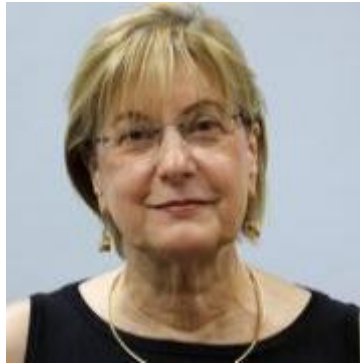


In memoriam
Professor emerita Leslie Banks-Sills
The ESIS President 2010-2018



With my greatest sorrow I am writing this obituary. Leslie passed away on Sunday, September 20th and left me a bit speechless for a couple of days. She was a great woman, such a good friend and the best ever ESIS president, on top of her brilliant academic career. She put us back on tracks after 2010 in 8 years of her leadership. Now I believe it is time to recover from shock, to remember her great deeds and to celebrate her life.

Leslie completed B.A. degree in mathematics at Queens College of the City University of New York in 1965, M.Sc. degree in engineering mechanics from the University of Michigan in 1973 and Ph.D. degree in engineering from Harvard University in 1977. After carrying out a post-doctorate at Brown University with Jim Rice, she joined the Faculty of Engineering at Tel Aviv University in 1979.

From 1993 through 1997, and again from 2001 through 2005, Leslie served as Chairman of the Department of Mechanics, Materials and Structures. She was Director of the Dreszer Fracture Mechanics Laboratory at Tel Aviv University and held the Diane and Arthur Belfer Chair of Mechanics and Biomechanics at Tel Aviv University since November 2006. The prestigious Mary Shepard B. Upson Visiting Professorship at Cornell University was awarded to her in 1997. Since 2001, she was an Adjunct Professor in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cornell University. She held the Lise Meitner Chair at Lund University, Sweden, from July until December, 2006. Since 2009, she was a Guest Professor in the Division of Solid Mechanics at Lund University.

Her research interests included the use of analytical, numerical and experimental methods to treat fracture problems of homogeneous materials, bonds, interfaces and composites. She participated in over 60 international conferences and been on the scientific committees of many of them. She has guided over 40 Master's, Ph.D. and post-doctoral students many of whom hold key positions in academia and industry.

Leslie was elected as an Honorary Fellow of the International Congress of Fracture in 2005 and served on the Executive Board of this organization, also as a treasurer after 2017. She was the recipient of the 2006 Honorary Membership to ESIS for her outstanding original technical contributions to fracture mechanics and good service to the international fracture mechanics community. She served as Vice President from 2006 to 2010, when she was

elected for the first term as the President and re-elected for the second term in 2014. The ESIS awarded Leslie the Griffith medal in 2020 for extraordinary contribution in solving problems of linear elastic and elastic-plastic fracture mechanics, especially regarding homogeneous materials, bonds, interfaces and composites.

Two weeks ago we had the ECF25 conference and promoted Leslie as one of four Pillars of ESIS. Also in my introductory speech on ESIS history I said in front of 600 people that:

..." If not for itself, ECF18 in 2010 was a great event because a new President was elected, the one who put ESIS back on track, Leslie Banks-Sills. The only President with two consecutive terms, with energy and willingness to serve for 8 years. If I have to choose, she is the best ever President. She left a completely stable and very strong Society to her two Vice-President, subsequent Presidents, Francesco Iacoviello and myself."...

My thoughts are with Zvi and Leslie's family with my strongest feelings and love for her.

Aleksandar Sedmak