out of reach without his time, care and support. Thus, the prospect of continuing without him when his term officially expires at the end of June is bittersweet, indeed. As board leadership passes to John Barker ’87 who has served the school for decades in every imaginable capacity, and is better suited than anyone I know to lead the board forward with so much in our sights, my gratitude for all that Steve has meant to and done for the school knows no bounds.

Steven R. Gorham ‘85 P’17, P’21

This year there will be two Distinguished Brooksians. Our newest Distinguished Brooksians are the personification of many of our core values and our mission at Brooks, most notably empathy, integrity, passion, moral awareness and social responsibility.

• The North Andover native was a day student who played baseball, basketball and football, in addition to participating in the Young Republicans, the Shield and the Eagle. He subsequently received a bachelor’s degree from the University of New Hampshire and an MBA from Boston College.

• Gorham’s career-long tenure at Massachusetts Financial Services began in 1989 as a teleservices representative. He now is an equity portfolio manager at MFS, managing the value and global balanced portfolios for MFS’ mutual funds, variable annuities and institutional investment products. He’s responsible for final buy and sell decisions, portfolio construction, and risk and cash management. He also participates in the research process and strategy discussions.
He joined Brooks’ board of trustees in 2008 and assumed the presidency in the summer of 2016, just a few months after the school’s successful, $60 million capital campaign publicly was announced. Now as he turns board leadership over to John Barker ’87, P’21, P’23, Gorham remains passionate about raising capital for financial aid.

“I was the sixth of seven kids and the first one to go to private school. I was fortunate to get in and to get financial aid,” said Gorham, who had also served on Brooks’ alumni board, reunion committees and fundraising committees. “For me, Brooks had been very transformative for my trajectory. My path would have been far different if I had not been able to attend. I’ve always felt blessed and I’ve always wanted to stay very connected to the school after graduation.”

Notes from Steve Gorham’s Bulletin profile:

Steve Gorham, the president-elect of the Brooks School board of trustees, has worked hard his entire life. Hard work is all he knows: Gorham grew up behind the counter of the North Andover hardware store his parents ran; he became determined to find firm footing among his wealthier peers at Brooks; and he followed his intelligence and dogged resourcefulness to career success at MFS Investment Management, a firm with global reach.

Now, Gorham is turning his energy toward Brooks, the institution that he says transformed his life. That hard work, that unending attention, that keen sense of responsibility; it’s all coming back to Great Pond Road. Gorham’s presidency will revolve around what he calls "active engagement." He promises to re-energize the Brooks community in large and small ways, with one goal: To ensure that, when his presidency concludes, Brooks remains poised to meet its mission and the challenges of its future.

Gorham comes from humble beginnings. He’s the sixth of seven children, a local kid. His parents ran the local hardware store in North Andover, Gorham Hardware. According to Gorham, the family business was not an extraordinarily successful one. "My parents didn’t have two nickels to scrape together," he says. "It was paycheck to paycheck. My parents packed seven kids into a 1,600-square foot house. My bedroom was in the basement with my two brothers, so, tight quarters. But, we had a lot of love and the right values."

Those values included a persistent work ethic. Gorham explains that his parents recruited Gorham and his siblings as employees early on. Gorham recalls that during almost every waking hour when he wasn’t in school, he was working at the hardware store or passing out advertising leaflets. Those habits have stuck: Today, Gorham is quick to call himself a workaholic. "Seeing my parents work six days a week, and then start to work seven days a week, really ingrained that sort of mentality in me," he says. "So when it comes to working on the board," Gorham continues, "I certainly admit that while I might not have all the skills that are necessary for grand visions, strategic executions, however you might describe it, I certainly feel that one thing I can bring is a whole lot of energy and a dedication to making sure the job gets done."

Gorham had no plans to attend anything other than the local public high school, but his life took a fortuitous turn. Gorham’s mother thought that Gorham’s youngest brother - the
seventh of seven children - had an intelligence that deserved a private high school education. The cost of Brooks tuition was out of reach for Gorham’s family, but during a chance meeting with a Brooks parent, Gorham’s mother learned that Brooks offered financial aid. So, Gorham’s mother decided, Gorham would serve as guinea pig and navigate the Brooks admission process first, clearing the path for his younger brother.

