

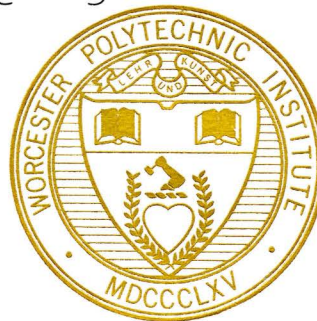
# Worcester Polytechnic Institute

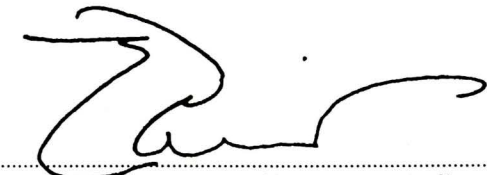
hereby confers upon  
**Duane D. Pearsall**  
the Honorary Degree of  
**Doctor of Science**

entitling him to all the rights, honors and privileges to that  
degree appertaining

Given in the City of Worcester in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
on the eighteenth day of May, nineteen hundred and ninety-six.

  
Chairman of the Board



  
President of the Institute

# WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

## *Citation*

DUANE D. PEARSALL

DOCTOR OF SCIENCE

HONORIS CAUSA

Helping others enjoy the benefits of a safe and productive life has been one of the hallmarks of Duane Pearsall's career as an inventor, entrepreneur and businessman. A native Midwesterner, he was attending General Motors Institute when World War II interrupted his education. As a naval aviator, he flew patrol bombers protecting North Atlantic convoys. After the war he received his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Denver and worked for several years at Honeywell Corp., before starting his own company in 1955.

Pearsall is credited with inventing and developing the battery-powered home smoke detector, which has been called one of the most significant contributions to fire safety in the 20th century. The company he created to manufacture the detectors, Statitrol Corp., grew from one employee in 1964 to more than 1,000 in 1977, the year he sold his business to Emerson Electric Co. His forward-looking management style, which included a profit-sharing program, nurse counseling facilities and day care, was recognized in 1976 when the Small Business Administration honored Pearsall as National Small Business Person of the Year.

Pearsall was a charter member of WPI's Fire Protection Engineering Board of Advisors, serving from 1981 to 1987, and

was the first recipient of the Center for Firesafety Studies' Herrick Drake Commemorative Award. For his pioneering work to bring a low-cost residential fire detector to market, the Society of Fire Protection Engineers named him Fire Protection Man of the Year in 1980.

An active supporter of education, he has served on the advisory committee of the Denver University Business School and the Loretto Heights College Advisory Committee. At WPI, he established the Duane D. Pearsall Fellowship, which provides full tuition for a student in WPI's fire protection engineering program.

Now retired, Pearsall continues his service to society by devoting his energies to a program for the homeless called Osage Initiatives. This program supports eight nonprofit organizations and a manufacturing facility that gainfully employs 45 homeless or potentially homeless individuals—all without government assistance.

For his distinguished career as an inventor and enlightened business leader, and for his continuing contributions to the welfare of others, Worcester Polytechnic Institute is proud to confer upon Duane D. Pearsall the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

*Given at Commencement, May 18, 1996*