



Nominees for Living Induction in 2026

Candidates	Title	Professional Affiliation	Nomination History
<u>Bell, Chanda Bell, Pitts, Christa, and Aebersold, Carol</u>	Inventors, Co-founders and Co-CEOs	The Lumistella Company, home to The Elf on the Shelf and Santaverse	Carryover 2025
<u>Dorfman, Alan</u>	President	Super Impulse	Carryover 2025
<u>Friedland, Les</u>	President	Les Friedland Associates	Carryover 2025
<u>Gagner, Karine</u>	President & General Manager	fdmt	Carryover 2025
<u>Golad, Adi</u>	CEO	Goliath	Carryover 2025
<u>Hardin, Greg</u>	Former CEO	Diverse Marketing	Carryover 2025
<u>Holden, Amy</u>	Director / Brand Development	World Alive	Carryover 2025

<u>Kahn, Alfred</u>	Chairman and CEO	Kidtagious	Carryover 2025
<u>Kohner, Michael</u>	President	Kohner Bros. 1966-1975 and The Michael Kohner Corporation 1975-Present	Carryover 2025
<u>Larian, Isaac</u>	CEO and Founder	MGA Entertainment	Carryover 2025
<u>Levy, Richard C.</u>	Founder & President	Richard C. Levy and Associates	Carryover 2025
<u>Litzky, Michele</u>	President of Michele Litzky Marcomms, Founder of Litzky Public Relations	Michele Litzky Marcomms	Carryover 2025
<u>Montoya, Julian</u>	COO	The Noble Collection	Carryover 2025
<u>Morris, Hunter</u>	VP of Product Strategy & Marketing	Boogie Board (part of Kent Displays, Inc.)	Carryover 2025
<u>Nuccio, Matt</u>	President	Design Edge	Carryover 2025
<u>Scher, David</u>	President	David Scher, Inc	Carryover 2025
<u>Schoeneberg, Brad</u>	Vice President - Merchandising & Product Design	The Walt Disney Company	Carryover 2025
<u>Stern, Gary</u>	Company Founder, Chairman of the Board	Stern Pinball	Carryover 2025
<u>Valenta, Rudy and Noriko</u>	Founders	Magna-Tiles	Carryover 2025
<u>Weiner, Andrew</u>	Chief Advisor	Toy'n Around	Carryover 2025
<u>Zawitz, Richard X</u>	Inventor & Tanglemaster	Tangle, Inc.	Carryover 2025

BELL, CHANDRA, PITTS, CHRISTA, AND AEBERSOLD, CAROL

Inventors, Co-founders and Co-CEOs, The Lumistella Company, home to The Elf on the Shelf, Santaverse

Nominated by: Madeline Rosenberg, Account Coordinator, 5W Public Relations

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

The founding trio has transformed The Elf on the Shelf into the expansive Santaverse, an innovative IP universe. They've introduced best-selling lines like Elf Pets, Extraordinary Noorah and Elf Mates to revolutionize Christmas celebrations with products, storytelling, and animation, demonstrating unmatched creativity and brilliance in the toy industry.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

The company's members, including Christa Pitts, were instrumental in starting TIA's IP Committee and a steering committee which created an influential white paper on counterfeit toys which garnered press and legislative attention. The paper parlayed action on legislation involving e-commerce platforms, and the requirements of sellers who list there.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Their company prioritizes ethical manufacturing practices through independent, yearly factory audits, focusing on labor standards, health and safety, business ethics and are continuously seeking ways to improve environmental impact. They ensure the well-being of all parties involved, aligning with the company's values of family-focus, integrity, respect and excellence.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Their company prioritizes ethical manufacturing practices through independent, yearly factory audits, focusing on labor standards, health and safety, business ethics and are continuously seeking ways to improve environmental impact. They ensure the well-being of all parties involved, aligning with the company's values of family-focus, integrity, respect and excellence.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

The trio are passionate philanthropists. They are active board members, donors and trusted mentors to organizations which center on the health and well-being of children. These include Path United, MUST Ministries, The Ryan Seacrest Foundation, and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. The company has donated product worth over \$1M to Toys for Tots.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Each have received national recognition including: finalists for the EY Entrepreneur of the Year award, Georgia SBD's business persons of the year, and more. Additionally, they received Entrepreneur's recognition for turning a family tradition into a holiday marketing juggernaut and are sought-after speakers for national stages and news programs.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

These women champion the toy industry's positive impact, engaging with organizations like SBDC and Chamber of Commerce. Through brand partnerships, licensing, and charity, they promote play's power, highlighting the industry's role in creating global family memories, reinforcing its significance and responsibility within the business community.

Additional Comments

On the dawn of the product's 20th anniversary in 2025, the trio is celebrating a 92% growth rate internationally over the last 5 years, spanning 24 countries and 5 continents, and a social following of 8.5M. In this new era of Santaverse, storytelling, consumers can expect to discover new characters, experiences and entertainment.

DORFMAN, ALAN

President, Super Impulse

Nominated by: Harold Chizick, CEO & President, ChizSix

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

For 30-plus years, Alan Dorfman has led and revolutionized the miniatures category in the toy industry. His passion in the category first kicked off at Basic Fun, which he founded in the early 1990s. At the time, he miniaturized a working Super Soaker water gun and put it on a keychain, and has since added hundreds of licenses to his portfolio between his tenure at Basic Fun and now at Super Impulse.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Although many companies have sprung up in recent years offering miniature toy products, few have rivaled Alan's ingenuity. His distinction in the category comes down to his focus on functionality. Yes! Actually works! is not just a packaging tagline on his iconic World's Smallestline, but a defining feature of the brand. Alan is agile, curious, and ambitious, and starts his creative process by reverse-engineering all the toys and games we know and love, and then redeveloping them at a palm-sized scale. The toy's working elements make them not only fun and engaging for children, but must-have collectibles for kidults who have played, photographed and sought out the products across major and specialty retailers alike.

Outside of the marvel in engineering, Alan is laser-focused on pursuing and attaining the most sought-after licenses to add to the Super Impulse portfolio across his award-winning brands like World's Smallest', Poptaters, Micro Figures, 3 Point Seven Five, Minis-In-Minis, Tiny Arcade' Wacky Packages Minis and more! Throughout his many years in the industry, he has brought forward reimagined classics from brands like Hasbro and Mattel, as well as trend-forward licenses from brands like Netflix, Sega, and more!

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Alan has served on both the Membership and Past Member Awards Committees.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Alan has committed to manufacturing his products in ICTI compliant factories for over 20 years.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Alan and his team at Super Impulse regularly team up with local (Philadelphia-based) charity partners to share their toys with under-privileged children. Most recently, these efforts benefitted Philadelphia Toys for Toys, which distributes toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Alan has worked tirelessly alongside licensors, industry partners and more to bring his myriad products to life. He is well-known for his candor and honesty in his approach to business, and is eager to work alongside his peers to create products that reflect current and evergreen pop-culture trends that are both functional and fun.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Alan regularly participates in both trade- and consumer-focused marketing campaigns to share his expertise in the toy industry with his peers and the public. His multi-pronged approach involves traditional media relations, influencer marketing, digital advertising, live events, and trade relations, all of which contribute to hundreds of millions of media impressions annually. He has been profiled as an industry leader in the likes of Forbes, The List TV and more for his pioneering work in the miniatures category.

Additional comments

Alan Dorfman has quietly kick-started and driven one of the most iconic toy trends of our time with his dedication to producing high-quality and innovative collectibles. From hilarious pop-culture products that reflect his wit, to clever product packaging that reflect his expert craftsmanship, to thousands of licenses that reflect his tenure in the industry, Alan is undoubtedly deserving of this distinction in the Toy Hall of Fame.

FRIEDLAND, LES

President, Les Friedland Associates

Nominated by:

Kevin Friedland, Vice President Sales, Toy'n around

Sam K. Harwell, President, Big Time Toys

Frank Landi, President & CEO, NSI International

Melody Young, Founder, Melody Young Consulting LLC

Roger Goddu, Senior Advisor / Former President , Toys R Us USA, Brentwood Associates

Leila Nosrati, Principal, Master Toy Advisors

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Les has had multiple positions within the industry. His first job in toys was at 17 years old, in 1971, as a janitor at Toy Town USA in Baltimore, Maryland. He rose through the ranks at Toy Town before joining Lionel Leisure Kiddie City as buyer and later VP of Operations. In 1982, he started Les Friedland Associates (LFA). LFA was the biggest rep group that supported Toys R Us. LFA is one of the only rep groups based on the east coast that focused on both Toys R Us and other retailers. Barnes & Noble, CVS, Five Below, Macys, Ross Store and many other retailers still work with LFA today. With 42 years as a rep company, LFA is still active and one of the longest running rep groups in the country. Les was awarded TRU Rep of the Year multiple times throughout his career and was often recognized by the manufacturers he represented as their Rep of the Year. He contributed to many companies' success at Toys R Us, where they, in turn, received TRU Vendor of the Year awards. Les contributed to the success of many notable toy companies over the years. Many companies he represented went on to grow themselves to

positions to be acquired. Les worked with Marvin and Geoffrey Greenberg and CDI before their sale to Jakks. He worked with Brian Kessler and Maui Toys, who also sold to Jakks. He helped Richard Yanofsky and WowWee before their sale to Hasbro, and again when they took back control of the company. Les helped many notable companies launch throughout his career like Zuru, Just Play, NSI, Skyrocket, Big Time Toys, WowWee, Creative Kids, The Canadian Group, Endless Games, Yvolution and Monogram, amongst others. He's been tied to the launches of some of the most successful TOTY winners in recent years like Bunch O Balloons and Fingerlings. Les also helped launch Own Brands at Toys R Us in their Baby doll brand, You & Me, and their Doll brand, Journey Girls.

