

# From Security Guard to CEO

Kurus Elavia of Chester

**K**urus Elavia, chief executive officer of Newark-based Gateway Security, Inc., has proven just how far hard work and dedication can take a person. We're not sure what's more impressive: that he was one of six finalists in the 2006 NJBIZ Executive of the Year competition, or that he earned his black belt while studying in Tokyo.

## CHOOSING CHESTER

I'm a first generation immigrant from India. I lived in Newark before moving to Florham Park, and then to Chester. My wife and I found the right place in the right neighborhood, and we love it.

## LIVING A DREAM

Having earned a graduate degree in business from Bombay University, I joined Gateway Security as a security guard when it was a \$7 million company. I worked my way up to the managerial level, and after 18 years, I was elevated to CEO. I feel like I've had the opportunity to realize an American dream.

## GIVING BACK

I do a lot of volunteer work in the local South Asian community and also a lot of charity work in the Newark area. We work in the inner city environments and are absolutely committed to that. As we grow as a family, we do more and more in the community in Chester as well.

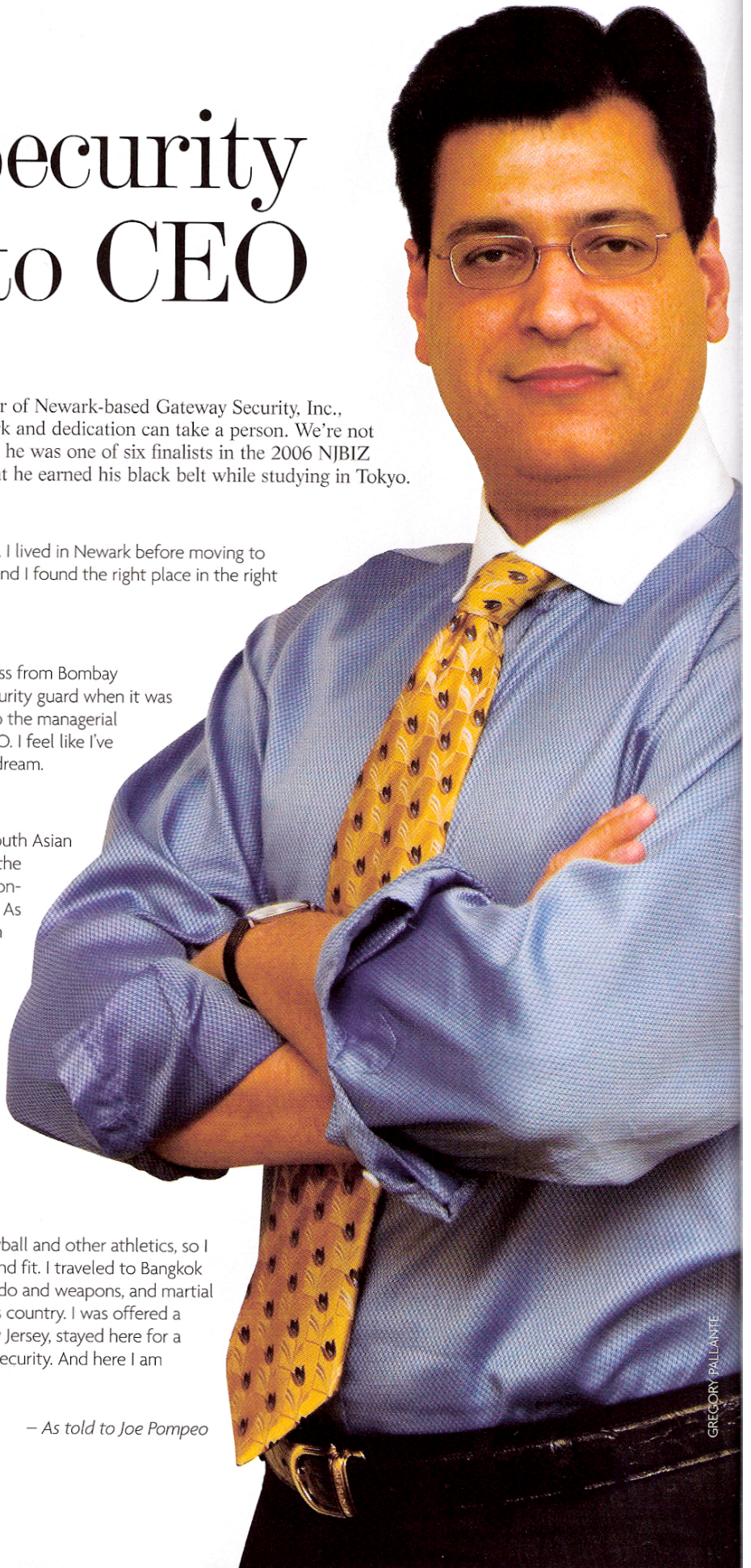
## A FAMILY MAN

My wife is currently working on a master's in dietetics at the College of Saint Elizabeth and she also works part-time at Morristown Memorial Hospital. When I'm not working and my PC is turned off, I enjoy playing with my dog and my daughter, working out and riding my motorbike.

## FIGHTING WORDS

Growing up, I was always involved in volleyball and other athletics, so I pursued martial arts as a way to stay limber and fit. I traveled to Bangkok and Thailand where I learned tae kwon do, judo and weapons, and martial arts is actually how I ended up coming to this country. I was offered a summer position teaching martial arts in New Jersey, stayed here for a few months, and ended up finding Gateway Security. And here I am today. ■

— As told to Joe Pompeo



GREGORY PALLANTE