

Feniosky Peña-Mora Appointed Next Dean of Columbia's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science

New York, N.Y. – Feniosky Peña-Mora has been named the next dean of Columbia University's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS). His appointment is effective July 15, 2009.

Peña-Mora has earned an international reputation for his scholarship, teaching, research and engineering innovations, as well as hands-on leadership in managing major university engineering programs at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the University of Illinois, where he served as associate provost.

"Columbia is fortunate to welcome such a remarkable new engineering dean at a time when the school is becoming ever more central to the university's mission," Columbia University President Lee C. Bollinger said. "He will be an outstanding leader for our School of Engineering and Applied Science."

A graduate of Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Peña-Mora earned his master's and doctorate in civil engineering from MIT. He worked at MIT as assistant professor and associate professor of information technology and project management in civil and environmental engineering. He then spent six years at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, serving as the Edward William and Jane Marr Gutsell Endowed Professor in the civil and environmental engineering department, a center affiliate at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications and a faculty affiliate at the Beckman Institute.

Peña-Mora is the author of more than 100 publications, with research interests including information technology support for collaboration in preparedness, response and recovery during disasters involving critical physical infrastructures. His research has been groundbreaking in the field of construction engineering and management.

"It was clear to me that the SEAS leadership at Columbia has built a very strong foundation in recent years, well positioning the school to move to the next level in terms of its impact on the university, the local community, the nation and the world," Peña-Mora said.

Peña-Mora is a professional engineer registered in the Dominican Republic and has been a key figure in a variety of international projects. He has founded high-tech startup and consulting companies and has worked with both the construction industry and governments in various countries, among them Argentina, Colombia and Japan.

He is the holder of the 1999 National Science Foundation CAREER Award and the White House Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. In 2007, he won the Walter L. Huber Civil Engineering Research Prize of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). In 2008, he was recognized with the ASCE Computing in Civil Engineering Award for outstanding achievement and contribution in the use of computers in the practice of civil engineering.