Les has been and still is one of the best, if not the best, sales/product/marketing representatives in the entire toy industry. His success is proof of this. There was arguably no better rep or rep organization to work with at Toys"R"Us as testified to by both the TRU buyers and toy companies.

I've known Les most of my 30 years in the industry. No one has provided me with more insight and guidance as I built my company. From buyer to salesman and owner, Les has one of the most incredible histories and skillsets I've ever come across in our industry.

Sr Vice President/GMM Target & President TRU USA

Les is my "Toy Industry Rabbi". Almost a decade after I left the position at which he called on me, I still call him for advice. Across his nearly 50 years in the industry, he went from working at a local toy store to owning the single most effective and influential manufacturer's rep firm. He doesn't just sell -- he knows the entire lifecycle of a toy from concept to markdown like back of his hand.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

What most people don't know about Les is along the way repping other people's companies, he owned a few successful toy companies of his own. Les owned Janex Corporation in the 80s. Janex was the first manufacturer of Licensed Electric Toothbrushes, Licensed clocks and doll accessories. After growing the company from \$175k in sales to over \$13M, Les had a successful exit with Janex. In the 90s, he turned to the wheels category, starting a Go-Kart company called Yerf-Dog and a battery-operated ride-in company called Computec, making Porsche licensed ride-ins. In the mid-2000s, Les became a major player in the doll business with his company Winway, manufacturing baby dolls and doll furniture for numerous retailers in both national brands and private label brands.

Les' success helping create and bring to market Home Run products is amazing...from Blip's Squinkies to Big Time's Socker Boppers & Moon Shoes to CDI's McDonalds licensed toys, and many more; Les brought fun and beautiful memories to millions of kids and families.

Les has given me more guidance on how to position, sell and promote our new product launches than any other person I have ever consulted. His historical knowledge of the industry and its innovations is unsurpassed!

Developed the first private label brands at Target . Improved the merchandise presentation in store at Toys R Us , and in the process made the stores more customer friendly . Developed and introduced the Toys R Us Holiday Wish Book which was wildly successful and eventually copied by many other retailer. Developed several new store prototypes and new formats including Babies R Us , and Kidsworld.

Did you know that in addition to being an awesome rep, Les is the grandfather of licensed electric toothbrushes and clocks? He built a multi-million-dollar company around those products in the 1980s. In the 90s, made Porsche licensed ride-ons, and in the 2000s, when I met him, he owned Winway, one of the quiet giants in the baby doll category. He's a true innovator and entrepreneur.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Les and LFA has been a member of the Toy Association for over 30 years. He has been around long enough that LFA had their own space in the old Toy Building

Conceived and pioneered the initial concept of the Dallas Toy Fair which brought together hundreds of toy vendors and scores of retailers including all Divisions of Toys R Us International .

Les has been an active member of the Toy Association as long as I have known him, but probably a lot longer than that!

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Les would not have the success he has if it were not for his high degree of integrity.

Always

Routinely inspected manufacturing facilities throughout Asia and elsewhere , and worked closely with the CPA .

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Les and LFA has always been a large contributor to charity. Whether it was the Toys R Us Fund, Toys for Toys, or local charities in his community, Les' generosity is unwavering.

Absolutely!

Les was a strong supporter of many Children's charities throughout the years. As an example , He supported the Toysrus Children's charities every year , by buying a table and bidding on auction items.

Involved with Kids In Distressed Situations (KIDS)

Les' contributions to the Toys R Us Children's Fund and Toys for Toys was always beyond generous. I know that he is also involved in many local charities in his community. There is no one who is more generous than Les when it comes to helping others.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

When I joined the industry myself, everyone I spoke to would tell me that, if you want to get into Toys R Us, you've got to use Les. Les valued and respected both his manufacturers and his retailers. You'd be hard pressed to find a former buyer or executive at TRU that didn't respect Les and what he brought to TRU. He ability to identify products, develop strategies with both manufacturers and retailers, and serve both communities led him to being one of the most respected reps in the toy industry over the last 40 years.

Les understands clearly and has put into practice that being among the great sales and marketing leaders in our industry requires honesty in all that one does.

In an industry full of people that have no problem copying and profiting from the hard work of others, Les has always been a champion of small, innovative companies and helping them grow and thrive.

I believe Target and Toys R Us demonstrated and consistently operated with integrity that was well recognized throughout the toy industry during my tenure at both organizations (1980 -1997).

Anyone who has ever done business with Les knows that no matter which manufacturer he was representing, the product would be safe, of high quality, and a contributor to the growth of everyone involved. Just the fact that he represented someone was a feather in their cap. When a product line did not perform, markdown discussions

were always fair, and he made tough situations much easier to navigate because he fostered respect and integrity everywhere he went.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Les has always supported the TIA and encourages his manufacturers to be a part of the TIA. While not a sitting member of the association board (yet), he's often consulted by TIA members as an experienced member of the toy industry.

The many products that Les has led to market speak for themselves...as they have brought so much joy & entertainment to millions of consumers resulting in their appreciation and admiration for our toy industry.

Created numerous children's playrooms in hospitals with support from key vendors , including Nintendo .

Les has always supported the Toy Association and encourages everyone to do the same.

Additional Comments

The Hall of Fame has (and will always have) product inventors, company founders/leaders, retail executive and the biggest names in licensing. Manufacturer's reps have played a critical role in the toy industry since its beginning and their contribution to the industry spans to both retailers and manufacturers alike. Ray Larsen was inducted in 2017 and is the only manufacturer's rep currently in the Hall of Fame. Les was/is one of the best of his generation and is deserving of a place in the Toy Industry Hall of Fame.

Les is one of those unsung heroes who quietly went about his business and was valued by retailers and factories large and small . He is dedicated & passionate , an astute businessman with a great eye for trends and product , and the ability to execute quickly . Those qualities , made a memorable mark on the industry in his decade spanning career.

I am a huge admirer of how close knit the toy industry has always been . It's the most enjoyable of many consumer industries that I have been exposed to and had the privilege to work in.

Manufacturer's representatives bridge the gap between retailers and manufacturers, and reps like Les ensure that entrepreneurs with excellent products but not a lot of sales experience get a fair shot. Les is the ultimate professional in this regard, and he has earned his impeccable reputation. He fully deserves a place among the industry's most esteemed figures, as he represents the best of the best in his field, across all generations.

GAGNER, KARINE

President & General Manager, fdmt

Nominated by: Apolonia Velasquez, Marketing and E-Commerce Specialist, fdmt

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

With 20+ years in the sensory tools industry, Karine Gagner spearheads innovation, notably the acclaimed manimo weighted plush. Transforming lives across families and the education sector, her record is a statement to pioneering products that enhance sensory experiences, fostering the maximum development of all by significantly contributing to the well-being of individuals, leaving a profound impact far beyond the industry's confines..

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Our groundbreaking products, including the manimo weighted plush, as well as tools such as the weighted blanket, lap pad, and balance cushion, revolutionize sensory engagement. Crafted to enhance relaxation, concentration, and overall wellness, they provide transformative solutions for individuals seeking enriched sensory stimulation.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

With a decade-long commitment, Karine has been involved with The Toy Association in different capacities, attending the Toy Fair and actively participating in webinars, events, and initiatives. Her steadfast involvement showcases a dedication to staying informed, fostering collaboration, and driving innovation within the industry, enriching the community's collective expertise and growth.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

She champions ethical manufacturing practices, ensuring every product upholds the highest standards of quality and responsibility. With a commitment to transparency and environmental consciousness, she leads by example fostering a culture of integrity within the industry.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Her philanthropic endeavors focus on uplifting children and causes supporting their well-being. Through generous donations to families, associations, and organizations, particularly those serving the most vulnerable or with special needs, she fosters a brighter future, exemplifying compassion and advocacy for the next generation..

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Her unassailable reputation for integrity and respect in the industry is evident through numerous accolades and frequent invitations as a guest speaker. With a track record marked by excellence and ethical leadership, she continually sets the standard for professionalism, earning the trust and admiration of peers and stakeholders alike.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

As a prominent figure in the toy industry, through product innovation, advocacy, outreach, and ethical business practices, Karine elevates the industry's reputation, fostering trust and demonstrating its vital role in enriching lives and shaping childhood experiences.

GOLAD, ADI

CEO, Goliath

Nominated by: Michael Albert, President & CEO, TCG Toys

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Adi has built an incredible organization over many many years and is highly regarded by all who have crossed paths. He has brought so many tried and true classic products to market over the years one can't begin to list them all. He is a true gentleman and the industry should acknowledge all he has accomplished..

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Pop The Pig, Sequence etc. etc.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

NA

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

He would only apply utmost ethics in all he does

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

can't begin to list all he has done over the years to help others

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

ask anyone who he has ever met or dealt with and they will all say the same thing....He is a true gentleman!!!

HARDIN, GREG

Fomer CEO, Diverse Marketing

Nominated by: Wes Hardin, Current CEO, Diverse Marketing

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Greg Hardin, born into the industry alongside his father, Ed Hardin, has lived and breathed toys. From 1992 to 2020, he was the CEO of Diverse Marketing. A National Manufacturers Rep Group that started in four states when he started, he took the group to 50 States and Canada, representing products within the Toy and Gift Relam to retailers from independents to the masses.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Greg Hardin left an indelible mark on the manufacturers rep space by pioneering the first manufacturers rep firm in the United States. This groundbreaking initiative revolutionized the industry, setting a new standard for efficiency and effectiveness.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

He attended every show and TOTY Awards put on by The Toy Association every year, including when he was no longer an active member of Diverse Marketing.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Greg expanded our Rep model from four states to 50 states plus Canada. As a Manufacturer Rep, we don't entirely deal with the manufacturing side, but we do look to bring in a Diverse group of vendors who come from different manufacturing locations, sizes, and practices.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Greg was an active member of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in the North Dallas Chapter. Every year he helped facilitate a large auction where Diverse Marketing and himself would donates hundreds of dollars worth of toys to benefit the CF Foundation and their mission.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Through his accomplishments in the toy industry, Greg has shown the utmost integrity. He is respected by all of his past colleagues and continues to be a wealth of information.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Greg Hardin promoted public awareness of the toy industry by being an active member of the TIA for 30 years, during which he helped recruit suppliers to join the TIA and get involved in their shows.

HOLDEN, AMY

Director / Brand Development, World Alive

Nominated by: Martin Lombardini, CEO, LIT

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Amy Holden has been in the toy industry for over 20 years and has had several successful Brands..

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Some of her brands include: Aqua Dragons, Soul Mates, Freak Marbles, My First Games

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

She has been a vocal member of the Toy community.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

She has been on the forefront of developing sustainable materials for her products for years and has shared her knowledge with other in the toy community. .

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

She is very charitable. She actually opened her home to refugees from Ukraine and took in several children and mothers.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Absolutely, this is her track record.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

She attends all the trade shows and advocates for all those in the toy industry and fosters strong relationships among her clients and associates. She has had the same distributors in some cases for 15 years

KAHN, ALFRED

Chairman and CEO, Kidtagious

Nominated by:

Gene Murtha, Volunteer, SCORE Association

Stephen Gass, President, The Gass Company

Gerald V. Cleary, President, In-Sync Consulting LLC

Phil Jackson, Former Group Executive, Hasbro Games (retired)

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Alfred Robert Kahn (born January 18, 1947) is an American executive. From 1991 to 2011, he was chairman and CEO of 4Kids Entertainment, a company that is a global provider of children's entertainment and merchandise licensing. He previously led the licensing division for the Coleco company. In 1995, he turned Leisure Concepts, Inc. into 4Kids Entertainment, having previously served as chairman and CEO of the company since March 1991. In 2002, he founded the National Law Enforcement and Firefighters Children's Foundation. In 2012 he co-founded CraneKahn LLC and was the CEO and co-owner of that company. In 2019 CraneKahn folded into Kidtagious.

Al is a legend!

Al has had a long and distinguished career in developing, marketing and selling some of the greatest brands in our industries history. licensing toy concepts, many of which became massive hits that had a positive impact

Al discovered Cabbage Patch Kids and brought them to Coleco where he turned them into one of our industry's greatest successes. In fact, they were a phenomenon! Al identified the potential of Toys and Traditional games based on the collectible, tradable card game Yugi Oh! Both segments became bonafide hits unto themselves for Mattel and Hasbro. Al founded 4 Kids Licensing and had a substantial run of hit properties.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Al Kahn has been responsible for many of the biggest hits in licensing including Cabbage Patch Kids, Pokemon, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Yu-Gi-Oh! He is also credited for the marketing and licensing programs for other iconic brands such as Nintendo, Mario Bros, Zelda, Donkey Kong, James Bond, World Wrestling Federation, WCW, Monster Jam Monster Trucks, Xbox, and Polly Pocket. In June 2005, Kahn was inducted into the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers Association (LIMA) Murray Altschuler Licensing Hall of Fame. That very same year, Kahn was also inducted into the Kidscreen Hall of Fame. Kahn started VeVe collectibles with David Yu and Dan Crothers, 4 years ago which is now one of the recognized leaders in the NFT space. He also became the chief marketing officer for VitiPrints, which is just introducing the first masks, Viracide masks, that deactivate COVID-19 and it's variants with in a minute ocontactThis year Kahn will introduce to the world the # 1 show in China, KUNGFU PORK CHOPPERS! Also Kahn has just announced his new company Kidrageous which is concentrating on collectibles including comic books and Truexistant collections, as well as plush collectibles made in North America.

From Cabbage Patch to Pokemon, Yu-Gi-Oh!, Tokyo Mew Mew and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, the list goes on...

Cabbage Patch Kids, YU-GI-Oh, Pokeman

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

We are not aware of Al's contribution to the management of TA or it's predecessor organizations, but he has been a part of the Toy Fairs for 6 decades going back to his time as a toy buyer, through his years as a Marketer and into his current role as a licensor.

From his time at Coleco to present, Al continues to play an active role in the health of the toy and licensing industries.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

In our many years of serving the toy industry, AL has always been known throughout the industry for promoting the highest standards of practice, as a buyer, a marketer, a manufacture and a licensor.

To the best of my ability to remember YES

Yes. Al is a leader and an example for our industry and how to do it right.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Al Kahn founded the National Law Enforcement and Firefighters Children's Foundation to help the children of law enforcement personnel and firefighters and fund anti-drug and anti-violence programs. Kahn also serves on the board of directors of the Federal Drug Agents Foundation, the Children's Tumor Foundation, the Stephen Gaynor School for Learning Difficulties, Long Island University, and Bette Midler's New York Restoration Project.

On June 22, 2005, LIMA, the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, inducted Kahn into the Murray Althuler Licensing Hall of Fame for his "continual and outstanding" contributions to the licensing industry for over 10 years. Over those 10 years, Kahn and 4Kids had licensed such huge and popular properties such as Pokemon, Yu-Gi-Oh!, Tokyo Mew Mew and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Kahn also won the 2006 Spirit of Achievement award from the National Center for Learning Disabilities .

Al has fully exercised his "give back" muscles through his work with the National Law Enforcement and Firefighters Children's Foundation, and serving on the board of directors of the Federal Drug Agents Foundation, the Children's Tumor Foundation, the Stephen Gaynor School for Learning Difficulties, Long Island University, and Bette Midler's New York Restoration Project.

Children's Tumor Foundation, Firefighters Children's Foundation

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Al Kahn is a living legend in the Toy, Game and licensing world, he is principled, honest, and can be trusted to do what he says he will do.

YES!

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Few people in our industry represent the creative drive of our business, the marketing skills, the salesmanship, the ability to identify and spot trends like Al. He brings excitement to every project he touches.

Al has done many many media interviews during a long career and represented our beloved industry to the highest standards.

Additional Comments

As noted, Al's accomplishments include many of the greatest toy and game product of this generation of toy makers. He deserves recognition by the Hall of Fame committee, standing among the most select group of people who have shaped our industry with enduring play.

I had the opportunity to work with/for Al back in the Coleco days. His drive, passion, and 6th sense about what will work are unparalleled.

When you look at the body of work throughout Al's long career he is long overdue to be inducted into the Toy Industry Hall of Fame.

I was just starting my career in the Toy Business as an Assistant Marketing Manager at Coleco. I was assigned to the Accessories Category of a new and fast growing doll line called Cabbage Patch Kids. I watched (and learned) in awe as Al led the product development, marketing, sales and PR for what became a juggernaut in our industry. As successful as he was, he never stopped the practice of taking time for the rookies and giving them opportunities to make presentations, ask questions and solicit their opinions. Working under Al was the foundation of my career and led to my lifelong dedication to Toys and Games. I will be forever grateful for the opportunities he gave me.

President, Kohner Bros. 1966-1975 and The Michael Kohner Corporation 1975-Present

Nominated by:

Audrey Watanabe, Associate Manager, Inventor Relations, Mattel

Rich Mazel, General Manager, All 4 Fun Toys

JM Duparc, Chief Creation, Identity Games

Jenni Jalava, Vice President, Martinex Oy

Vincent Imaoka, Chief - International Business Development & Licensing, Sega Fave

Kim Vandenbroucke, President, Brainy Chick, Inc.

Jim Pressman, Retired President, Pressman Toy Corp.

Tony Serebriany, VP, Inventor Relations, The Op Games – usaopoly

Michael Albert, President & CEO, TCG Toys

Tim Walsh, Fearless Leader, The Playmakers

Don Ullman, President, Ulco Toy and Game Co.

Garry J. Donner, President, Random Games & Toys

Bastian Herfurth, Head of Project Management, Schmidt Spiele GmbH

Peter Kristoffy, Business Development Consultant – Games, Self-Employed

Karri Bean, Sr. Licensing Manager, Disney Consumer Products

George M. Irwin, CEO, Irwin Toy

Dieter Strehl, Managing Partner, Ferd. Piatnik & Sons

Gary Pyper, Fun-damnetal consulting Ltd

Eleanor Black, VP Business Development, Seven Towns

Andrew Berton, President, Excel Development Group, Inc.

Serge Azoulai, President, Lansay

Danny Kishon, Managing Director, All in 1 Products Ltd

Catherine McMillen (Gill) President, McGill Associates

Markku Heljakka, Chairman of the Board, Tactic USA

Sara Furay, Director of Investor Relations, Goliath

Mary Couzin, President, Chicago Toy & Game Group, Inc dba POP

Mark C. Nuccio, Founder, Design Edge

Floor Doggenaar, Group NPD, Innovation & Sustainability Director, Jumbo Group

Michael Steer, Vice President, Random Games & Toys

David Yakos, President, Streamline Design LLC

Shannon Swindle, Inventor Relations Manager, Games, Moose Toys

Peggy Brown, Owner, Peggy Brown Creative

Phil Sage, Senior Director, Design & Innovation, N.A., PepsiCo

Paul Laing, Head of Product Development, Cheatwell Games/Outset Media

Katrina (Kati) Heljakka, Doctor of Arts, PhD, Member of the Board, Tactic Games

Wendy Harris, Inventor, Random Games & Toys

Adi Golad, Founder, Owner, Md of Goliath USA, Pressman, Jakks, Pressman, Goliath International, Jakks

Mike Moody, CEO, Seventowns Ltd

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Michael created a worldwide licensing program while EVP of Kohner Brothers. Founded MKC in 1975 representing inventors, licensing 100s of items worldwide. Created an All-IN Pricing System in 2004 where inventors represented have their products shipped to distributors at prices that include royalty, development, molds, etc. making product placement easier.

Michael is one of those people that builds the industry and supports the next generation. He is a keystone to the industry and a legend in our midst.

Michael is a true legend in the industry. His All in License system is a win win for all parties involved

Michael has been in the industry for a long time, creating worldwide licensing programs, representing inventors and licensing their games worldwide. And has come up with a very effective way of working making it easy to the manufacturer and also to the customers

Has been responsible for product in the industry "Pop-O- Matic as an example that has endure the test of time both as having been the manufacturer as well as the licensor that needs to be recognized.

Part of the legendary Kohner Brothers family, Michael Kohner is Paul's son and entered the family business in 1965 after his father's passing. He was in charge of international licensing for the company and helped grow the company until its purchase by General Foods in 1969. Michael Kohner created a world wide licensing program for Kohner Brothers before it was sold and then formed Michael Kohner Company in 1975 to represent inventors, licensing 100s of products as an agent over his incredible career. Have worked together for over 35 years. He is a stalwart in our industry ahvin borgjht so much innovation to the product landscape words cannot capture.

I known Michael Kohner for over 50 years, and have seen him work with all the major toy manufacturers.

Michael's legacy blazes like a comet across the firmament of innovation. As the Executive Vice President of Kohner Brothers, through unleashed creativity, Michael birthed a worldwide licensing program that propelled the business to a key leader in the global market. In 1975, amidst the tumult of entrepreneurial fervor, Michael seized the reins of destiny and founded MKC, a bastion of ingenuity that would become the crucible for countless inventions. With a visionary zeal unmatched by his peers, he embarked on a crusade to amplify the voices of inventors, licensing hundreds of revolutionary products to every corner of the globe. But Michael's true stroke of genius came in 2004, when he unveiled the All-IN Pricing System, an innovation that revolutionized the industry landscape. With this audacious move, he shattered the barriers of tradition, empowering inventors to transcend logistical hurdles and streamline product placement with unprecedented ease. No longer shackled by the labyrinthine complexities of pricing structures, distributors and inventors alike found themselves liberated, emboldened to chart new frontiers of commerce and creativity. In the epic saga of Michael's career, each chapter bears witness to a relentless quest for excellence, a tireless pursuit of innovation that reshaped industries and

redefined the boundaries of possibility. His name now stands as a beacon of inspiration, a testament to the indomitable spirit of human ingenuity and the transformative power of visionary leadership.

Michael is a legacy candidate for the Hall Of Fame having Father and Uncle as Toy Industry veterans. He has been responsible for licensing over 100 products creating toys for millions of children worldwide. Member of the TA for decades Michael deserves serious consideration for this recognition.

Michael is a legend of the toy industry, created a worldwide licensing program, with an all-in pricing system which is unique

Part of the legendary Kohner Brothers family, Michael Kohner is Paul's son and entered the family business in 1965 after his father's passing. He was in charge of international licensing for the company and helped grow the company until its purchase by General Foods in 1969. Michael Kohner created a world wide licensing program for Kohner Brothers before it was sold and then formed Michael Kohner Company in 1975 to represent inventors, licensing 100s of products as an agent over his incredible career.

I know Michael Kohner for over 50 years, and have seen him work with all the major toy manufacturers.

Michael has been in the industry for decades, and the number of products in the market is too many to count!

Mike has licensed hundreds of items in the toy industry over the years. Treats inventors honestly, Created his "All-In Pricing" concept which is becoming a standard.

Michael represented many inventors over the years and created a global licensing program and this way got many new and exciting games to the end consumers. He created a licensing program where he would offer the games including Mold & royalty.

Michael, EVP at Kohner Brothers, launched a global licensing program, founded MKC in 1975 representing inventors, and developed an All-In Pricing System in 2004, streamlining product placement by including royalties, development, and molds in prices.

Through experience at the Kohner Bros factory and later through his own corporation, MKC, covering almost 60 years of serving the industries with hundreds of items that are still sold daily.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

A few better known MKC products licensed are LOOPIN' LOUIE, GIGGLE WIGGLE, MAD MOUSE, FRAIDY CATS, PENCIL NOSE LUCKY DUCKS, DON'T PANIC, MONSTER MASH, MAGIC TOOTH FAIRY, PUPPY RACERS, SHARK ATTACK and from KOHNER BROS. who doesn't remember TROUBLE with POP-O-MATIC, BUSY BOX, HI-Q games, Character PUSH BUTTON PUPPETS, etc.

Everything he has ever touched.

Too many to mention! Some of my favorites are LOOPIN' LOUIE, PENCIL NOSE, DON'T PANIC and TROUBLE with POP-O-MATIC

There are so many well known products that have gone through the Michael Kohner touch. Pencil nose, Loopin' louie, shark attack. And the pop-o-matic!

The list is endless.

His family was responsible for bringing some of the most enduring and classic products our industry has seen and beyond has brought inventions and innovation to our industry that nobody really knows of. He is a rock star!!!

As an agent and coach to many inventors, he has brought many items to market via licensing.

Michael has bridged Hong Kong and Manufacturers together, as well as items like Lucky Ducks, Big Roll Bingo, Slap, Don't Panic, Magic Tooth Fairy and many more

Together with Michael we have collaborated on many titles like Diggin Doggy, Magic tooth Fairy etc. Besides this he also has worked on many good titles like Loopin' Louie that is owned by many many families world wide.

Found a unique way to serve all ranks in the industry by offering games that include the tooling, the license fee the development the testing actually a turn key project shortening process and reducing risk.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Michael has been a member of the TA for decades, including the years it was called the TMA and TIA. His office was at the Toy Building and is now in his Private Suite at Javits. Michael has donated to the TIF in past years.

In addition to being a TA member for decades, he's been a huge supporter of the TIF.

Has been an integral part of many committees that further development of new innovation within the industry.

Has worked on committees and industry events too numerous to mention.

He has certainly been an influence in this area.

Michael has maintained a longstanding membership with the Toy Association (TA) spanning several decades, a tenure that spans the organization's evolution from the Toy Manufacturers of America (TMA) to the Toy Industry Association (TIA). Initially situated within the iconic Toy Building, his base of operations has since transitioned to his Private Suite at the Javits Center, a strategic move reflective of evolving industry dynamics and logistical optimization.

Aside of working with ethical manufacturers, Michael all along his career conducted his business relations in an outstanding fare manner treating "big Dog or Small Dog" with same interest and respect. He never let grid rule his business. Honesty as priority.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Michael has only partnered with ethical manufacturers such as Longshore, Tactic Games, Design Edge

Michael partners with Longshore, a very ethical and well established company.

There is not a more ethical person, in all respects, that I have met in over 40 years within the industry than Michael Kohner.

Over all the many years of having worked with Michael there is no more and ethical individual than he.

Michael's partnership with Longshore Limited, one of the most respected manufacturers in the toy industry, is a testament to his business ethics.

There is no one more honest or more trustworthy.

Michael has been an avid supporter of ethical manufacturing using Longshore as hie Manufacturer of choice

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Michael never left the Private Suite at Toy Fair without leaving all finished licensed games available for the Toy Foundation. Also donate samples to the Toy Foundation on e-mail solicitations when available.

He has supported 2+ generations of success in his field.

I am pretty sure Michael has donated his share of games for good purposes.

Innumerable

Michael never left the Private Suite at Toy Fair without leaving all finished licensed games available for the Toy Foundation. Also donate samples to the Toy Foundation on e-mail solicitations when available.

He goes above and beyond to raise funds (I have supported many of his efforts over the years) for worthy organizations and his comittement to doing so should NEVER be in question .

Michael has regularly donated toy products to the Toy Foundation throughout his career.

Michael's commitment to philanthropy shines brightly even amidst the hustle and bustle of Toy Fair. With a heart as generous as it is innovative, he ensures that every visit to the Private Suite culminates not only in fruitful discussions but in acts of kindness that reverberate far beyond the showroom floor.

Before departing the hallowed halls of Toy Fair, Michael meticulously gathers all finished licensed games, each brimming with the promise of joy and imagination, and bestows them upon the Toy Foundation. This selfless gesture transforms mere products into catalysts for happiness, ensuring that children facing adversity can find solace and delight in the magic of play.

But Michael's benevolence doesn't end there. Even when inundated with emails and solicitations, he remains unwavering in his dedication to giving back. Whenever possible, he liberally donates samples to the Toy Foundation, each package carrying not only the potential for play but also a tangible reminder of compassion and goodwill.

In these small yet significant acts of generosity, Michael embodies the true spirit of Toy Fair, where innovation and altruism intertwine to create a brighter, more inclusive world for children everywhere.

He donated to the toy foundation

Toy Foundation and anyone who ever asks for help in this industry-New Inventors, You name it Mike is a giver- Never a taker

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Everyone in the industry has warm positive feelings about the Kohner name and that it stands for integrity. Michael brings together competitors and inventors to break bread during Toy Fair. His door is always open for those who need help and he has been a mentor to many.

