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— Roger Grace, E’66, ME’69

A NORTHEASTERN ALL-STAR



As an electrical engineer who transformed himself into a strategic marketing consultant, Roger Grace, E’66, ME’69, has had an amazing track record of success. If you ask this energetic alum what’s behind his impressive achievements, he’s quick to answer.

“I attended Northeastern for eight years—first as an undergraduate doing co-ops, then as a graduate student employed at Raytheon,” says Grace. “That combination of classroom learning and hands-on experience jumpstarted my career. I’m grateful to Northeastern for enabling me to gain practical experience while earning my degrees.”

As an undergraduate co-op at Avco, an aerospace firm in Wilmington, Massachusetts, Grace rose from the role of a technician to that of an antenna design engineer. “I was at the top of the food chain, doing the same work as college graduates,” explains Grace. “I left Northeastern with three years of professional experience. I didn’t have the highest grades in our graduating class, but I received the highest job offer at graduation from a West Coast firm. However, I decided to stay in Boston and attend Northeastern for graduate school.”

Grace earned his masters at Northeastern as a Raytheon Company Fellow, then worked for the company for several years, managing teams of engineers developing electronic warfare systems. He later worked at Ford Aerospace in Palo Alto, California, designing satellite communications systems.

“I realized that I enjoyed managing people and projects, working with executives, and bringing technologies to market,” notes Grace. He founded his own consultancy, Roger Grace Associates, in 1982 to help companies from startups to Fortune 100 companies commercialize their products. Grace has demonstrated his gritty entrepreneurship passion for over 30-plus years serving his many high-tech clients, and through his 1990 to 2003 adjunct faculty position at the University of California Berkeley, College of Engineering where he team-taught the marketing segment of a class on entrepreneurship and business plan development. As an acknowledged world expert in the commercialization of sensor technology, he was duly recognized with the inaugural “Sensor Industry Impact Award” by *Sensors Magazine* in June 2016. Grace was honored with the Northeastern University Distinguished Engineering Alumnus Award in 2004.

Over the years, Grace has maintained close ties to Northeastern, serving on President Joseph Aoun’s West Coast Council and the Advisory Board of the College of Engineering. In October 2016, Grace helped organize and was the general chair of an all-day workshop on printed sensors and systems at Northeastern’s Silicon Valley campus, at which several representatives of the College of Engineering gave presentations, along with Provost James Bean.

Grace has also endowed scholarships that help students write their own success stories. “It only makes sense to give back to the University—and to support the next generation of hard-working engineers and entrepreneurs,” he states.

A native of Somerville, Massachusetts, Grace is just as passionate about the Red Sox as he is about Northeastern. On February 23, he experienced a lifelong dream when he threw out the first pitch at the team’s 2017 opening day ceremony at Jet Blue Park in Ft. Myers, Florida, using a baseball glove dear to his heart; it was given to him from his father when Grace was in Little League.



Roger Grace, Lincoln Park, Somerville Mass., Little League in the 1950s