Gene Amdahl

- Amdahl was born and raised in South Dakota, where he received his bachelor’s degree in engineering physics from South Dakota State University in 1948. He then came to UW-Madison to continue studying theoretical physics, and received his PhD in 1952. Amdahl’s doctoral thesis, titled "A logical design of an intermediate speed digital computer," led to the creation of the first computer at UW-Madison and in the state.

- Called the Wisconsin Integrally Synchronized Computer, or WISC, the computer is now housed in a museum in southern California.

- Immediately after his graduation from UW-Madison, Amdahl accepted a job with IBM and moved to California, where he would spend the rest of his life. Amdahl is best known for being the chief architect of IBM’s mainframe computer, which he designed in the 1960s and 70s.

- Later, Amdahl started his own company, Amdahl Corporation, which sold computer mainframes and other parts. Eventually, he left that company to pursue other high-tech ventures.

- Relation to UW ECE Department: PhD in 52’