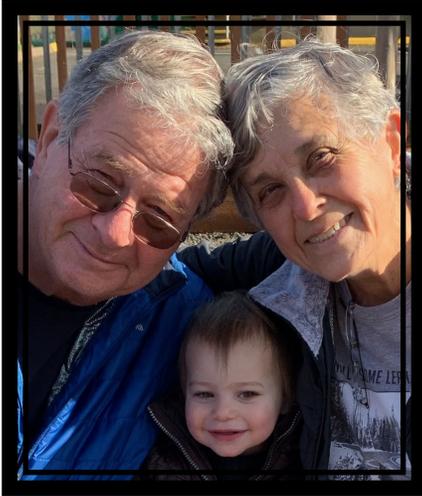


Allan Block

Always Better Wall of Fame 2019



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Dov and Ora Leshchinsky **ADAMA Engineering Inc.** *Clackamas, OR*

Dov and Ora Leshchinsky have taken a most unusual route to help keep Allan Block on the correct path over the years. My first memory of contacting them was in 1994, as Dov's name kept coming up as the Professor you needed to speak with to understand how these segmental retaining walls worked. After contacting him to get the information that would help me understand, he quickly assigned several papers to read and drafted responses to my questions that were thoughtful, in detail, and left no question as to where he stood on any issue. There was little doubt that he had a very clear vision, and one that I hoped to better understand as time progressed.

I quickly realized that I needed to pay more attention now, than I did while I was engrossed in my studies. Dov was not your typical Professor, he had a way of making you want to understand the details of what he was teaching. There was such passion in his answers and methods of explaining his position. He was as straightforward as what you would encounter when a fly would land on the back side of an elephant.

Soon after, I learned there was much more to Dov; namely, his side kick and wife, Ora. Regardless of how unusual it was for our paths to cross, it was clear how fortunate for both Allan Block and our industry that it did. To have mentors like Dov and Ora take an interest in what we were doing was going to mean great things. They were leading the way and all we had to do was listen and learn from them.

Both Dov and Ora were born in Israel and studied Civil Engineering at Technion (Israel Institute of Technology). In 1979 they moved to Chicago, IL where Ora worked on her master's degree in architecture and Dov pursued his PH.D. at the University of Illinois – Chicago, focusing on railroad research. After completing their studies in Illinois, they move to Delaware, where Dov started and eventually finished his 30-year university career at the University of Delaware. Ora taught at nearby Widener University, but they soon found themselves with two sons to add more joy to their lives.

Teaching at the university level and raising a family was not enough for Dov and Ora. They soon discovered a need for teaching and writing software for an industry that was growing up around them. They teamed up and Ora became the master at writing

computer programs based on some of the work that Dov was doing. As they moved from writing software for the geotextile companies to MSE (Mechanically Stabilized Earth) wall manufactures, they filled a need with the FHWA (Federal Highway Administration), creating a software package for the design of MSE walls entitled MSEW (Mechanically Stabilized Earth Walls). This software as well as their global stability software ReSSA, have become mainstream technical solutions for design and analysis.



While living a full and productive life, Team Leshchinsky found time to help the engineers at Allan Block understand the inner workings of the technical side of the business. While answering questions, with term paper length responses, they helped transfer all that they had learned over the years. It was not unusual for Dov and Ora to be working at some distant corner of the world. If we had a question while they were in a time zone twelve hours different than ours—in an airport no less—they'd still promptly respond, “please be patient, we'll get back to you soon”. Generally, we did not have to wait long, maybe an entire 30 minutes for a 4-page response. If only the rest of the world could keep up with Dov and Ora.

Our next step in working together was in 2001, when Dov called to see if the NCMA (National Concrete Masonry Association) would be interested in helping to fund seismic research with SRWs (segmental retaining walls). When the NCMA SRW Committee voted against doing this research, Allan Block decided that this was something of prime importance to the industry and we partnered with Dov and Hoe Ling. Working with them, through Columbia University, they conducted a series of 6 structures and multiple tests on each structure. The findings of this research rewrote the book on how to apply loads to SRWs. Prior to this research, AASHTO had limits of 0.29g pseudo static loads for design purposes. Their research pushed loads to 0.8g with outstanding performance. During this research we also learned the importance of 2 course grid spacing.

Through all their many adventures and accomplishments, there are a few lessons they share every day for all to see. Dov and Ora are inseparable companions and friends, they value family as the center of their universe, and they are the most loyal friends anyone could ever have the blessing to know. For this and all you have done and continue to do, thank you for helping to make Allan Block *Always Better*.