Second Class of Distinguished Career Alums Selected

Five distinguished alumni will be honored at the Mechanical Engineering Business & Career Conference, to be held on April 28, 2006.  Allen Flenner, Terri Kelly, William Mavity, Carl W. Hall, and Kaushal Kurapati.

Alumni are selected for recognition based on several criteria, including achievement, impact, uniqueness, and interest.  "Our alumni have a tremendous range of career experiences not only in the fields of engineering, but also in business, academia, government, the arts and sciences, and public service," says Department Chair Tom Buchanan.  "We discovered last year that our alumni and Distinguished Career Recipients were outstanding in many ways."

The following highlights the careers of this year’s distinguished alumni.

Alan Flenner (1986) is an attorney with High, Swartz, Roberts & Seidel in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and a Commander in the Navy Reserve Civil Engineer Corps.  He is currently assigned as the Commanding Officer of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 21 in Lakehurst, New Jersey.  Born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, his postgraduate education includes a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois, a Juris Doctor degree from Penn State University, and a Command and Staff diploma from the U.S. Naval War College.

Flenner enlisted in the Navy as an Officer Candidate through the Navy Civil Engineer Corps Collegiate Program in 1982 before entering his senior year at Delaware.  Among his early assignments, Flenner was the project officer for the largest single Navy construction effort of the Persian Gulf War, a 15,000-person tent camp and equipment marshalling yard.

Upon completion of graduate school at the University of Illinois in January 1993, Flenner was assigned as the Environmental Officer at the Navy Ships Parts Control Center in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.  In October 1995, he became the Director of the Safety, Health, and Environment Division of the Naval Inventory Control Point (NAVICP) in Mechanicsburg and Philadelphia.

Flenner left active duty to attend law school in November 1996 and immediately affiliated with the Navy Reserve.  He was promoted to his current Navy rank in August 2002.

Flenner focuses his law practice on matters associated with the built environment and concentrates in the areas of municipal, environmental, and land use law.  He also serves as Counsel to the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association.

In July 2004, Flenner was recalled to active duty with the First Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.  Among other duties, Flenner served as the Officer in Charge of Reconstruction in Fallujah.  He was responsible for working with local Iraqi engineers to restore essential city services and reconstruct critical infrastructure heavily damaged by the November 2004 battle to remove insurgents from the city.

Flenner is a Registered Professional Engineer in Delaware and Pennsylvania, a Licensed Attorney in Pennsylvania, and a Registered Environmental Manager with the National Registry of Environmental Professionals.  He earned Penn State’s top academic awards in both environmental and land use law.  He has published and spoken on riparian and stormwater management regulation.  His military awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (five awards), and numerous campaign and service awards.

Flenner lives with his wife Robin, son Jacob, and daughter Jenna near Harrisburg.

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William Mavity (1972) joined Paracor Medical, Inc. as President, Chief Executive Officer, and Director in March 2003.  Paracor Medical is focused on developing device-based treatments for patients suffering from heart failure.

Mavity spent the first 21 years of his career with a large conglomerate (3M Company) and the next 12 years with a number of smaller companies.  He has acted as CEO, and led the sale, of two public medical technology companies.  His responsibilities at 3M included heading its cardiovascular subsidiary, Sarns/3M Health Care, and serving as the head of European Health Care manufacturing.

Mavity has been involved in raising private capital from leading venture capital firms on a number of occasions and in funding-raising (secondary offering) in public markets.  He has also led the acquisition of companies and businesses, as well as helping to found two small medical technology companies.

He is currently involved in trying to develop a means to treat heart failure, affecting five million Americans, many with no longer-term alternative.  He recently hosted UD President David Roselle at Paracor’s headquarters in Sunnyvale, California, and gave him an overview of the company’s efforts.

