

James R. Lightner Biography

Mr. Lightner is the retired Chairman and President of Electrospace Systems, Inc. In January 1970, he, along with three other engineers from Collins Radio Company, created the plans for a new technology company and entered the telecommunications field. Their efforts ultimately established Electrospace Systems as a leader and major technology contributor in the areas of airborne command and control systems, secure telecommunications, antennas and satellite communications systems.

Under Mr. Lightner's hands-on guidance throughout the 1970's and 1980's, Electrospace Systems became one of the most highly recognized and fastest growing electronics company in North Texas, earning the National Small Business Award from the United States Department of Commerce and a listing on the New York Stock Exchange. When the company was sold to Chrysler Corporation in 1987, it employed more than 4000 people and was operating at a revenue rate in excess of one-half billion dollars per year. Electrospace Systems enjoyed a highly successful relationship with agencies of the United States Government which accounted for one-half of its business.

Mr. Lightner received his Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Iowa in 1944. He has been active in the electronics industry for nearly 50 years, having first joined Collins Radio Company in 1953. He met Imp, his wife of 56 years, at his first engineering job at Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in Akron, Ohio. Mrs. Lightner graduated in 1944 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Political Science. She continues to be active in civic and service organizations in Richardson and Dallas. The Lightner family includes their daughter and son-in-law, Cindy and John Sullivan, and three grandchildren, all of Galveston, Texas.

Mr. Lightner has served as Chairman of the Development Board of the University of Texas at Dallas and the Engineering Advisory Board of the University of Iowa. He has made numerous, unheralded contributions to the community by assisting with the start-up and sustenance of many small businesses. He has also been called a "political activist" for his strong support of causes in which he believes. Since 1974, the Dallas Military Charity Ball has been a grateful beneficiary of Mr. Lightner's continuous attendance and extraordinary financial and philosophical support.