



UNIVERSITY of DELAWARE

College of Engineering

Distinguished Career Awards



Dinesh Mohan, '70 MMAE

Dinesh Mohan is one of the world's leading experts on traffic safety issues and human tolerance to injury. His work has significantly advanced motorcycle helmet design, pedestrian and bicyclist safety and child restraint regulations, and helped develop safer ways for various modes of transportation to safely share the roadways.

While a UD graduate student in mechanical and aerospace engineering between 1967 and 1970, he studied under J.L. Nowinski, Jack Vinson, Herbert Kingsbury and Barry Schneider, who, he said, each left an indelible mark on the importance of fundamental understanding of engineering principles. He credits the foundation he gained at UD in solid mechanics for influencing his career in biomedical engineering, especially his work on the mechanical properties of hard and soft tissues. Both, he underscores, require strong background in non-linear anisotropic materials and dynamic impacts.

Mohan, who is now the Volvo Chair for Transportation Planning and Safety, professor emeritus, with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, launched his career as a senior bioengineer with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety in Washington D.C. There, he conducted and published the first real-world assessment of airbag effectiveness in frontal crashes of General Motors cars. His work there also impacted the evolution of regulations requiring children to be secured in a back seat.

He moved to India in 1979 to join the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, where he served as State Bank Chair for Biomechanics and Rehabilitation between 1981 – 1991; became professor in 1985, and headed the Centre for Biomedical Engineering between 1991 – 1996. He then served as the Henry Ford Chair for Traffic Safety Biomechanics until assuming his current position in 2007.

In 1997, he helped establish—and coordinated until 2010—the Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIIPP), which presents a replicable model for creative interaction and cross-divisions problem solving for research, academia and other groups in cities worldwide.

Among his many honors are the 2001 Bertil Aldman Award for outstanding contribution to the subject of impact biomechanics, International Research Council on Biomechanics of Impacts; and the 2000 International Distinguished Career Award from the American Public Health Association.