



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Daniel S. Mead '75, '77g



To Daniel S. Mead for his distinguished career in wireless communication and his commitment to aiding victims of domestic violence.

When Dan Mead arrived on campus in 1971, the nearest phone was in the hallway of his East Halls dorm and the first bulky wireless phones of the 1980s were more than a decade away. But, at that point, Mead didn't realize he would one day serve as chief operating officer of the nation's largest wireless company, Verizon Wireless, with \$62 billion in annual revenue, 93 million customers, and 80,000 employees. Even as a Penn State freshman, though, Mead did know he wanted a career in business.

A native of Warren, Pa., Mead chose Penn State because "It's a big school but in the country, and I knew I didn't want to go to school in the city," he said. Once on campus, he majored in quantitative business analysis and took as many finance courses as he could. A summer internship at Eastman Kodak convinced him he belonged in the corporate world and that an M.B.A. would help him achieve that goal. After completing graduate school—also at Penn

State—Mead started his career with the Ford Motor Company, working in Ohio and Dearborn, Mich. By 1978, he joined GTE, then a leading manufacturer of telephone and electronic equipment, as tooling and equipment plant controller.

With GTE he also worked in the traditional business functions: manufacturing finance, product development, mergers and acquisitions, and strategic planning. Mead's current responsibilities are rooted in his first stint in wireless, when he was named president of GTE Wireless' Ohio/Pennsylvania region in 1995.

When several companies—including GTE Wireless—merged in 2000, creating Verizon Wireless, Mead was promoted to president of the new company's Midwest area, a 15-state region stretching from Pennsylvania to the Dakotas, from Minnesota to Kentucky. In 2005, he became president of the newly formed Verizon Services Organization, which centralized finance, fleet, real estate, and supply chain services for all Verizon companies. Following that, he was president of Verizon Telecom, an organization of more than 70,000 employees delivering telephone, Internet, and FiOS entertainment services to millions of residential

and business customers across 25 states and the District of Columbia.

Mead was promoted to chief operating officer of Verizon Wireless in 2009 and was also appointed to the Verizon Wireless Board of Representatives. Though based in New Jersey, he spends most of his time traveling to meet customers and employees, ensuring Verizon Wireless is providing the best service possible. Of his long and varied career in virtually every aspect of telecommunications, Mead said, "I'm most proud that I was one of the founding senior executives of Verizon Wireless. We had 25 million customers then and 93 million now."

Mead is also a passionate advocate of his company's award-winning HopeLine program, which distributes phones and provides wireless service to victims of domestic violence and awards cash grants to domestic violence agencies nationwide. In 2006, he was instrumental in establishing Verizon's grant partnership with Penn State to create a domestic violence training program for Penn State students and faculty and in selecting Penn State as the site of Verizon's annual National Domestic Violence Summit in

2007. Mead also worked with Penn State Public Broadcasting to produce a one-hour documentary, *Telling Amy's Story*, about a Verizon Wireless employee in State College who was a victim of domestic violence and eventually murdered by her husband. Mead recently introduced the documentary at its preview in Washington, D.C.

Mead's other work with the University includes serving on the Council of Fellows at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College. The council advises college leaders on strategic planning with an emphasis on regional needs and economic development. Mead also serves on the Penn State Corporate Campaign Committee. The University previously honored him with the Alumni Fellow Award in 2008.

Mead is a life member of the Penn State Alumni Association and lives with his wife, Wendy, near Doylestown, Pa., and in State College, Pa.

