

West Bend Names Spirit of the Silver Lining Award Recipients Across the Midwest **West Bend also presented grants to those non-profits the recipients support**

WEST BEND, Wis. (March 31, 2017) – West Bend Mutual Insurance Company recently presented \$90,000 to nonprofit organizations supported by independent agents representing the company. In addition to the grants from the West Bend Independent Agents’ Fund, the agents and nonprofit organizations received the Spirit of the Silver Lining Award which honors their dedication to delivering a silver lining to those in need.

Since 2006, West Bend has awarded more than \$1,000,000 in grants for sustaining support, special projects, or capital projects to nonprofit organizations representing a broad field of interests, including, but not limited to, arts and culture; education; the environment; family, youth, and elderly; health and human services; medical research; and community development.

Spirit of the Silver Lining recipients in Indiana are:

Byron Kauffman, risk manager at Wetzel Insurance Agency, Inc. in Warsaw, and Operation FINALLY HOME. Operation FINALLY HOME was established in 2005 and provides custom-built, mortgage-free homes to American military veterans and families of the fallen. They partner with corporate sponsors, local businesses and groups, and volunteers to help America’s military heroes and their families transition to the home front. Byron has served as treasurer of the Builders Association of Kosciusko Fulton Counties (BAKFC) since 2004 and currently serves as financial director of BAKFC Operation FINALLY HOME Warsaw Indiana Project.

Chris Phillips, vice president and insurance agent at City Securities Insurance in Indianapolis, and Children’s Bureau, Inc. Founded in 1851, Children’s Bureau, Inc. works on behalf of abused and neglected children and families in Indiana, acting as an advocate for them. They provide a full array of community-based prevention and intervention services. Chris has served as a board member of Children’s Bureau for 12 years and the agency contributes both financial and volunteer resources.

Spirit of the Silver Lining recipients in Iowa are:

Craig Schroeder, executive vice president of sales and marketing at AW Welt Ambrisco Insurance, