2006 Award Recipient

Ajay V. Chauhan '86
For generations, your company has been delighting families around the world with sweets and treats that are enjoyed by millions of people. Throughout India, the Parle Products Brand is known for the fine quality of its classic cookies and its imaginative confections.

You come from a hard-working and industrious family. Starting with a small toffee factory in 1929, and then a single biscuit type launched in 1939, the Parle Company soon expanded across India, with products to suit every taste. Today, your family's enterprise commands a major share of the biscuit market, competing with brands like Nabisco. Parle Biscuits can be found in every corner of the world—from Australia to Angola, throughout the Middle East, and here in the United States.

You came to WPI, in the family tradition, to acquire the skills you would need to compete in a world market. You used the WPI Plan to acquire an education that would bring the latest technologies and best practices to the family company. You also earned an MBA at Babson College to add management skills to your portfolio.

You returned to India prepared to bring Parle Products Limited into the twenty-first century. One of your first goals was to bring computerized design operations at the factories. Since then, in the role of Executive Director, you have used your knowledge to expand and advance operations, modernizing and improving to meet international standards.

The results speak for themselves: Your cookies and candies are best sellers—at home in India, and abroad. Year after year, your products win taste awards at international competitions. With innovative advertising and marketing campaigns that appeal to enduring family values, you have captured the imagination of consumers who seek nutrition and a bit of fun.

Most of all, you have lived out WPI's mission of using your talents for the benefit of humanity. You have joined with others as part of a “Dream Team,” to lead fundraising and relief efforts for the underprivileged and for victims of local disasters.

Ajay Chauhan, it is with great pride that we present you today with the Ichabod Washburn Young Alumni Award for Professional Achievement.