

A HAWK'S TALE

Engineering ESPN— Charles “Chuck” Pagano '84, M'07



Pagano joined ESPN a month before it actually signed onto the air in 1979—and long before it became the global sports multimedia juggernaut it is today. Starting as a technical director, he spent 35 years there, retiring in February 2015 as ESPN's executive vice president and chief technology officer.

Pagano's contributions made ESPN the leader in marrying cutting-edge technology to unparalleled content across a

Throughout the industry, Pagano became known as a collaborative partner, an early adopter of new ideas, and a leader who always recognized that technology starts with people.

Pagano is also praised for his loyalty, a trait that is clearly illustrated through his long-standing association with the University of Hartford. He has received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in organizational psychology from UHart, is a former member of the University's Board of Regents, and currently serves on the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture's Board of Visitors.

While an undergraduate, the University's public alternative radio station, WWUH, provided Pagano a chance to get a taste of the media business—and showcase his favorite genre of music—as he hosted a jazz show. He soon discovered, however, that he was more intrigued by the flashing lights on the other side of the studio's glass.

"Growing up, the U.S. army had a slogan, 'Join the army and see the world,'" Pagano recalls. "For me, the calling was to be an engineer and change the world. The engineer bug hit me big time while attending the College of Engineering at the University of Hartford, a very special institution for me."

Pagano singles out the late Bill Teso, a professor who he refers to as "my guiding light, who showed me the beauty of electromagnetics and communication theory, both important pillars that prepared me for my ESPN journey and hiked up my overall curiosity index."



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When Charles "Chuck" Pagano '84, M'07 was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award during Undergraduate Commencement on May 21, it was far from the first time he was front and center on stage. He has been inducted into both the Consumer Technology Association Hall of Fame and the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame, and in January 2016, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 67th Annual Technology and Engineering Emmy Awards.

variety of media platforms. He was the key driver in the creation of ESPN's Digital Center in Bristol, Conn., one of the most technically sophisticated TV production facilities in the world. Outfitted as an all-encompassing digital resource, the building contains over 7 million feet of cable and four HDTV studios.

Pagano's culminating effort was delivery of the Digital Center 2 facility. In this 194,000-square foot building, the sports media company is prepared to handle the next wave of technology, whether that be producing content in 8K resolution or adapting shows to be interactive with social media.