2004 Award Recipient

James M. Melvin ’84

James Melvin, your hard work, entrepreneurial spirit, leadership, and intuitive recognition of market opportunities have distinguished you among your peers.

Your career began on a traditional engineering path at Digital Equipment Corp. in 1984, just after you received your bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering. Over the ensuing seven years you held product development and marketing positions with increasing levels of responsibility, and were granted two U.S. patents for DEC. Along the way, you expanded your horizons and earned an M.S. in management in 1988 from your alma mater.

Arriving at a crossroad, you determined that you could use your technological background to do more, and subsequently left DEC to join Avid Technology, a startup firm that was advancing in the field of digital video editing. You were responsible for the company’s media composer business unit; however, not one to settle for the status quo, you took the initiative and started a group within the company that focused on corporate communications, which ultimately helped grow the company into one of the foremost digital audio and video editing companies in the world.

When your entrepreneurial spirit beckoned you to pursue a new direction, you became a member of the founding team and vice president of marketing at SightPath, a developer of appliances for creating intelligent content delivery networks (CDNs). Once again you were a driving force, this time behind the creation of the CDN market. Subsequently, you played a key role in securing the acquisition of SightPath by Cisco Systems for $800 million in 2000. Recognizing your talents, you were tapped by Cisco to stay aboard as the director of marketing to help develop and position its CDN business unit.

After two years with Cisco you boldly struck out on your own, this time as a consultant offering your considerable talents and expertise in computer engineering, technology, marketing and financial strategies. In short order, however, one of your startup clients lured you to join their firm. In 2002 you were named president and chief executive of Mazu Networks Inc., a company that delivers enterprise network traffic security solutions to help commercial and government entities ensure business continuity and information protection. Today you are successfully building Mazu Networks into a leading innovator in the fast-moving market for security software.

James Melvin, you have charted your own unique career. It is with great pride that WPI presents you with the Ichabod Washburn Young Alumni Award for Professional Achievement.