In addition to his role as a Director of Paracor Medical, Mavity currently serves as Chairman of Biosurface Engineering Technologies and as a Director of Aspire Medical, a private entity focused on treating sleep apnea.  He has previously served on the Boards of Cohesion Technologies, Inc., InnerDyne, Inc., Cardeon, Inc., AMed Sytems, Inc., Fidus Medical Technologies, NeuColl, Inc. and the Michigan Technology Council.  Mr. Mevity also serves on the Advisory Council for the UD College of Engineering.

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Kaushal Kurapati (1995) is currently Senior Product Manager at Ask Jeeves, Inc. He manages several products coming out of the Teoma search engine, and oversees many relevance initiatives. Most recently he was responsible for the products Zoom (concept-based navigational tool) and Web Answers (answering questions by mining unstructured web pages).

Kurapati has over eight years of industry experience in the areas of web search, personalization, machine learning, and information visualization. He worked at large multinational corporations such as IBM and Philips Electronics for several years before joining Ask Jeeves. While working in IBM's Software Group, Kurapati developed technology and a product positioning strategy for IBM's flagship product WebSphere portal. He led a global research team in developing personalized TV program guides for PVRs (Tivo-like devices) while at Philips research labs.

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Carl W. Hall (1950) earned his bachelor’s degree in agricultural engineering (five year) at Ohio State University in 1948, his M.M.E. at the University of Delaware in 1950, and his doctorate in agricultural engineering at Michigan State University in 1952, where he served as department chairman. He taught at those institutions and then at Washington State University until 1982, leaving as dean emeritus of engineering and professor emeritus of mechanical engineering. He devoted his career to teaching, research and administration in engineering. He served in the U.S. Army infantry with combat in ETO (three campaigns).

Hall was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1989 for his fundamental research in agricultural product processing and food engineering. He retired in 1990 as Deputy Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation’s Directorate for Engineering. He is credited with developing and obtaining funding for NSF’s Engineering Research Center (ERC) program. He’s been a leader in incorporating biology in engineering education.

Hall has held consulting and professional assignments to industry, foundations, universities, the National Research Council, and the United Nations. He has served as president of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) and as director of the ASABE and the National Society of Professional Engineers, and he has been active at the national level in ABET and the American Society for Engineering Education.

Hall is a fellow of AAAS, ASAE, ABET, AIMBE, ASME and CIGR. He is an author or editor of 30 books and has won numerous national and international awards.

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Terri Kelly (1983) is President and Chief Executive Officer of W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc. Ms. Kelly was appointed in April 2005, after 22 years with the company in positions of increasing responsibility. Before assuming her current role, Kelly spent more than four years as a member of the leadership team that worked with the President and Chief Executive Officer. She assisted in enterprise-wide decision making, including strategic direction and vision, investment planning, portfolio management, acquisitions and divestitures, resource planning and key enterprise initiatives. Kelly began her career at Gore as a Process Engineer. She gained experience in military fabrics as a Product Specialist for the Extended Cold Weather Clothing System from 1985 to 1989 and as Business Leader with over responsibility.

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Kelly comes from a family of mechanical engineers including her father and two of her three sisters. Kelly and her husband, John, have four children—Bryan (14), Maddie (10), and twin girls Nicole and Alexis (5). In her spare time, Kelly enjoys running, skiing, cooking, and going to the beach.

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Kelly was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1989 for his fundamental research in agricultural engineering. He served in the U.S. Army infantry with combat in ETO (three campaigns).

Kurapati holds six U.S. patents and has authored several technical papers and presented them at major international conferences. In addition to his BME from Delaware, Kurapati earned an MS degree in computer science and an MBA from the NYU Stern School of Business.

Although Kurapati has deviated from pure mechanical engineering in his career, he believes that the analytical abilities he developed during his education at UD have been of value in his various jobs. He credits his office mate at UD, Jim Newill, with piquing his interest in programming languages and helping him gain confidence with computers in general, as well as his advisor, Dr. Ajay Prasad, who let him follow his interests in computer sciences and encouraged him to pursue his goals.