

Archived Information

Presenter Bios

Second Meeting, December 8-9, 2005

The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

Session 5 "Quality"

Charles M. Vest

Charles M. Vest was president of MIT from 1990 until December 2004. During his presidency, he placed special emphasis on enhancing undergraduate education, exploring new organizational forms to meet emerging directions in research and education, building a stronger international dimension into education and research programs, developing stronger relations with industry, and enhancing racial and cultural diversity at MIT. He also devoted considerable energy to bringing issues concerning education and research to broader public attention and to strengthening national policy on science, engineering and education.

In this latter capacity, Vest chaired the President's Advisory Committee on the Redesign of the Space Station and has served as a member of the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), the Massachusetts Governor's Council on Economic Growth and Technology, and the National Research Council Board on Engineering Education. He chairs the U.S. Department of Energy Task Force on the Future of Science Programs and is vice chair of the Council on Competitiveness and immediate past chair of the Association of American Universities (AAU). He sits on the board of directors of both IBM and E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co. In February 2004, he was asked by President Bush to serve as a member of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Charles Vest earned his B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from West Virginia University in 1963 and both his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Michigan in 1964 and 1967, respectively. Dr. Vest is Professor of Mechanical Engineering at MIT and is a Life Member of the MIT Corporation, the Institute's board of trustees.