
2017 Ron Taylor Award of Integrity and Commitment Recipients

NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA (August 31, 2017) - World Millwork Alliance (WMA) is proud to announce two recipients will be awarded with the 2017 Ron Taylor Award of Integrity and Commitment; Brian McIlwee and George Kessel, Jr.

The Ron Taylor Award (RTA) committee recognizes two individuals this year who have set sterling examples of the three key components associated with the RTA – connection, commitment and contribution. The prestigious awards will be presented October 9, 2017, at the WMA 53rd Annual Convention & Tradeshow in Charlotte, North Carolina. The RTA committee is comprised of past RTA recipients.

Brian McIlwee, president of McIlwee Millwork in Chicago, Illinois will be honored for his lifetime commitment and humanitarian efforts to family, friends, community, business, the millwork industry and World Millwork Alliance. The RTA will be presented to Brian McIlwee at the Opening General Session to take place at The Westin Charlotte.

The second RTA will be awarded posthumously to George Kessel, Jr., a prior executive officer of WMA, who passed away on December 2, 2016. George's wife, Brenda Kessel, has been invited to join her husband's longtime friends and colleagues in Charlotte to honor the life works of her husband and to receive his award.

"The 2017 award recipients, Brian McIlwee and George Kessel, Jr., represent the very best of our Association and industry." said Rosalie Leone, WMA chief executive officer.

Brian McIlwee to be Honored with the 2017 Ron Taylor Award

Brian P. McIlwee has been with the J. J. McIlwee Company since 1978, and is the second president of their 55-year-old family business, known today as McIlwee Millwork.



Brian McIlwee

Brian has been a member of the Chicago Family Business Council since 1988. He was instrumental in moving CFBC from the University of Illinois at Chicago where it originated, to DePaul University in 2011, serving as its President and subsequent Chairman of the Board in 2012. Brian continues to contribute his time and experience to CFBC assisting in developing protocols, training, and as a mentor to other moderators, forums and executive groups to foster the development of CEO leadership skills. Brian volunteers as a consultant with several family businesses and is a frequently invited as a guest lecturer at DePaul's College of Business for entrepreneurship classes, sharing his family business experience.

Active with Boy Scouts of America since his childhood, Brian continues his passion today as an Eagle Scout, former Lodge Chief and Vigil Member of the Order of the Arrow. As an adult council volunteer, Brian is engaged in several committees supporting alumni development and fund-raising efforts within the Northeast Illinois Council boundaries. Brian has received several Council President's Awards, is a member of the Scouting Heritage Society, and designated a James E. West Fellow recognizing his contribution and leadership at the council level.

Brian has coached youth sports for over 15 years. He remains an active member of the Darien Lions Club after 30 years; serving on its board for nearly 10 years and as a committee chair and member on numerous committees. Brian served as a team leader for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Light the Night campaign through his wife's prolonged illness. Brian was a devoted caregiver to his wife Shannon for 14 years.

A longtime supporter of World Millwork Alliance, Brian has been actively involved for more than three decades generously contributing his time and efforts in supporting the growth of WMA. Brian served as 2004 WMA President, as an executive officer, board of director, and as a committee chair and member of numerous committees.

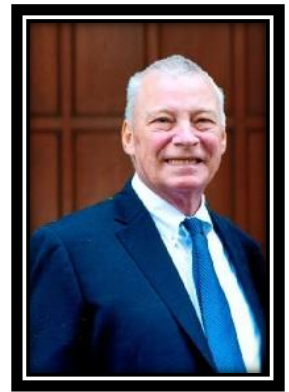
Brian McIlwee has heart! Heart for family, friends, community, employees, business, the millwork industry, and WMA.

George Kessel, Jr. to be Honored with the 2017 Ron Taylor Award

The second RTA will be awarded posthumously to George E. Kessel, Jr., a prior executive officer of World Millwork Alliance, who passed away on December 2, 2016.

George served in the U.S. Navy between 1970 and 1974. During that time, George served in Vietnam and was stationed on an Air Force Base. George was a "Big Look Spook" in Danang, Vietnam, *"A species of carefully selected and highly trained members of the US Navy and Marine Corps who do things they can never talk about for people they do not know with little recognition from those who they have served."*

George flew in planes gathering intelligence information on the enemy as a radio operator. After Vietnam, George served time in the Philippines.



George Kessel, Jr.

After George's military career, he returned home and pursued a degree in Business Administration and Accounting. After college, George worked for Deloitte Haskins and Sells CPA firm where he was assigned as an auditor to Huttig Sash and Door Company, today known as Huttig Building Products. After several years, George was offered the position of Controller at Huttig and later as Vice President and Treasurer.

In 1994, George joined Morgan Wightman Supply Company as president. George brought a wealth of corporate knowledge and leadership skills to the company where he remained as President of Morgan Wightman Supply for 22 years until retiring in 2016.

For nearly 30 years, George has been a part of the millwork industry. Mentoring and inspiring others with his entrepreneurial spirit. An active longtime member of World Millwork Alliance since 1994, George volunteered his time freely and was dedicated to supporting the progress and prosperity of the Association. George served as an association executive officer, treasurer, board of director, finance committee chairman, and was a member of numerous committees until 2016.

George contributed to his community coaching youth baseball and soccer for several years. A devoted father of three, George made it his priority to attend every baseball, soccer, hockey and lacrosse game for his children. George loved the outdoors, whether spending time on the golf course or taking a pleasure ride on his motorcycle.

George will be remembered for his unselfish contributions to all facets of his life, his commitment to give one hundred percent to every endeavor, and as a gentleman who gave meaning to the word "integrity".

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About WMA

Established in 1963, World Millwork Alliance is a wholesale distribution organization headquartered in New Port Richey, Florida. World Millwork Alliance is dedicated to the progression and prosperity of the millwork industry; a recognized leader providing networking, education, advocacy, leadership, and certification for the millwork industry.

To post company news or a press release on the WMA website or news brief, contact WMA at 727-372-3665, or email a press release to mail@worldmillworkalliance.com