- "My mother readily admits that she experimented with me, and that she sent me through the process first to see what would happen," Gorham says. "She had me apply just to Brooks, nowhere else. I was totally ambivalent about going to Brooks. I had no perception of what independent schools were like. Zero clue. But, I knew to be excited when I was accepted, and then again when I received financial aid." Gorham’s experimentation with the school admission process paid off for him. He enrolled at Brooks and began classes as a day student in 1981.

- Gorham had succeeded at his first challenge: Getting accepted to Brooks and receiving the financial aid he needed to be able to attend. A second challenge awaited, though: Gorham still had to get through Brooks, and hit his stride at a school that he described as being like a different world from his middle-income childhood.

- Gorham says that he stood out at Brooks for another reason: He was very aware of the socioeconomic differences between him and most of his classmates. For Gorham, back-to-school shopping consisted of "going down to the local department store and getting five pairs of corduroys—one in every color, which you rotated every day of the week—and one jacket, and that was it. It was reasonably evident that others had more than I had, and I was very self-conscious about it."

- Gorham gravitated toward the other day students. He says his friendships with other local day students were strong, and have lasted to this day. He still counts some of those other day students as his best friends, and says that their network was as strong as any in the school. Gorham also found his place at Brooks through athletics. He played football, basketball ("very poorly," he says) and baseball during his time at Brooks. He speaks most fondly of his time on the football team, which was hugely successful during Gorham’s tenure at Brooks. Although he was never a star player, he revered his coaches, who he says were mentors to him: Bill Poirot P’86, P’90, Dan Rorke P’84, P’85, P’89, Gorham’s advisor Skip Perkins ’56, P’81, P’83, and Nick Evangelos P’74.

- Gorham’s moment in the spotlight came at the perfect time: during the football game against St. Paul's School his sixth-form year to decide the league championship. Gorham, who played defensive end on defense and tight end on offense, scored a touchdown early in the game and then intercepted a pass late in the game to seal the win for Brooks. "The elation of that moment," Gorham remembers. "It was a high stakes game, and again, not being the greatest athlete but being involved in a lot of the teams for a long time, to actually feel like I could have contributed a reasonable amount to that victory was a personal success."

- What Gorham remembers vividly, what he seems to really treasure from his Brooks experience, is the time spent with faculty, especially Skip Perkins, his advisor. "I remember spending time with him at his kitchen table in PBA," Gorham says. "He was such a relatable character because he was also a day student on financial aid when he went to Brooks, and he
took me under his wing and gave such valuable advice to someone who could have gotten completely lost in a school like that. For him to take the time to know me and know my story and guide me through was fantastic.

- "Obviously education is one of the most important factors in driving success in anyone’s life in the grand scheme of things," Gorham says, "but I think the beauty of Brooks is that nobody can get lost. Everybody is known and given that level of individual attention. The Brooks Community has the ability to take students, wherever they are in their lives, move them forward in dramatic ways in such a transformative period of their lives, and give them all the character traits that transcend what you learn in the classroom. That capability to connect with great faculty on the field, in the classroom, in the dorm, to be known across multiple levels, is such a special level of education that few institutions have the opportunity to provide. We have a legacy of doing that for 90 years now; I view it as our responsibility to ensure that continues for another 90 years."

- Gorham left Brooks for the University of New Hampshire, where he took an interest in stocks and investing. Gorham immersed himself in accounting and investing courses, and completed an internship with a brokerage firm during college. He then took a post-graduation job answering telephone calls from clients in the service center at MFS’s headquarters in Boston, the firm he still works at today. "I knew right away when I took the service center job that it wasn’t what I wanted to be doing, but I focused on being the best I could be at the job I had, all the while looking to do something else," Gorham explains. He was determined to find success. He met another challenge: Attending night classes to receive his MBA from Boston College and then receiving his CFA designation. He also managed to set up a series of informational interviews with senior members of the firm, through which he learned about a highly sought-after job with a one-year term in the firm’s equity department.

