2001 Award Recipient

Donald K. Peterson ’71

Don Peterson, your hard work, dedication and commitment to quality have propelled your career and led to numerous professional achievements.

As president and chief executive officer of Avaya, you are leading an $8 billion company focused on becoming the leading global provider of comprehensive e-business communications solutions.

Following your graduation from WPI with a degree in mechanical engineering, you obtained an MBA from Dartmouth College. You began your career in 1973 as a senior analyst at State Mutual Life Assurance; in 1976 you joined Northern Telecom and advanced through numerous financial and sales positions in the United States and Canada. In 1994 you were named president of Nortel Communications Systems, a company with $800 million in revenue; you held this position for a year before joining AT&T, where you were chief financial officer of the Communications Services Group. These experiences and successes led to your appointment in 1996 as executive vice president and chief financial officer of Lucent Technologies, responsible for executive management and oversight of all financial operations and information systems for the company.

In June 2000 you were named president and chief executive officer of the spin-off Avaya Inc., a company focused on delivering next-generation communication networks to a million customers in over 90 countries.

You have been a constant supporter of WPI throughout your career and a strong advocate for the benefits of corporate partnerships within higher education, particularly within WPI. Appointed to the WPI Board of Trustees in 1997 and currently chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, your talents continue to have an impact on the future of WPI.

Don Peterson, your impressive career has distinguished you and brought great honor to your alma mater. It is with significant pride that WPI presents you with the Robert H. Goddard Alumni Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement.