2005 Award Recipient

Edward C. Lafortune '90, Kevin J. Buckler '89, and Peter L. Quinn '89

Ned, Kevin, and Pete, there are countless stories of campus friendships that grew into successful business ventures. There are few as perfect as the meshing of the skills you learned at WPI into your unique enterprise - Wachusetts Brewing Company, the top brewery in Worcester County.

You incorporated in 1993, with loans, salvaged equipment, and some highly creative engineering. Within 10 years you were brewing up a million dollars in sales in a highly competitive market. With your homey logo and your quaint growler jugs, you built a customer base through person-to-person sales, driving the delivery routes yourselves in a rented truck. Today, your wares are on tap, on the shelves, and in high demand at more than 500 local establishments.

Your unflagging insistence on product quality brought honors, including the Nashoba Valley Best Taste Award. You have become a model micro brewery, and your advice is sought after - even by German brewers. Your handcrafted ales and lagers have brightened many campus events, and your brewery has served as a laboratory for WPI students to tackle industrial challenges. Your establishment has become a family-friendly tourist destination for the Wachusetts region.

Wachusetts Brewing Company's 10th Anniversary celebrations reaffirmed your commitment to staying fresh and local. You have successfully modernized operations and diversified your product line, but you continue microbrewing and bottling where you began, at the foot of Mount Wachusetts. While other companies have yielded to commercial pressures to franchise and outsource production, you remain true to the values of a bygone era, when beer was brewed fresh and unpasteurized, to be enjoyed locally - in nearby homes, and in neighborhood taverns.

Ned, Kevin, and Pete, it is a great pleasure to present you with the Ichabod Washburn Young Alumni Award for Professional Achievement.