2000 Award Recipient

Edward Sydor '50

Ed Sydor, you are a leader and mentor to your family, your professional colleagues and your classmates. Your gentle yet determined nature has served you well, inspiring those around you to excel. And always, your hallmark has been your ability to tackle problems of any magnitude with style and humor.

Your parents instilled in you at an early age a strong work ethic and a belief in the value of education. Ukrainian immigrants, they ran a neighborhood grocery store where you learned commitment to family. You began your career at Graton & Knight Co., a tanning firm in Worcester, at the same time continuing your studies in math and chemistry at Northeastern University and MIT.

In 1944 you joined the Army. On your only furlough before you sailed for Europe, you married your high school sweetheart, Milly Nideur. After the war you returned to Auburn and with the help of the GI Bill and a scholarship from Graton & Knight, you earned your degree in chemical engineering at WPI in 1950.

You spent the early part of your career rising through the ranks at Raybestos-Manhattan and Chrysler Corporation. In 1967 you became vice president and general manager of National Friction Products Corporation, a startup in Logansport, Ind. There you developed a niche market: friction products for washing machines and clutches for the mining industries. Your purchase of the company in 1984 and its subsequent sale in 1989 marked the pinnacle of your career.

You have supported WPI through the years and have been a strong advocate of the educational experience it provides. Presidential Founders since 1992 and lifetime members of the President's Advisory Council, you and Milly established the Edward J. and Mildred P. Sydor Scholarship Fund, which has helped some 35 students further their education. As chairman of your class's 50th Anniversary Gift campaign, you provided the leadership that enabled the class to set a new giving record.

Ed Sydor, it is with great pride and admiration that we recognize your distinguished achievements by presenting you with the Robert H. Goddard Alumni Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement.