



MEET HOOSIER

Tim Barrick

The
2017
Weld
Coxe
Marketing
Achievement
Award
Winner

By Ed Hannan

Hoosier. We know it's a term used to describe someone who lives in Indiana. It's also the name of Indiana University's athletic teams and the title of a classic 1980s movie starring Gene Hackman and Dennis Hopper.

While most of us are familiar with the term "Hoosiers," we might not be as knowledgeable about its history. So, when SMPS sat down with Tim Barrick, FSMPS, this year's Weld Coxe Marketing Achievement Award (MAA) winner from Indiana, one of the first things we asked was, "What's a Hoosier?"

On the day I posed the question, we sat on a sunny July morning in Indianapolis just before he was honored at the 2017 SMPS Build Business conference. He pointed to different buildings that dotted the skyline and shared his thoughts on the history of each building, the architecture of each structure, and whether an out-of-town visitor should spend a few hours in the museums located within walking distance of the hotel.

Barrick is pretty much an encyclopedia when it comes to knowledge about Indiana and downtown Indianapolis. Yet, when we asked him about the derivation of the term, Hoosier, there was no easy answer. We chatted for several minutes about it and then he followed up with an email that included a link to the Indiana Historical Society's website.

The website talked of a poet named John Finley who wrote a poem in the 1830s called "The Hoosier's Nest" but never explained the meaning of the term. He spelled it as Hoosher, and the verbiage refers less to the people and more to their qualities of self-reliance and bravery. Barrick exemplifies these qualities through and through.

Friend. Partner. Hoosier.

These three words are a good way to describe Barrick throughout his illustrious career. Yes, he is principal and executive vice president with RATIO Architects. He is also a past-president of SMPS, having served in that capacity two decades ago, from 1997–98.

Barrick has an insatiable work ethic and has tirelessly given back to SMPS over the years. His mentorship of respected marketing professionals such as colleague Tony Steinhardt, FSMPS, CPSM, principal/vice president at RATIO, is noteworthy. "I've been blessed to work with a marketer at the top of his game, a mentor, a close friend, and a partner."

Indeed, veteran Build Business attendees can attest to Barrick and Steinhardt at times being joined at the hip during networking sessions or at the black-tie awards dinners. This year, Steinhardt would see his friend and partner honored with the MAA.

The Weld Coxe Marketing Achievement Award is the highest honor bestowed on an SMPS member. It salutes a remarkable marketing or business development professional whose career achievements, leadership role, and lasting contributions to the industry are exemplary. Barrick joins a distinguished group of accomplished members who embody the mission and spirit of SMPS and are valued advisers to the organization. He is the 26th recipient of the award, named in memory of marketing pioneer, SMPS founder, and past honoree Weld Coxe.

Among those whom Barrick has called mentor is 2013 MAA recipient Karen Courtney, AIA, FSMPS, CPSM, who said, "Tim has been a tireless advocate for SMPS, and a champion of programs that we now take for granted."

Passionate Marketer. Tireless Advocate. Industry Trailblazer.

These words appeared on screen during the photo montage that played at Build Business prior to Barrick receiving his award.

Steven Osborn, P.E., SE, FSMPS, CPSM, principal/president of fellow Indianapolis firm CE Solutions, Inc., noted, "Tim leads by example and is proof that marketing professionals can be leaders in their firms."

One way in which Barrick has led by example is that under his leadership, RATIO was the first architecture firm in Indiana to hire a full-time public relations and communications manager. He established RATIO's marketing-forward culture, a philosophy that has won the firm multiple awards.

Barrick's leadership and marketing-forward thinking has also led to RATIO improving its percentage of repeat clients from 20 percent in the early 90s to more than 70 percent today.

A Principled Principal

Barrick grew up in Shelbyville, IN, a 20,000-population city located about 40 miles southeast of Indianapolis. He got his degree in construction engineering and technology from the mouthful university Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (with the equally challenging acronym IUPUI).

Of course, someone with a work ethic like Barrick wasn't going to wait for his college degree to start working. To help pay his tuition while he pursued his degree, he worked as an architectural draftsman for

Tim Barrick, left, stands with last year's MAA recipient and good friend Kenny Diehl before receiving his award.



his hometown firm, Pace Engineering. While at Pace, Barrick began working in business development and fostering new client relationships. He sees this as the first step toward his marketing and business development career.

In 1980, he became business development director of the venerable Bohlen, Meyer Gibson & Associates (BMG). He stayed with BMG, one of Indiana's oldest and most prominent architectural firms, for seven years before joining RATIO in 1987. He became principal at RATIO in 1989 and, during this time, piloted the firm's growth from a regional entity to a national design firm. Along the way, Barrick picked up the additional responsibilities for RATIO's finance and administrative operations.

A Lifetime of Work, an Evening of Thanks

Looking back on his life and his career during his acceptance speech at Build Business, Barrick thanked his wife of 38 years. "She has always sacrificed for me and the family. Without her support, I wouldn't be standing here today."

Barrick accepted the award from last year's recipient Kenny Diehl, P.E., FSMPS. The two have known each other for more than three decades. "He shows his emotions as much as I do," Barrick said of Diehl. "Hearing (that I would receive the award) from him was special."

Noting that he had met the award's namesake many years ago, Barrick shared, "I'm fortunate to have met Weld Coxe. I only wish I could have had more time with him. He was truly unique and certainly a pioneer in this industry. (Receiving this award) is truly a humbling experience. As I think of previous recipients of this honor, I realize I stand among giants."

Though it's been nearly three decades since Barrick attended his first Build Business in 1988, he remembered, "From the moment I walked in, I felt the power and energy of this organization. There were so many smart and talented people, all willing to share their knowledge and willing to share it with me."

After dispensing some advice to conference attendees, Barrick made sure to thank Melissa Lutz, FSMPS, CPSM, who convinced him to be nominated for the award. He also thanked past national presidents Julie Luers, FSMPS, who preceded him, and Mike Reilly, FSMPS, who succeeded him. "The three of us worked together to create a new and improved (headquarters) staff and management structure. Those were complex times, and I value the times we spent together."

He also thanked his mentor Courtney, "I learned a lot from her, more than she will ever know," as well as other long-term SMPS members. Barrick explained, "More meaningful to me than receiving this award is that these people consider me worthy of receiving it."

Along with his industry peers, Barrick also noted the contributions of those he has worked with over the years. He thanked RATIO founding partner Bill Browne, FAIA, LEED AP, who hired Barrick 30 years ago. "He believed that marketers bring value to the board room." He also thanked Rob Proctor, AIA, LEED AP, who "has become the consummate seller-doer. It's easy to grow a firm with talent like his," and Steinhardt, "whose energy and ideas seem limitless."

Barrick closed his acceptance speech with a quote from Albert Einstein: "Try not to become a person of success, but try to become a person of value. I hope I've done that." He wasn't comparing himself to the legendary genius, but aspiring to live by those words.

Hoosier Tim Barrick—an industry leader who has set a strong example at his firm and within the A/E/C communities—seems to have already taken his closing quote to heart. ■