



INDEPENDENCE BELL AWARD / INDUSTRY PERSON OF THE YEAR

Honors an individual who have significantly contributed to the betterment of the independent agency system and/or OIA. Honorees may be chosen from any field and are not limited to those within the insurance industry.

1. Tim Able, Seibert Keck, Fairlawn

Nominated by: Randi Macioce, Central Insurance, Columbus

I chose Tim Able, EVP of Sales and Operations for Seibert Keck Agency for the industry person of the year award because Tim truly cares about independent agents and the OIA. He is always attending OIA events, industry events and looking for ways to better the Seibert Keck agency and independent agency channel. Tim has extensive knowledge and experience of the independent agency channel.

2. Jillian Froment, Director of the Department of Insurance, State of Ohio

Nominated by: Carolyn Mangas, OIA

I would like to nominate Jillian Froment for Industry Person of the Year.

Jillian joined the Ohio Department of Insurance in 2011 as Chief Administrative Officer and was soon elevated to Deputy Director. In 2017, Froment was appointed Director of ODI.

In addition to her role at ODI, Froment also represents Ohio through her leadership role as a member of the Executive Committee at the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), which establishes industry standards for all 50 states. She is currently serving as Chair of the Life Insurance and Annuities Committee and as a member of the Property and Casualty Insurance Committee and the Innovation and Technology Task Force. Additionally, she is a member of the Federal Advisory Council on Insurance and a steering committee member for the EU-US Insurance Dialogue Project.

OIA has maintained a strong working relationship with Froment during her tenure at ODI. Over the years, we have worked with her on several initiatives, including implementing the change to allow agents to carry over excess continuing education hours and the implementation of the certificates of insurance law. More recently, we have worked with the department on the implementation of the various requirements of the insurance cyber law passed in late 2018 as well as several measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures include insurance being deemed an essential industry; premium relief for insureds; temporary agent licensing, license renewal/CE extensions and education-related initiatives.

Director Froment has proven to be an incredible leader during a trying and confusing time. Froment was instrumental in helping to ensure insurance was deemed an essential business by the governor's office during the Stay at Home order. She also recognized the importance of agent education during a highly uncertain time, and thus made a significant exception to CE filing requirements so that OIA could gain very quick approval of our one

webinars to educate agents on the various impacts of the pandemic to their business. Furthermore, to date, nine substantive bulletins have been issued by ODI in 2020 – 8 of which are as a result of the pandemic. Many of these bulletins have helped agents and their clients tremendously. And, as if this was not enough, she successfully moved nearly her entire staff of 300+ employees to a remote work environment in a short amount of time. Despite the fact that almost the entire ODI staff has been remote over the last several months, the responsiveness of her legislative staff, licensing staff and fraud and enforcement staff has been stellar.

Last but not least, Director Froment makes a clear effort to ensure that she is accessible and actively demonstrates a desire to solicit input and feedback from stakeholders in the industry.

For these reasons, Jillian deserves to be awarded OIA's 2020 Industry Person of the Year.

3. *Bill Purmort, Central Insurance, Van Wert*

Nominated by: Jeff Smith, CEO, OIA

President F.W. "Bill" Purmort III retired effective May 13, 2020. Bill is retiring after 43 years with the company but will remain Chairman of the Board of Directors. Bill began his career at Central in 1979 and held positions in underwriting, marketing, and management before becoming President and Chairman of the Board in 1994. Bill is a trustee for the Property & Liability Resource Bureau, a past board member for Trusted Choice and the Property Casualty Insurers Association of America, and past trustee for the Ohio Insurance Institute and the Griffith Foundation.

Bill is a recognized industry leader and passionate supporter of the IA community and OIA. He has consistently contributed to OIAPAC and InsurPAC at the highest levels. In addition, he frequently hosts fundraisers at Central's HQ for the Ohio Supreme Court candidates. Under Bill's leadership, Central was recognized as OIA Company Partner of the Year in 2019.

The Central Mutual Insurance Company was founded in Van Wert, Ohio in 1876 and has evolved into the Central Insurance Companies, a successful property and casualty group providing insurance for more than 350,000 automobiles, homes, and businesses in 24 states. Central is based in Van Wert and operates regional offices in Boston, Atlanta, Dallas, and Van Wert. The Central group of companies has combined assets of over \$1.7 billion. Central's A.M. Best rating is A (Excellent).

4. *Matt Simon, CoverLink, Bellefontaine*

Nominated by: Jeannine Giesler, CISR, CPIA

Matt shared the story of how he was born into the insurance business. "At the age of 5, I would accompany my father when he met with clients to discuss their insurance policies. Dressed in my suit and clip-on tie, complete with my very own briefcase, I took my job seriously, even if it was just delivering a calendar.

Today, the clip-on tie is gone, but at my core, I'm still fiercely committed to helping clients fulfill their needs for proper and adequate insurance protection.

My passion is working with families and business owners to help protect all that's important to them. It could be

protection from an uncovered claim, or from a frivolous lawsuit destroying everything they've worked so hard to build.

No one is good at everything, and as much as you may be in control of your insurance policies, chances are, coverage gaps exist.

I help people identify the problems with their existing policies and then provide solutions. With years of experience and deep knowledge of the insurance market, I help clients struggling to understand their insurance needs make better, more efficient buying decisions.

Specialties: Personal Insurance (home, auto, motorcycle, boat, umbrella), Business Insurance, Malpractice Insurance (physician, CPA, attorney) “

The story of how a 100-year old family held insurance agency has evolved and decided to rebrand. Today we touch on values, change management, and the importance of the people in the agency. It is not about the name on the front door but the values held by those living the agency's brand.

Hill & Hamilton Insurance has rebranded to CoverLink . The story of rebranding is not about what is changing. Focus on what is not changing, your values! When asked, **Matt Simon**, President of **CoverLink**, said this, “We believe we represent the link in our clients' lives that affords protection.

Matt continues to serve and provide solutions for Independent agents. He currently is involved and serves:

Advisor

BOLD PENGUIN

Aug 2016 – Present

Bold Penguin is taking on the insurance industry. Dedicated to working on innovative solutions for the modern-day insurance problem, at the core, we believe in the Trusted Insurance Advisor. The future may be digital – but it is also human. We're here to help agents write more commercial businesses with fewer touches, mistakes, or headaches. Our agent portal originates – evaluates – and places new and renewing business with the right carrier. Faster. Smoother. Simpler.

State Director

Associated Risk Managers of Ohio

From 2008 – Present

ARM of Ohio is a select group of independent insurance agencies, working together to bring a more professional insurance experience to consumers. The insurance market is complicated and always changing. ARM agencies distinguish themselves by being on the cutting edge of developments from cyber liability to access to highly unique insurance policies.

Accomplishments

Honors & Awards

- Insurance Advisor of the Year
- Excellence in Leadership - 2017
- National Young Insurance Professional of the Year - 2013

Matt has always been monitoring the accelerated pace and changes that have been happening in our industry and how best to position his agency and more importantly what independent agents should be focusing on in their agencies.

He strongly believes in giving back to his community, and the independent agency system. Matt currently serves on the OIA Board, the OIA Governance Committee is a past President of the OIA and is a Nationally Recognized Insurance Advisor.