Michael has been a mentor to many and treats inventors with warmth and respect. He understands the value inventors bring to the industry, and while some companies write contracts that severely limit inventor profits and insist they carry unreasonable indemnity burdens, Michael's contracts reflect his commitment to partnership. His financial and personal support of inventor events such as POP reaffirm his desire to champion all parts of the industry.

Michael is not only a legend in the industry, he's been a mentor for so many new and young people in the industry. He trully is someone that brings the people in the industry together! He's an example!

There is not a nicer or more generous person in the toy industry than Michael Kohner. He takes care of people like they were his children. Connecting inventors to companies, and competitors to each other. Michael knows everyone, but you feel equally important to him, even if my company size is way smaller than of many others

Ask anyone that has ever crossed Michael's path what a total gentleman he is and has the industry at heart !!!!

Just ask anyone who has had the privledge of crossing Michael's path just how very much he is revered . You meet all kinds as you travel the world of this industry and there is no finer and individual than Michael Kohner in our midst...His integrity is impeccable.

Michael Kohner has beloved in the toy industry and anyone would be very hard-pressed to find someone who had a bad thing to say about the man.

The best. Exudes integrity and commands respect from everyone I know.

The mention of the Kohner name in the industry invokes a collective sense of admiration and respect, for it has become synonymous with unwavering integrity and genuine warmth. Michael Kohner, the luminary behind this esteemed reputation, not only excels in business but also in fostering a culture of camaraderie and collaboration within the competitive realm of the Toy Fair.

Respect is the first word that comes to mind with Michael, he has helped numerous professionals get their start. From the very beginning of my career Michael has treated me no different than he treats the CEO.

Mike is a man who brings people in the industry together--He stands for Integrity in the industry

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Michael embodies the very best of what the Toy Industry represents. His approach to business, much as his approach to life, is to be fair, honest, and direct and has never shied away from adding his clever humor and wit to any situation. From the days he hosted an annual get together of a Toy Industry group to attend a NY Ranger hockey game at MSG (still a passionate fan) to large Toy Fair dinners he hosted at Keens Steakhouse, Michael has always been a magnanimous host.

Any chance Michael gets to talk about the joy, importance and impact of the Toy & Game Industry he takes on with great pride and conviction.

Coming from the development side there is no greater champion than Michael.

Call Mary Couzins and let her tell you of all he has done....Game Set Match

As a champion of inventors and manufacturers like Longshore, Michael had a hand in 100s of products all along the development process from ideation to production and in so doing, has helped promote the world of play and toy design to the world.

He always gives his time to the toy and inventor community, shares his knowledge, donates to events and very philanthropic man

Michael makes many charitable contributions, both monetary and product.

You can call him "Mr Toy" Mr GAMES' who lives everyday for the positive aspects of our Industry.

On personal title he organizes 'get togethers' for his friends from the industry, which is always a pleasure to attend. He brings together all parties from the industry: toy companies, including competitors, and the inventor community. Everyone enjoys this a lot and it is highly appreciated.

His ethics have helped to make our businesses as responsible as possible to protect consumer safety while at the same time delivering the most fun possible to the public.

Michael epitomizes the toy industry - he is a pillar of the community.

Michael's Saving items from the trash pile and reviving them is a great way to hold and increase awareness

Additional Comments

Michael is an amazing example to all of us that could pick other fields but do so out of the love of toys, games and play. He has my highest recommendation.

From all the great people we have in our industry, Michael is unique. He continues to bring people together with his famous dinners during toy fairs and he still brings so much passion to the table even after so many years in the industry. I'm greatfull to consider him a friend.

I am very honored to be able to call Michael Kohner a friend of mine and feel that Michael has really left a footprint in the toy industry with both his products but also a person.

Michael's impact on the Toy Industry is unparalleled and wide reaching. He absolutely deserves a spot in the Toy Industry Hall of Fame.

Michael epitomizes what the Toy industry is all about. He truly deserves the honor of being inducted into the Toy Industry Hall of fame

Michael is an exceptional advocate for the Inventor/Designer Community, as well as for business partners that he has helped to grow. From the moment I met him, I was taken aback by the focus, passion and presence he has for what he does, and his celebration for all the wonderful people in this industry.

This man belongs to stand among those already honored and it would be a great tribute to his many many years and to his family that precedes him having launched many classic toys that have endured decades of success. He belongs in the Hall Of Fame so please make it so.

There are many deserving candidates but none more so than Michael Kohner on so many levels!!!

Michael has been an important mentor to me over the years. In addition, Michael is very generous with his experience and even his contacts and always tries to help others in the industry! In fact, one of my most successful products came from a Michael Kohner introduction. With his long and successful career in the industry he is very deserving of this honor!

I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this honor.

Michael is a gentle businessman, where a handshake still counts. His word is reliable. An industry icon.

I have known and worked with Michael Kohner for more than 20 years while I was employed both at Hasbro Games and Spin Master Games. Michael has always been honest, patient and fair in each business transaction and treats every company (licensee) the same, no matter their size and business potential. Michael's philosophy, which he vigilantly adheres to, is "first to commit is first to get the licensing rights". On a personal level, Michael has a warm and generous heart. He is always available for counsel (mentoring) and will go out of his way to help anyone in need. Our industry would benefit from more Michael Kohners!

Michael Kohner stands as a titan in both the Toy Industry and the realm of innovation, wielding influence that reverberates far beyond mere product lines. With his visionary creations, Kohner has fundamentally altered the landscape of childhood play, crafting experiences that transcend mere entertainment to etch unforgettable memories into the fabric of families worldwide. Through his groundbreaking products, he has not only redefined the notion of play but has also catalyzed moments of joy, imagination, and bonding that resonate across generations.

Yet, Kohner's impact extends beyond the realm of product development. He serves as a beacon of guidance and inspiration within his industry, dedicating himself to the cultivation of talent and the nurturing of innovation. As a mentor, Kohner generously imparts his wealth of experience, offering invaluable insights, sage advice, and unwavering support to colleagues striving to make their mark in the dynamic world of toys and innovation. In doing so, he not only elevates individual careers but fortifies the industry as a whole, ensuring a legacy of creativity, excellence, and enduring impact for generations to come.

Michael's commitment to the Toy Industry and people within the industry is unparalleled, he always has time for those who need it and has mentored many successful Toy icons in their early years.

He is super !

Michael is a truly wonderful individual, and should be recognized by his peers, for this prestigious acknowledgement

I have worked with Michael and his company for many years and achieved re-licensing success on behalf of my clients such as Don't Tip the Waiter, Fraidy Cats, and "Chicken Limbo".

Mike has been at the centre of representing the Games inventing community for decades and famously hosted a networking evening at the Ice Hockey at Madison Square Gardens every New York Toyfair where the international industry would come together. Mike has worked with the large and small companies all over the world, visiting them regularly on his "world tours" as well as at all the major toy fairs. As full of vim and vigour as ever it would be great to celebrate his lifetime of achievements.

He's a legend and ever so deserving of this recognition! It's an honour to endorse Michael for this nomination!

Our toy business has started in 1967 and then the co-operation with Kohner's Brothers was the starting point. We still have co-operation with Michael.

I can think of no other person whose name is so linked with Toy Industry.

Michael has made an indelible mark on the toy industry through his integrity and dedication to innovation, quality, play value and people. His influence extends beyond product development; he believes in giving with warm hands; has mentored and given to many. His heartfelt contributions have profoundly impacted our toy industry.

Mike and I have been my buddy for over Fifty Years. I know his entire family as he does mine. When my son Matthew Nuccio-Who you should know-Mike took him under his wing as he has done for so many-If there was ever a man i needed to watch out for me whether personally of business wise -It would be Michael _Proud to know him. (And a prayer in memory of his Dear Wife Elaine) Peace to All –

Thank you Michael for the collaboration over all the years!

I've known Michael since 1979. He has been a leader, mentor, and supporter of the inventing community forever! He is probably one of the main reasons that we survived our early years as inventors. As you can see above, his list of accomplishments makes him a super star in our business. His games have probably generated billions of hours of fun for children all over the world. There is no better credential for being inducted into the Toy Association Hall of Fame.

I consider him a mentor and and pattern for how I have entered the buisness and do work.

When I think of Michael, I always think of TROUBLE! Ha, just kidding! When I think of Michael, I think of warmth, generosity, and kindness. He is an absolute legend in our industry! He is like the godfather of our toy & game family, and his dinners are among my favorite memories. Michael's gift is bringing people together, always in the spirit of promoting play.

Michael has built incredible products over decades which add up to an incredible body of work, though that's not nearly his most important accomplishment. He is tirelessly generous of spirit and knowledge, and we all benefit from his wisdom and efforts to connect people and share his wisdom. In no other industry are people, competitors really, so eager to trade, share, collaborate, combine efforts and raise each other up as in the toy industry, and Michael has played an important role in fostering our community and teaching us all how to share the way he does. We're all only one degree away from Michael Kohner because of the enormous impact he has made. His work not only leaves an indelible mark on kids and families the world over, but on the many members of Toy Nation - from the seasoned vets to the dewy newbies. Michael is a true mensch.

Michael's track history in toys and games is exemplary. Michael was one of the first experts I approached to get to know, as I made my transition from LEGO to Hasbro, in a chapter I am extremely grateful. He is a gentleman, scholar and a leader. A person I'm honored to call my friend. He deserves this like no other.

It has been an honor to have known Michael for so many years. He is a great figure in the world of toys and games.

