James P. Dunn '67

HERBERT F. TAYLOR AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO WPI

James Dunn, we are proud to recognize you for your work as a co-founder of the WPI Venture Forum and as a mentor to many budding entrepreneurs, and for numerous other activities you have helped enable.

The seeds of the WPI Venture Forum were planted in 1990, when you met the late Jim Fee ’65 at an MIT Enterprise Forum. You asked each other how you could start a similar endeavor at WPI. While at Homecoming a few months later, you mentioned the idea to electrical engineering professor Bill Grogan, who recommended bringing Bill Gasko ’62, an adjunct professor in entrepreneurship, into the discussion. What began as a meeting of three was solidified into the WPI Venture Forum in 1991. Hundreds of inventors and innovators, venture capitalists and seasoned professionals in the WPI community continue to benefit from the Venture Forum’s monthly programs, and the seminars, competitions, and other programs offered throughout the year.

Your impressive career and extensive work with NASA also brings much pride and recognition to WPI. A longtime entrepreneur, you have amassed more than 30 years of experience in a variety of high-technology ventures with companies ranging from start-ups to Fortune 100 organizations. Most recently, you have brought your ingenuity back to your alma mater. With a patent for a “Fuel Cell–Powered Electric Aircraft” you are leading the development of the world’s first fuel cell–powered electric airplane. Your work on this project has included more than 50 WPI students and volunteers and received much international acclaim from such publications as Popular Science, Popular Mechanics, Smithsonian Air & Space, The Economist, BusinessWeek, and the Boston Globe, among many others. In addition, you were recently recognized by Fuel Cell Management magazine as one of the world’s “Top 30 Contributors” to the fuel cell field. You have also mentored many students on alternative and renewable energy projects.

James Dunn, your work as an innovator and to establish the WPI Venture Forum fuels both the hearts and minds of aspiring entrepreneurs in the WPI community and the region. We are honored to recognize you today with the Herbert F. Taylor Award for Distinguished Service to WPI.

William F. Gasko ’65 MS, ’69 PhD

HERBERT F. TAYLOR AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO WPI

William Gasko, your service to WPI has left a lasting impression on the university, helping fuel its commitment to entrepreneurship education.

After earning a master’s degree in aeronautical physics and a PhD in theoretical physics at WPI, you went on to a highly successful career as an entrepreneur and expert in technology transfer. You served as chairman and CEO of several companies, including Millis Corporation, Aster, Vivascan, and the Center for Technology Commercialization, and served as vice president of marketing at Amrita TV, of Kerala, India. Your work took you around the world to such countries as Ireland, Finland, Germany, China, Japan, Taiwan, India, and Russia. You also served as the northeast regional technology transfer executive director for NASA and led programs for the national review of commercial technology for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and the development of technology access and visibility for the National Institute of Justice.

As your impressive career often took you far from Worcester, you recognized the critical importance of creating a culture of entrepreneurship at your alma mater. For three years, you served as a full professor, holding the Grant Chair of Entrepreneurship. You developed courses in entrepreneurship, organizational behavior, and cross-cultural behavior. With several fellow alumni, you helped establish the WPI Venture Forum, a valuable resource for entrepreneurs and inventors, and served as its chairman for the first five years. You have been an advocate for further integration of entrepreneurship and business education into WPI’s engineering and science curriculum. Now you are seeing the fruits of your advocacy, with the university’s renewed emphasis on entrepreneurship education backed by faculty and academic support in this area. You remain active in the life of WPI, serving as a judge for the WPI Venture Forum business plan contest and as a member of the Citations Committee of the WPI Alumni Association.

William Gasko, your contributions to the life and work of WPI will continue to impact generations of students and alumni. We recognize you today with the Herbert F. Taylor Award for Distinguished Service to WPI.

To be presented at a Venture Forum event on June 12