2007 Award Recipient

Domenico Grasso

Domenico Grasso, since graduating from WPI with a degree in civil engineering, you have been interested in contaminants in the environment, and in developing techniques to reduce the risks they pose to human health and natural resources. Your work led the administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency to appoint you vice chair of its Science Advisory Board; Justice Sandra Day O'Connor to invite you to participate in the World Justice Project. You were elected president of the Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors, named a “Pioneer in Disinfection” by the Water Environment Federation, and have been invited to join leadership boards and research teams across America and abroad.

You rose from assistant professor to department head at the University of Connecticut before joining the faculty at Smith College, where you were the founding director of the first engineering program at a U.S. women's college. There you set out to emphasize the importance of the connections between humanistic motivations and behavior and the sciences. In a recent article describing this, you noted that “to better serve humanity, engineers must at least attempt to understand the human condition in all its complexity.”

As a professor and dean of the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences at the University of Vermont, you continue to evolve engineering curricula to connect the sciences and the liberal arts, and challenge students and faculty to realize the power of engineering thought.

Domenico Grasso, you have garnered the respect and admiration of many with your accomplishments. WPI honors you today with the Robert H. Goddard Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement.