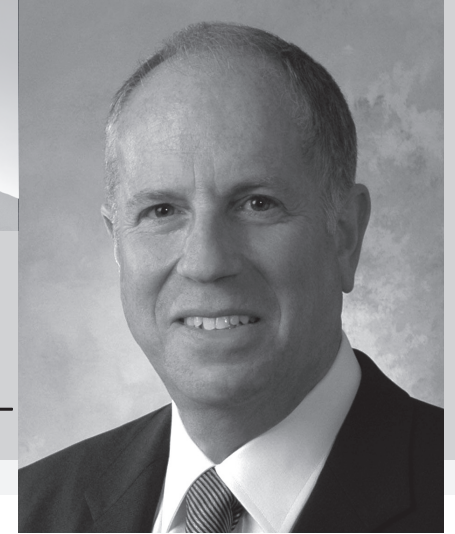


## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Richard H. Bard '69



### To Richard H. Bard for his entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to giving back to Penn State and his community.

Richard Bard was attracted to Penn State and University Park by a sense of family and home, a vibe that strengthened during his time as a Nittany Lion and since.

Bard, who was from Scotch Plains, N.J., had an older brother attending Penn State when he arrived at University Park, and then a year later, his father passed away. Bard had already lost his mother, who died in childbirth when he was 9. Bard then worked with advisors at Penn State to have the out-of-state tuition fee changed to in-state, allowing him and his brother to continue their education.

"That's the reason we were able to finish our college careers and go on to lead our lives," Bard said. "Penn State was there for us when we needed the help."

Bard majored in civil engineering with a minor in computer science, giving him a multi-faceted background that has served him well in his career. His father suggested the engineering approach—which his older brother also followed—but Bard also

spent plenty of time debugging problems in the Computer Science Building.

"It certainly kept me busy and focused when I had a lot of other things going on in my life," Bard said.

After graduating, Bard became, at the time, the highest-paid civil engineer out of Penn State, involved in computerized design of highway structures. He moved on to Citibank, where he created a desktop quality control process that allowed Citibank to better store Wall Street stock certificates.

"The reason I was able to get a job at Citibank was my computer background," Bard said. "They hired me as a technical guy and a problem solver, and the training I got at Penn State really gave me the opportunity and flexibility to build a career."

While also getting his MBA at night in New York, Bard was selected to work on corporate acquisitions and strategic growth for Citibank. He later turned down a job offered by Citibank to be a bank president in Syracuse, N.Y., and then moved to Chicago to oversee 13 Midwestern states for Citibank.

Citibank also gave Bard the chance to pursue a lifelong dream of owning a business. He joined a customer of Citibank's in Chicago as chief financial officer, a troubled company that Bard became president of and grew into the highest performing healthcare company in 1986, as then rated by *Forbes*.

After a career of acquiring and operating middle market businesses, Bard is today owner and chairman of two companies: Blastrac Global, Inc., the world's No. 1 brand in manufacturing equipment that resurfaces highways and bridges, and Jet Edge, one of the world's top five charter companies of large cabin jets.

"It's all about people and customers," Bard said. "If you figure out what the customer wants, and treat your employees right, you have a winning combination."

At Penn State, Bard is a founding member of the Board of Visitors of The Smeal College of Business and has endowed the Bard Family Chair in Marketing. He has helped chair fundraising campaigns at Penn State and the University of Colorado, and has been a champion of philanthropic efforts within the health and education fields for the last three decades.

Bard was Chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. He has also received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, which is recorded in the U.S. Congressional Record and awarded for encouraging cultural unity and engaging in humanitarian efforts that benefit the United States.

"I always viewed it as a privilege to give back and help other people, particularly people with the same desire to succeed," Bard said. "It really started when Penn State was kind to me, because I really had nothing else and Penn State was home."

Bard and his wife, Pam, reside in Evergreen and Beaver Creek, Colo. They are life members of the Penn State Alumni Association and have five children, including Alex, a 2015 Penn State Smeal graduate.