- Gorham’s hard work paid off again. He landed the one-year role, and when it ended, MFS offered Gorham a job as an analyst. He’s taken several significant leaps up the ladder from there: Now, Gorham is a senior vice president and portfolio manager. Gorham manages a U.S. large cap value portfolio and a global large cap value portfolio, which together hold, he says, somewhere north of $60 billion of assets under management. He serves on MFS’s equity management committee, a group that oversees the firm’s equity department. And, Gorham spent a number of years living in London when he helped set up MFS’s office there. Today, the London office of MFS is the firm’s second-largest, trailing only Boston.

- Gorham speaks passionately about his work. He says he enjoys the constant learning and processing of data that’s needed to make wise investments in different companies. "It’s the kind of job where you can show up to work any day and there’s an infinite amount of information to learn and people to talk to," he says. "The beauty is the information, and if you love it and you get the passion of working on it, it’s fantastic."

- While he was living in faraway London, Gorham found himself missing his connection to Brooks. He wanted to re-engage with and give back to the school. On his return to North Andover, he joined the alumni board, and then joined the board of trustees in 2008. "I am very much of the belief that to whom much is given, much is expected," he says. "It’s very fulfilling for me to give back, not only financially but also in terms of resources. I’m happy to contribute in any way I can."
The Campaign for Brooks marks a turning point for Brooks. The $60 million capital campaign is the largest in the school's history. It promises to honor the fundamental traditions and values that Brooks rests on, while also advancing Brooks and positioning the school for the challenges and innovation of the future. The campaign's needs are great, and support is crucial. Steve Gorham will be a leader for Brooks and a stalwart advocate of The Campaign for Brooks. He leads by example: Gorham made a historic $5 million leadership gift to the campaign. This matches the amount given to the campaign in 2014 by Nick Booth '67, P'05, the current board president. Gorham's and Booth's gifts to The Campaign for Brooks are the largest gifts given in the history of the school. Gorham made his gift, he says, "because we need to raise the horizon of what giving means from a Brooks perspective. Beyond the number, what is important is that these gifts raise other's expectations of their own giving aspirations."

"Brooks is one of those places that people say they love, and that people say is great. And that's important," Gorham continues. "But, we also need people to love the school by caring for the school; that's the critical part, because schools like Brooks don't exist out of some natural-born right. They're a product of people who care for them and ensure that they are maintained and grown for the future in greater ways. If we want Brooks to be in a better place, that requires people to care for it, and that requires people to translate the great experience they had at Brooks and the great love they have for Brooks to great care for Brooks. Hopefully, these leadership gifts will inspire Others." Leadership gifts are necessary, says Gorham, but they won't be sufficient. The Campaign for Brooks has to be a team effort to succeed. "Everybody factors into this," Gorham says. "Smaller gifts are a big part of this. Participation is a big part of this. My first gift to Brooks was probably 25 bucks, because my first job was answering telephones and that's what I could afford. More important than the individual dollar amounts are that those amounts add up and go a long way. Also, those smaller gifts speak to the passion of individuals to give back to the school, and that passion is contagious. We want people to get into the regular habit of giving. The reality is that Brooks will only be as successful as its alumni base wants it to be, and we need to ensure that the alumni are inspired to make Brooks the best version of itself it can be."

For his extraordinary volunteerism and contributions to the Brooks School, we hereby present Steven R. Gorham, class of 1985, with the 2022 Distinguished Brooksian Award.

Steven R. Gorham ’85, P’17, P’21
DISTINGUISHED BROOKSIAN 2022

The Distinguished Brooksian award honors individuals whose life and contributions to society exemplify the nobility of character and usefulness to humanity embodied in the spirit of the school. Dr. Joseph Sherer ’37 presented the first Distinguished Brooksian award to Frank Davis Ashburn on Prize Day, May 27, 1991.

Steven Gorham joined Brooks' board of trustees in 2008 and assumed the presidency in the summer of 2016, just a few months after the school's successful, $60 million capital campaign publicly was announced. Now as he turns board leadership over to John Barker ’87, P’21, P’23, Gorham remains passionate about raising capital for financial aid.
“I was sixth of seven kids and the first one to go to private school. I was fortunate to get in and to get financial aid,” said Gorham, who had also served on Brooks’ alumni board, reunion committees and fundraising committees. “For me, Brooks had been very transformative for my trajectory. My path would have been far different if I had not been able to attend. I’ve always felt blessed and I’ve always wanted to stay very connected to the school after graduation.”