I consider Michael an important mentor for my work as a product designer and toy and play scholar/toy expert working in the industry, the non-profit sector, as well as academia.

Michael always makes time for inventors and is their biggest cheerleader. He makes a difference in the lives of everyone who knows him.

I cannot mention a better nominee serving the industry for almost six decades

I have known and worked with Michael for over thirty years and he deserves this award for his all his contributions to the Toy Industry and as a mentor to many of us.

LARIAN, ISAAC

CEO and Founder, MGA Entertainment

Nominated by: Arnie Rubin, Retired CEO, Funrise Inc.**Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.**

Isaac has been a visionary and innovator in the toy industry for the past 45 years. MGA has introduced and marketed many of the industries most successful product lines

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Bratz and LOL Surprise were huge industry success stories

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

NA

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

NA

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Isaac has generously supported an organization that I'm personally involved with, The Literacy Project, which benefits under performing 2nd and 3rd graders in bridging the literacy gap

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

NA

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

NA

LEVY, RICHARD C.

Founder & President, Richard C. Levy and Associates

Nominated by: Bettie C. Levy, Founder & CEO, BCL Entertainment**Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.**

Founder/President Richard C. Levy & Associates. 45+ year career as a member of the independent inventor community. First toy, StarBird (Milton Bradley), sold over 1-million units. First game, Adverteasing (Cadaco), sold over 1-million units. Partner in licensing and development of animatronic Furby (Tiger/Hasbro), which has sold over 70 million units worldwide to date and in 12 different languages.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Toy/Game/Premium licensees include: Bandai, Basic Fun, Cadaco, Cardinal, Duncan, Educational Insights, Endless Games, Ertl, Estes, 4Kidz, Fashion Bug, Fat Brain, Fisher-Price, Galoob, Ganz, General Foods, Gerber, Goliath, Great American Puzzle Factory, Hasbro, Ideal, International Playthings, Kenner, Knots, Lakeside, Learning Curve, LJN, MasterPieces, Matchbox, Mattel, Meccano, Mego, MGA, Mindware, Milton Bradley, Monogram, Moose, Parker Brothers, PlayMind, Playskool, Poof-Slinky, Pressman, Proctor & Gamble, Ralston-Purina, Russ, Schmidt Spiele, Skillcraft, Spinmaster, SRM, Super Impulse, SwimWays, Tiger, Tomy, ToyMax, Tyco, Uncle Milton, University Games, USAopoly, Vivid Imagination, Wicked Cool Toys, Winning Moves.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Richard volunteered to participate in many Creative Factor seminars held during NYTF, both as a solo speaker and also speaking with co-author Ron Weingartner. Additionally, Richard participated in TA's Generations of Play: An Oral History Project, American Folklore Center, Library of Congress.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Richard supports all ethical manufacturing practices (and has visited overseas factories to experience first-hand the procedures taking place).

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Donation of 2500 historic catalogues to the Strong Museum. Donations to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center (Children's Cancer Fund) at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Pap Corps 2019 Award (Honorees Sheryl and Richard Levy for your extreme generosity and tireless work to help find a cure.) Financial support and truckloads of toys and games for children being treated at U of Miami's Cancer Center.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

45 years in the industry with endless colleagues/clients/friends, all who would say Richard holds the highest regards within the industry... for his tireless work-ethics and contributions to the industry but more importantly, his selfless nature of always being available to help others... and being the best family man on the planet.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Co-authored several highly acclaimed books about the industry and in particular the professional independent inventing community, including Inside Santa's Workshop, How Toy Inventors Develop, Sell, and Cash In on Their Ideas, From Workshop to Toy Store, and The Toy and Game Inventor's Handbook (#2 on Forbes' 2016 list of the 33 Best Books Recommended by Shark Tank Entrepreneurs). Wrote many articles for variety of industry trade publications (ie. The Toy Book, Playthings, and MoJo Nation). Keynote Speeches include Tagie Awards, Licensing Executives Society Annual Conference, USPTO's National Inventor's Day, National Science Foundation's Conference on Industrial Science and Technological Innovation, IBM's Inventor Dinner, Inventors of National Capital Area, Wharton School's Entrepreneurship Conference at UPenn, University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business, and University of Hawaii's Shidler College of Business. Profiled in Kiplinger's Personal Finance, New York Times, Washington Post, Inventor's Digest, The Discovery Channel's Invention's TV series, etc.

Additional Comments

Richard is so beyond deserving of this recognition and I only wish these submission spaces allowed for longer answers. ;-)

LITZKY, MICHELE

President of Michele Litzky Marcomms, Founder of Litzky Public Relations, Michele Litzky Marcomms

Nominated by: Josslynne Welch, President, Litzky PR

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Michele Litzky launched her agency and joined the toy industry in the early 1980s, just as it started marketing to children. A niche marketer by trade, she applied her expertise in consumer package goods to the industry of play under the tutelage of Stephen Hassenfeld, Tom Griffin, and Joe Bacal.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Litzky has launched toys into category-leading brands (e.g., G.I.Joe, My Little Pony, Transformers), and delivered marketing successes like Mr. Potato Head's Boise, Idaho Mayoral campaign, launching CAP Candy's Spin Pop and Lazer Pop into a \$50M category, without advertising, and amongst the first toy launches at CES with WowWee's Robosapien.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

An active Toy Association member for 35+ years, Litzky also called it a client for more than a decade. Dedication to the TA includes active roles on committees, mentoring programs, TOTY board, the opening of the Hall of Fame in 2015, and was the first president of Women in Toys.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

While ethical manufacturing practices were an issue Litzky supported clients with, she played a larger role in ethical marketing practices working with Peggy Charren on Action for Children's Television and counseling clients and helping the industry maneuver through new regulations instituted by the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU).

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

In 1984, Litzky wrote the charter for the Hasbro Children's Foundation and has since dedicated her career to causes that benefit children and families, including pro bono work for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, extensive support of The Toy Foundation, and currently involved with the Boys & Girls Clubs.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Among the first women invited to work alongside industry leaders, Litzky led innovative communications programs that caught the industry's attention and set the standard for publicity and promotion. From launching startups to building some of today's iconic brands, she has also mentored other women to lift them amidst the industry.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Litzky PR is a leading communications agency in the business of play. With 36 years of expertise working with kids and family brands, the agency supports B2C and B2B clients. Litzky was the first president of Women in Toys and the agency continues to be very active in the organization.

Additional Comments

Litzky's impressive and impactful career is bookended by the breakfast where Stephen Hassenfeld and Stephen Spielberg saw Transformers for the first time and the moment when Brian Goldner brought the iconic brand to the big screen. In between, she learned from and partnered with many of the industry's icons.

MONTOYA, JULIAN

COO, The Noble Collection

Nominated by: Akram Saigh, Retired CEO, The Noble Collection

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

35 years

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Harry Potter, Warner brother, Lucas, Fox

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Yes

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Yes

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Yes

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Yes

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Yes

Additional Comments

Julian Montoya is a legend in the toy industry

MORRIS, HUNTER

VP of Product Strategy & Marketing, Boogie Board (part of Kent Displays, Inc.)

Nominated by: Monica Whitehurst, Senior Director of Marketing & Communications, Boogie Board (part of Kent Displays, Inc.)

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Nearly 15 years at Boogie Board, serves as lead product designer and has built out company's robust toy division (in partnership with integrated product team)

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Under Hunter's product strategy and design leadership, Boogie Board has solidified its role as a beloved toy leader. Hunter blends his industrial design expertise, role as a father of four, and marketing/business acumen to design award-winning creativity toys using the company's patented LCD tech.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Hunter was proud to serve as a virtual speaker for the Toy Association/Toy Fair '23 University on the topic of how companies can innovate around a core technology. Hunter also led the design for Play 'n Trace -- a Boogie Board toy that won a "Toy of the Year" award from the Toy Association in 2016.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Hunter works closely with all key stakeholders at Boogie Board to ensure our design, development, and manufacturing processes meet rigorous, best-in-class standards. As a company dedicated to providing products that serve as paper alternatives, Hunter is especially passionate about prioritizing FSC certified materials for packaging whenever possible.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

As a father of four, Hunter is often lending his time out of the office to the Kent, OH school district and sporting events that require coaches and volunteers. Hunter's wife is a teacher, so supporting area schools and teachers locally is a passion point for him.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Yes - Hunter demonstrates integrity and garners respect from industry peers.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

One of the areas that Hunter is most vocal about when it comes to the toy industry is his passion for screen-free play, as well as supporting businesses and brands that create original and authentic toy innovations (vs. copycat products). Whether it's judging a young inventor's challenge in Chicago or working with his team to launch a product authenticity awareness program, he deeply understands the importance of toys and play.

NUCCIO, MATT

President, Design Edge

Nominated by: Greg Walsh, President, Walsh PR

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

I've known Matt for most of my career in the toy industry. He has designed some of the most renowned toys and games in the world

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Past to present

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Matt is on several boards and committees including TOTYs.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

U.S. and overseas manufacturing knowledge

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Donations and support esp in Long Island

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

I think everyone in the industry recognizes Matt.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

He's well know part of all toy committees

SCHER, DAVID

President, David Scher, Inc.

Nominated by:

Lindsey Scher Murphy, Director of New Business Development, License 2 Play Toys, LLC

Neal Hoffman, CEO, Mensch on a Bench

Patricia B. Jackson, President, PB&J Marketing, LLC

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Mattel- 1984-1989- David was the Vice President of Sales for Kmart which was a significant player in the toy industry at the time. David then pivoted to Tiger Electronics and worked with toy legends such as Roger Shiffman. David then became a VP at Jakks Pacific during the height of WWF (now WWE). From there, David started Zizzle Toys with Roger Shiffman, Marc Rosenberg, and Patty Jackson and landed the Pirates of the Caribbean license. David then went on to become a top toy rep at Walmart for companies such as WowWee, Beverly Hills Teddy Bear Company, License 2 Play, and more. David has had an incredible toy career, but now spends time consulting and mentoring up and coming toy leaders such as Neil Hoffman (Mensch on a Bench, FanRoll Dice), Gavin Lawler (Irish Fairy Doors, Deddy Bears), and Lindsey Berger (Director of New Business Development-License 2 Play).

David has a long and storied history in the toy industry which began when he was a child helping his own father in the toy industry. He was the lead sales person on Furby, lead sales at Zizzle and has helped many organizations. I can really speak to my experience with David when I was a novice toymaker with the idea of Mensch on a Bench. David took me under his wing and helped me through the process of getting the Mensch produced in China. He then literally held my hand as I visited Target, BBB and Walmart for the first time. David helped me manage the Shark Tank process and continue to grow the line on Mensch for the past 12 years. I am 100% sure that without David Scher, there would be no Mensch on a Bench.

I have worked with David Scher at two different companies over a 20 year period (Tiger Electronics/Hasbro & Zizzle)

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

David is a second-generation toy salesman and is loved by everyone in the industry. David is a sales dynamo and has worked with companies such as Mattel, Jakks, Tiger Electronics, WowWee, Beverly Hills Teddy Bear Company, KIDesigns, Endless Games (now Goliath), The Bridge (now Basic Fun), License 2 Play Toys, etc. David has led the sales charge on items such as Barbie, Hot Wheels, Masters of the Universe, TalkBoy, Furby, WWF (now WWE), Paper Jamz, Robosapien, Surprizamals, Justin Bieber Dolls, etc. David's sales career is extremely impressive, but his impact on other salespeople in the industry is what makes him worthy of hall-of-fame status.

David has helped in the development and production of over a dozen Mensch on a Bench items created for the Jewish marketplace. This includes Ask Bubbe (the talking Jewish Grandmother), Mitzvah Moose and Dreidel Dog.

David was an extraordinary sales person leading many different sales teams and training a variety of new comers to the industry. He worked with all the major and minor retailers

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

David is an industry mentor outside of an official organization. David has mentored inventors, manufacturers, and sales leaders such as Neil Hoffman (Hasbro, Mensch on a Bench) and Gavin Lawler (Irish Fairy Doors, Deddy Bears).

Outside of the TIA, David is a mentor to dozens of entrepreneurs and helps them manage the process of taking an idea and bringing it to market.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

David always partners with certified factories for his mentoring/manufacturing. David lives by a fierce ethical code. He is always direct and honest with his buyers and my favorite quote is "unlike fine wine, bad news does not get better with age". David always faces challenges and issues head on and does so with honor and integrity.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

David is on the board of Autism Speaks in Florida. He has also donated thousands of products over the years to Children Hospital of Michigan.

David is involved in children's autism awareness in Florida in his semi-retirement.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

If you ask anyone in the industry, they will tell you they love David. I could list 100 people (maybe more) who you could call, email, text, and they would all respond back that David has positively impacted their lives in the toy industry. Although David is my father, he has also been my best mentor in the toy industry. I owe my sales

successes to him- I have learned the right way to manage my business and provide my customers with the best customer service.

As someone who runs the Mensch on a Bench company, I can say with 100% certainty that David is a Mensch, a good or honorable person. I am a better person for having known and worked with him.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

David LOVES the toy industry. He has made his best friends in this industry and is proud to be part of the toy community. He starts every story with, "when I was a baby at Mattel" and raves about his experiences in the industry. When people are looking for new opportunities, he always points people in the direction of the toy industry. David is in the board of SoapSox, Autism Speaks, etc. and always puts ethical practices at the forefront of his teachings.

Additional Comments

David has impacted this industry in such a significant way. He is one of the best, if not the best, salesperson in the toy industry. Buyers always trust David's opinion because he is honest, ethical, and genuinely loves the toy industry. If you need the list of 100 people to contact in the industry that believe David deserves this award, I am happy to send it!

SCHOENEBERG, BRAD

Vice President - Merchandising & Product Design, The Walt Disney Company

Nominated by: Robert A. LaFlamme, Director - Merchandising – Toys, The Walt Disney Company

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Brad, a seasoned Disney Parks expert boasting 25+ years in toys, ascended from Walt Disney College Program to VP of Disney Consumer Products. Since 2003, as Toys Developer and Buyer, he revolutionized the division, crafting immersive experiences and broadening the product range, solidifying its industry dominance.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Brad orchestrated pivotal toy partnerships with industry giants such as Duncan Yo-Yo, Hasbro, and LEGO, fueling multimillion-dollar revenue streams. He spearheaded the creation of diverse toy lines, elevating Disney's brand presence across major franchises and pioneering immersive experiences in iconic destinations like CARSLAND, Star Wars Galaxy's Edge, Avengers Campus, and Pandora: The World of Avatar.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Brad actively engages in the global toy community, participating in international toy fairs, conducting market research, and contributing to industry benchmarking. He is involved in major award events (and multi-time winner) such as the TOTY Awards, IAAPA Awards, THEA Awards and TAGIE Awards, showcasing his commitment and recognition to the toy industry.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Brad champions ethical manufacturing with a focus on sustainability, source country diversification, and product integrity. He has transitioned Disney plush to sustainable materials, introduced plastic-free packaging for Disney Princess dolls, and implemented eco-friendly structural enhancements, combining playability with environmental responsibility.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Brad has actively supported numerous charitable organizations through initiatives like Force for Change benefiting UNICEF, Toys for Tots, Give Kids the World, and Make-A-Wish. He has contributed time and product donations to align with key philanthropic priorities that make a meaningful impact.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Brad's unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the Toy industry stems from his unwavering commitment to honesty, fairness, and professionalism in all his dealings. He consistently prioritizes transparent communication, ethical decision-making, and fostering positive relationships with colleagues, partners, and stakeholders, earning him widespread admiration and trust within the industry.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Brad promotes public awareness of the toy industry by actively engaging in community outreach, educational initiatives, and public speaking engagements. Through his advocacy for responsible business practices, innovation, and safety standards, Brad demonstrates the toy industry's vital role in fostering creativity, education, and social development while ensuring consumer trust and confidence in its products..

Additional Comments

Brad epitomizes the essence of excellence and innovation in the toy industry. With over two decades of dedicated service, his transformative leadership, unwavering integrity, and pioneering spirit have not only elevated Disney's toy division but also set industry standards. Brad's profound impact on the industry merits recognition in the Toy Hall of Fame, where his legacy will inspire future generations of toy enthusiasts and industry professionals alike.

STERN, GARY

Company Founder, Chairman of the Board, Stern Pinball

Nominated by: Hannah Fletcher, Assistant Account Executive , fortyseven communications

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Since the 1930s, Gary Stern and Stern Pinball have been synonymous with blending traditional mechanics with modern technology. Gary has overseen collaborations with countless iconic pop culture icons, while garnering awards, accolades and loyal fans, and establishing Stern Pinball as a revered leader in quality, durable pinball manufacturing.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Under Gary Stern, Stern has pushed boundaries in product innovation more. Stern's Insider Connected system sets the brand apart in pinball, pushing gameplay into the digital realm, allowing players to interact globally. Strategic collaborations with franchises like John Wick ensure Stern's appeal to a broad market, with immersive player experiences.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

NA

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Stern has a dedicated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices. All machines are expertly handcrafted at the Stern Pinball Factory in Chicago, Illinois, using quality materials and practices, ensuring that each Stern machine is of the highest quality and caliber.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Amongst other philanthropic endeavors, Stern Pinball has proudly donated pinball machines to Project Pinball, a charity organization that places pinball machines in Children's Hospitals and Ronald McDonald Houses to introduce therapeutic benefits to kids of all ages as well as making many kid's Make-A-Wishes come true.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Boasting a lifetime of experience in pinball, including his roles as founder of Stern Pinball and Data East Pinball, contributions to innovations, including licensed pinball machines, electronic flipper control, and more, Gary has earned a respected reputation, which further extends to the video game and toy industries and well beyond.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Gary spearheaded the creation of Stern's manufacturing process, employing over 500 craftsmen with toy manufacturing experience to imagine, build, and test each hand-made game. The team is constantly seeking out positive attention for these craftsmen in trade publications and award recognitions to put a much-deserved spotlight on these artisans.

Additional Comments

Gary has founded an iconic brand, rich with history and joy-inducing entertainment. Since the 1930s, Stern continues to innovate and bring interactive gameplay to all ages and backgrounds, delighting with nostalgic and reimagined classics and popular culture. Stern inspires a lifetime love of games, forges friendships, and connects people everywhere.

VALENTA, RUDY AND NORIKO

Founders, Magna-Tiles

Nominated by: Rudy Valenta, VP of Americas, Plan Toys

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Rudy and Noriko Valenta pioneered the Magnetic Construction Toy category with Magna-Tiles. There are now, 10s if not 100s of brands and products in the wildly popular global category

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Magna-Tiles brought magnetic construction toys to the world. Magna-Tiles have been a TOYT winner among the countless other awards it has won globally.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Valtech & Magna-Tiles have been long time members of the Toy Association since 1997 when the company was founded and have been showing at NY Toy Fair since it's early days.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Yes, they have committed to ethical and safe manufacturing at numerous factories around the world for their global supply chain.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Among the many charitable efforts, Magna-Tiles has recently partnered with the museum of Discovery and Science to open the Magna-Tiles Studio to let the local community have a play space to create and play with Magna-Tiles.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Without a doubt. They are supported of play through and through.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

With the promotion of Magna-Tiles goes hand in hand with the toy industry and the benefits of play that it brings to every individual's day

Additional Comments

I appreciate the consideration for this founding couple and their impact to the toy industry. They are a representation of a the American dream of bringing an idea to live from the basement of their home to a household name that millions of children play with daily.

