



2017 Honoree **Mike Badger**



Honoree Mike Badger was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. Mike graduated Marion Franklin High School in 1965 and went straight into the grain business, working for Continental Grain. At the same time, he attended Franklin University, earning his bachelor's degree in 1977. He was also a member of the National Guard, putting him on the front lines during The Ohio State University riots in the early 70s.

At Continental Grain, Mike was employed as a messenger boy first, before he worked his way into grain accounting. After a couple of years, Mike was asked if he wanted to join grain origination, a move which put him on the career path where he has remained. While at Continental Grain, he fine-tuned his communication skills by becoming the lunch hour Euchre Champ, and was considered a customer relations expert because of his willingness to go above and beyond for his customers, even if it meant running out to buy a pair of pants for a trucker.

In the late 1970s, Mike started work at Ohio Farmers as the grain terminal manager in Mansfield, Ohio. He retained the facility and grain marketing manager position through several mergers and acquisitions from Ohio Farmers to CountryMark, Inc. In the early 1990s, what was then Agrimark and Sunrise purchased the Mansfield location from CountryMark, and Mike was asked to help create Sunmark, an LLC between the two cooperatives. During this time, Mike fine-tuned his management and leadership skills by learning through hands on experiences, like when he wrestled an irate employee off of his boss during a termination meeting.

After the merger of several local cooperatives into Town & Country Co-op in the early 2000s, Mike went to the Ashland corporate office as grain marketing manager for all of the company's grain facilities. He still works at the Ashland office for the newly formed Centerra Co-op. To this day, Mike has a true passion for grain marketing and helping his customers be profitable and remain customers of the co-op.

Mike has been an active member of the Ohio AgriBusiness Association for many years. Mike was involved in the inception and creation of the Bowling for Scholarships event, serving on its committee for many years. He spent more than 20 years serving on the *Golf for Scholarships* committee, as well as being a past member of OABA's Grain Committee.

Actively involved in the industry, Mike has served on the Board for Southeastern Grain and Feed Association for 12 years, serving as president for the 2016-17 term. He is also involved in Fueling the Cure committee for Centerra Co-op, the company's golf outing to raise funds for cancer research.

Mike is an avid classic car show enthusiast, motor head, enthusiastic golfer, especially with Duane Staats, and he prefers to do more things behind the scenes than brag about himself.

The Ohio AgriBusiness Association is pleased to recognize Mike Badger as the 2017 OABA Educational Trust Honoree.

For more than 50 years, the *Golf for Scholarships* outings

have been one of the primary fundraising activities for the Ohio AgriBusiness Association Educational Trust scholarship program, through which more than \$35,000 in scholarships is provided annually to students enrolled in an agriculture-related field attending The Ohio State University and OSU Agricultural Technical Institute, Central State University, Clark State Community College and Wilmington College.