The North Andover native was a day student who played baseball, basketball and football, in addition to participating in the Young Republicans, the Shield and the Eagle. He subsequently received a bachelor’s degree from the University of New Hampshire and an MBA from Boston College.

Gorham’s career-long tenue at Massachusetts Financial Services began in 1989 as a teleservices representative. He now is an equity portfolio manager at MFS, managing the value and global balanced portfolios for MFS’ mutual funds, variable annuities and institutional investment products. He’s responsible for final buy and sell decisions, portfolio construction, and risk and cash management. He also participates in the research process and strategy discussions.

In August of 2017, Richard was tapped to become the 76th United States Secretary of the Navy. He served in this position until November 2019. For a short interim, he was the acting U. S. Secretary of Defense. Richard became very prominent in the news when he took a principled stand against White House interference in the handling of a widely reported Navy disciplinary matter. The case involved a Navy SEAL who had wrongfully posed for an unofficial picture with a human corpse.

The White House pressured Secretary Spencer to overturn the results of a court martial proceeding that had found the SEAL guilty. Spencer refused. In a resignation letter to Donald Trump, Richard stressed his belief in the importance of “good order and discipline” (no doubt learned at Brooks School), saying “Unfortunately, it has become apparent that… I no longer share the same understanding with the Commander and Chief who appointed me. I can no longer in good conscience obey an order that I believe violates the sacred oath I took to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Integrity - that’s what I think of
When told - you should have picked someone else more than worthy than me

Upon receiving a bachelor’s degree from Rollins College in 1976, the Honorable Richard V. Spencer joined the United States Marine Corps and served as an H-46 (Phrog) pilot until 1981. After leaving active duty, Spencer worked on Wall Street for 16 years with responsibilities centered on investment banking services. He was president of Crossroads Investment Management, LLC, before serving Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., as vice chairman and chief financial officer and Fall Creek Management, LLC, as managing director.

Notably, Spencer was sworn in as the 76th secretary of the Navy on August 3, 2017, serving in that office until November 24, 2019. When pressured by the White House administration to
overturn the results of a specific court-martial proceeding, Spencer refused and subsequently resigned. “Richard became very prominent in the news when he took a principled stand against the White House,” classmates wrote when nominating Spencer for this award. “In a resignation letter to Donald Trump, Richard stressed his belief in the importance of ‘good order and discipline,’ which he no doubt learned at Brooks.”

In addition to volunteering his time to Brooks through a variety of roles, Spencer has served on multiple corporate boards. His charitable activities include board service on the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, Veterans Campaign/Center for Second Service and Honoring Our Vets. He also served on the Defense Business Board and the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel.

Richard V. Spencer ‘72)

The Distinguished Brooksian Award is reserved for members of our alumni community whose “life and contributions to society exemplify the nobility of character and usefulness to humanity embodied in the spirit of the school.”

- The first Distinguished Brooksian award was given to Frank D. Ashburn in 1991. And the list of subsequent awardees since then is similarly impressive.

- This year there will be two Distinguished Brookensians. Our newest Distinguished Brookensians are the personification of many of our core values and our mission at Brooks, most notably empathy, integrity, passion, moral awareness and social responsibility.

- Richard V. Spencer was born on January 18, 1954, in Waterbury, Connecticut. He is a 1976 graduate of Rollins College with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. Upon graduation, he joined the United States Marine Corps, and proudly served as an H-46 (Phrog) pilot until 1981.

- After leaving active duty, Spencer worked on Wall Street for 16 years with responsibilities centered on investment banking services. He served as President of Crossroads Investment Management, LLC, and then joined Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., as Vice Chairman and Chief Financial Officer. Before being nominated as the Secretary of the Navy in 2017, Spencer was the Managing Director of Fall Creek Management, LLC.

