2002 Award Recipient

Nancy M. Pimental ’87

Nancy Pimental, your hard work, creative spirit and sheer courage have propelled your career in a most unconventional manner. As a comedienne, actor, television host and scriptwriter, you have distinguished yourself as a formidable force in the entertainment industry.

Your latest project, the screenplay for the movie *The Sweetest Thing*, opened earlier this spring. It also provided you the opportunity for your film debut, in a cameo appearance. However, the movie is just the latest coup in a long list of accomplishments for you in Hollywood.

Soon after graduating from WPI with a degree in chemical engineering, you enrolled in acting school and spent a year with a comedy improv group before heading to Los Angeles, where you toiled as a stand-up comic, actor, writer, waitress, valet, and in numerous other jobs. Your first break came with a script you wrote for South Park, an animated satire series for television. Then came the break that put you in the living rooms of millions of TV viewers almost every night-serving as co-host of Comedy Central’s *Win Ben Stein's Money*. Serving as announcer, questioner and comic relief to Stein's dry wit, you held your own with the brainy Stein, who pits himself against three contestants in a battle over “his” money.

Your tenacity and courage were honed as an undergraduate at WPI. Much as in the male-dominated comedy industry, you learned how to be successful in a primarily male environment. You also credit WPI with developing one of the most important traits for a comic – self-assurance. Your success in mastering chemical engineering helped give you the confidence to succeed in other endeavors, as well. As you have commented, “Once you’ve survived organic chemistry, facing a television audience of millions just doesn’t seem so scary anymore.”

Nancy Pimental, your early accomplishments in a dynamic and ever-evolving career serve as a striking example of how an engineering education can be a preparation for nearly any career. It is with great pride that WPI presents you with the Ichabod Washburn Young Alumni Award for Professional Achievement.