WEINER, ANDREW

Chief Advisor, Chief Advisor, Toy'n Around

Nominated by:

Andy Quartin, CEO, Thames & Kosmos

Dan Bowling, CEO, Toy'n Around

Elizabeth Wicox, Sr. Sales Executive, Toy'n Around

Kevin Friedland, Vice President Sales, Toy'n around

Bryan Scott, Vice President, Target

Nik Nayer, Chief Merchandising Officer, Senior VP, Target

Karl Aaronian, Senior VP Marketing, Playmates Toys

Brain Bonnet, CEO, Bonkers Toys

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Celebrating 50 years in the Toy Industry in 2025

Andy's impact on the toys industry could possibly be second to none when you consider the fifty years of aggregated success. Andy made the first sale for brands like Vtech, Battat, Playmates, Cra-Z-Art, Basic Fun, Wicked Cool (Jazwares now), Bonkers, Zuru, and IMC. Those companies may not exist without Andy's leadership and ability to scale their brands into US market, specifically at Target. If Andy was directly the head of sales for all those accounts, he'd already be in the Hall of Fame. But, in essence, that is what he was. All of these manufacturers, that are today household names, had zero sales in the USA before Andy. They now make up a large chunk of the entire industry. Historically, Toy'n Around has been the largest rep firm in the entire industry and has launched over 300 brands that have accomplished over \$3 billion dollars in retail sales. When you consider those numbers, not even CEOs of our most recognized and well established companies have successfully launched as many brands as Andy. Rep firms at Target were not common in the Toy Industry, but his impact with Toy'n around has now become the proof for the entire business model. Today, there's an estimates 100 rep firms in the Twin Cities, all following his lead. There may not be another person ever to come along and be attached to as many big brands as Andy. t on the toy industry in possibly second to none.

Over 50 years in the toy industry founding the largest rep firm in the industry. Launching over 300 brands that have accomplished over \$3 billion dollars in retail sales.

If you've been in the toy industry and had any dealings with Target, you would know of Andy Weiner and Toy'n around. Andy built the largest Rep firm in the midwest with a focus on Target. He helped launch numerous brands at Target and built a reputation not only for himself, but for his company, Toy'n around.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Successfully launched many

Per above, I think he legitimized the entire Rep Firm Industry. In addition to that, he is responsible for getting Target back into industry events such as the association trade shows and even their involvement in that Toy Association as a member, which he is solely responsible for.

Andy continually looks at ways to improve the vendor and retailer's timeline and action utilizing his relationships with Target leadership and Vendors alike to listen, share and enact process improvements.

Andy helped put toy companies like Playmates, Bonkers Toys, Cra-Z-Art and Basic Fun on the map at Target. He led a team building the most trusted rep group at Target.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Served 3 full terms on TA board, actively involved in many committees, currently a non voting advisor to TA chair. Chair emeritus of the Toy Foundation.

Yes, former Chairman of Foundation

Andy has served on The Toy Association's Executive board committee but whether titled or not he is and always will be in the "toy industry", a staple and founding father in the rep community.

Andy's time spent on the TIA Foundation and Board changed the direction of fundraising and community bringing industry veterans and companies together to raise money for companies that needed it.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Yes, but would love to hear from those that have worked close with him over the last 50 years. I imagine this has evolved quite a bit over that long period of time.

Our company core values were instilled by Andy and why our company has won Inc Magazine "Best of" three times. Andy is also the reason we're so charitable with our net proceeds.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Significant time, money and talent to many organizations including but not limited to The Toy Foundation, Make a Wish, and Minnesota Children's hospital.

Toy'n Around has fed over 1 million children, saved over 200 girls from human trafficking, funded domestic abuse therapy for over 100 kids, and helped raise millions of dollars for Make A Wish Foundation.

Through Andy's leadership, he has impacted well over a million children's and young people's lives through Toy'n Around's generous annual charitable give back campaigns.

- Supplying safe drinking water for the underprivileged

- Providing meals for the underfed

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Andy was the first vendor partner I ever worked with when I started my career in retail. He was hugely supportive, taught me a lot about retail, and always demonstrated tremendous integrity. Fast forward 25 years later, and he continues to be that sounding board and thought partner for me. No matter the issue, I trust that he will always give me good advice. I value our relationship and all the council he has shared over the years. I know I'm not alone in those feelings. The Toy Industry has been blessed to have Andy's leadership over the course of his career. He has been of big part in making this great industry what it is today.

Yes, clearly.

Fifty years of service and not even a rumor or peep of anything but total integrity. That alone is an accomplishment!

Ask anyone in the industry and they will tell you the same thing; not only does Andy drive with proven results but he is most importantly a great man who we are proud to nominate and hope to recognize.

There are few reps that are associated with the largest retailers in the toy industry. When you want to get into Target, you call Andy and Toy'n around. He built Toy'n around based on his expertise of the industry, expertise of Target, and syncing that knowledge to help manufacturers grow to become major companies in our industry.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Yes, his record speaks for itself.

I think he took the foundation from an entity that was not supported even with in the association to a foundation that is now supported across the entire industry.

Additional Comments

I can't think of a more fitting inductee into the Toy Hall of Fame. Andy's love for this industry is intense, long, unwavering and selfless. If it's possible to bleed toys, he does. Not only has he been instrumental in launching many brands and companies, but he's created a pipeline of talent that helps keep this industry innovating and growing. The positive effects of his legacy will continue long after he retires.

If everyone shared Andy's passion for the Toy'n industry, the world would be an even more remarkable place.

We, as an industry, have an opportunity to reward some of our greatest, 50+ year contributors to the toy industry. Through their support, manufacturer's reps have helped hundreds of companies achieve success through the major retailers. Andy is one of those reps that deserves to be recognized in the Hall of Fame. At Toy'n around we consider ourselves 'more than just a rep'... and Andy has exemplified that throughout his career and for his lifelong achievements and contributions would make him a great addition to the Toy Industry Hall of Fame.

ZAWITZ, RICHARD X

Inventor& Tanglemaster, Tangle, Inc.

Nominated by: Jan Marie Zawitz, VP Sales & Marketing, Tangle, Inc.

Long experience and record of accomplishment in the industry.

Richard X. Zawitz boasts extensive expertise and a remarkable track record in the toy industry. With decades of experience, he has demonstrated a talent for innovation, product development, and design, contributing significantly to the evolution of the classic Tangle play pattern and creating beloved toys cherished by generations of children worldwide.

Innovative product, marketing introductions or significant process improvements.

Richard X. Zawitz's innovative product, Tangle, is a tactile and versatile toy composed of interconnected plastic pieces that twist and turn. Its unique design fosters creativity, sensory stimulation, and stress relief, making it a beloved sensory toy enjoyed by individuals of all ages worldwide.

Active involvement in the Committees or work of The Toy Association.

Richard X. Zawitz's contributions to The Toy Association include leveraging his extensive industry experience to advocate for innovation, safety standards, and educational value in toys. As a respected, decades-long member, he collaborates on initiatives promoting excellence in educational and sensory toys, shaping the future of the toy industry for generations to come.

Demonstrated commitment to ethical manufacturing practices.

Richard X. Zawitz exemplifies a steadfast commitment to ethical manufacturing practices by prioritizing fair labor conditions, sustainable sourcing, and product safety throughout his career. He ensures that his products adhere to stringent ethical standards, fostering trust and accountability within the industry and promoting responsible business practices globally.

Charitable efforts benefiting children and/or children's causes.

Throughout his career, Richard X. Zawitz generously donates Tangle toys to schools, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations, aiding children with sensory needs. His initiative fosters therapeutic play, aiding in cognitive development and emotional well-being, demonstrating his dedication to supporting children's diverse needs and enhancing their quality of life through Tangle's classic play pattern.

An unimpeachable record of integrity and respect in the industry.

Known fondly as the Tanglemaster, Richard X. Zawitz upholds an impeccable record of integrity and respect in the toy industry, earning widespread admiration for his creative genius, honesty, and altruism. His unwavering commitment to excellence, coupled with a genuine regard for colleagues and consumers, solidifies his reputation as a trusted leader and role model within the industry.

Promoting the public's awareness of the toy industry as a significant and responsible member of the business community.

Richard X. Zawitz elevates public awareness of the toy industry's significance and responsibility by championing innovation, safety, and education in toys. His life's work to "spread peace through creativity" is evident in the generations of children and adults who have come to recognize and adore the Tangle brand. Positivity and self-discovery through play is the underscore of his life's work. At 77 years young, he continues to play a pivotal role as a vital contributor to childhood development and joy.

Additional Comments

Richard X Zawitz is my father-in-law. Married to his son and being a part of their business for over a decade now has been a real joy. I am nominating RXZ because I have seen firsthand how his art (and subsequently the invention of his Tangle toys) has positively impacted the lives of children and adults all over the world. The Tangle brand is widely recognized and truly beloved by all who have experienced the joy of its classic play pattern. To be recognized for his life's work and his contribution to the toy industry would be the honor his life. Thank you for your consideration!