- In addition to volunteering his time to Brooks through a variety of roles, Spencer has served on multiple corporate boards. His charitable activities include board service on the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, Veterans
Campaign/Center for Second Service and Honoring Our Vets. He also served on the Defense Business Board and the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel.

- The Honorable Richard V. Spencer was sworn in as the 76th secretary of the Navy on Aug. 3, 2017, and served in that office until Nov 24, 2019. He served as acting secretary of defense from July 15, 2019, to July 23, 2019. He performed the duties of the deputy secretary of defense from July 23, 2019, to July 31, 2019.
- When pressured by the White House administration to overturn the results of a specific court-martial proceeding, Spencer refused and subsequently resigned.

- “Richard became very prominent in the news when he took a principled stand against the White House,” classmates wrote when nominating Spencer for this award. “In a resignation letter to Donald Trump, Richard stressed his belief in the importance of ‘good order and discipline,’ which he no doubt learned at Brooks.”

- One Love Foundation’s “Heroes Among Us Award”

Richard Spencer’s nomination form from classmates Valentine Hollingsworth and Murray Danforth:

“Secretary of the Navy (appointed 2017), After service in the Marine Corps and a long career on Wall Street Richard took on a series of public service roles. For several years he served on the Defense Business Board and then on the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel.

In August of 2017, Richard was tapped to become the 76th United States Secretary of the Navy. He served in this position until November 2019. For a short interim, he was the acting U. S. Secretary of Defense. Richard became very prominent in the news when he took a principled stand against White House interference in the handling of a widely reported Navy disciplinary matter. The case involved a Navy SEAL who had wrongfully posed for an unofficial picture with a human corpse.

The White House pressured Secretary Spencer to overturn the results of a court martial proceeding that had found the SEAL guilty. Spencer refused. In a resignation letter to Donald Trump, Richard stressed his belief in the importance of “good order and discipline” (no doubt learned at Brooks School), saying “Unfortunately, it has become apparent that… I no longer share the same understanding with the Commander and Chief who appointed me. I can no longer in good conscience obey an order that I believe violates the sacred oath I took to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

After service in the Marine Corps and a long career on Wall Street Richard took on a series of public service roles. For several years he served on the Defense Business Board and then on the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel.

Richard was a greatly valued member of our Class of 1972 and has continued his association with Brooks. For several years, he hosted Headmaster John Packard and groups of Brooks students visiting Washington DC during Winter Term trips.

We believe that Richard is an outstanding candidate for this award and recommend his consideration.”

For his extraordinary volunteerism and contributions to the Brooks School, we hereby present Richard V. Spencer, class of 1972, with the 2022 Distinguished Brooksian Award.
Richard V. Spencer ’72

DISTINGUISHED BROOKSIAN 2022

The Distinguished Brooksian award honors individuals whose life and contributions to society exemplify the nobility of character and usefulness to humanity embodied in the spirit of the school. Dr. Joseph Sherer ’37 presented the first Distinguished Brooksian award to Frank Davis Ashburn on Prize Day, May 27, 1991.

Upon receiving a bachelor’s degree from Rollins College in 1976, the Honorable Richard V. Spencer joined the United States Marine Corps and served as an H-46 (Phrog) pilot until 1981. After leaving active duty, Spencer worked on Wall Street for 16 years with responsibilities centered on investment banking services. He was president of Crossroads Investment Management, LLC, before serving Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., as vice chairman and chief financial officer and Fall Creek Management, LLC, as managing director.

Notably, Spencer was sworn in as the 76th secretary of the Navy on August 3, 2017, serving in that office until November 24, 2019. When pressured by the White House administration to overturn the results of a specific court-martial proceeding, Spencer refused and subsequently resigned.

“Richard became very prominent in the news when he took a principled stand against the White House,” classmates wrote when nominating Spencer for this award. “In a resignation letter to Donald Trump, Richard stressed his belief in the importance of ‘good order and discipline,’ which he no doubt learned at Brooks.”

In addition to volunteering his time to Brooks through a variety of roles, Spencer has served on multiple corporate boards. His charitable activities include board service on the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, Veterans Campaign/Center for Second Service and Honoring Our Vets. He also served on the Defense Business Board and the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel.