



### C I T A T I O N

For the Conferment of the  
Distinguished Alumni Award  
on

**Dr. Lalit Pande**

Dr. Lalit Pande received his Bachelor of Technology degree in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Delhi in 1970. He subsequently received his Master's degree from MIT, Cambridge in 1972 and Ph.D. from Purdue University in 1982.

Dr. Lalit Pande is presently the Director, Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan (USNPSS), Almora. Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi is a public charitable trust founded in 1967. USNPSS, a registered society, was set up in 1999 to handle all the environmental activities of the Nidhi.

After graduating with distinction from IIT Delhi in 1970, Dr. Lalit Pande headed to the USA for graduate study. After completing his Master's from MIT, he returned to India as an Assistant Engineer in the then IPCL, Baroda, a public sector undertaking. His main pursuit was to understand India, along with the question of "academic excellence and social relevance". In doing

so, he struggled with some more jobs in Bombay, before he eventually returned to the US for a Ph.D. at Purdue University. Along with completing the requirements of a PhD, he made an attempt to answer his own questions about life. He eventually decided to go and live in the mountains and came to Almora in 1984, his ancestral home, where he had never lived before in his life.

For Dr. Lalit Pande, this was the beginning of a new chapter - "an alternative path". There was no clarity about what exactly this would be. In time, this resulted in developing and introducing an environmental education programme in the school curriculum, preschool education in villages, rural libraries and evening centres, women's groups and gender issues, practical activities like water and sanitation, plant nurseries and afforestation programmes, agriculture and climate change.

Dr. Lalit Pande, living and working in Almora and the hills of Uttarakhand, with a network of community based organisations and individuals in about 500 villages, led to insights into ideas of development, environmental and social issues and community learning. Simply put, he provided a platform for ordinary people to identify their concerns, develop and implement their own solutions, thereby becoming confident in their own abilities.

Dr. Lalit Pande has been awarded Padma Shri by the President of India in 2007 in recognition of the work being done at the grass roots level in a remote part of the country. He is also a mentor for various NGOs.

In honouring Dr. Lalit Pande, IIT Delhi recognizes the outstanding contributions made by him in Public Service. Through his achievements, Dr. Lalit Pande has brought glory to the name of the Institute.