2001 Award Recipient

Frank D. DeFalco '58

Frank DeFalco, your support for WPI has been as solid as the structures you design. For four decades, you have stood by generations of future engineers, instructing and inspiring them to excellence. Under your skillful guidance, your students have designed everything from oil rigs to roller coasters.

You joined the faculty in 1960, after earning your bachelor's and master's degrees at WPI. You went on to earn a doctorate from the University of Connecticut. Early in your career you were awarded a Fulbright fellowship and were invited by the Department of Defense to teach civil defense construction to architects and engineers.

Your excellence in the classroom did not go unrecognized. In 1977, the Board of Trustees honored you as WPI's Outstanding Teacher of the Year. Your MQP students were so successful in the annual Lincoln Arc Welding competition that you were awarded special commendation for achievement in engineering education.

You have touched students' lives outside the classroom, as advisor to the Order of Omega and as assistant coach to the wrestling team. Your leadership was instrumental in uniting a campus once separated by West Street, which has been transformed by the peaceful Reunion Plaza that we all enjoy today.

Beyond WPI, your expertise is sought by the media and in the courtroom, whenever an expert is needed to help us understand the collapse of a bridge or structural failure of a building. Your professional accomplishments have earned you fellowship in the American Society of Civil Engineers and a National Honor Award from Chi Epsilon.

The quality of your instruction so impressed one of your contemporaries—an entrepreneurial alumnus of WPI—that he endowed a scholarship in your name. Likewise, your department established the Frank DeFalco Award to encourage promising civil engineering students to follow in your footsteps.

Frank DeFalco, for your unwavering devotion to WPI and its students, we present you with the William R. Grogan Award for Support of the Mission of WPI.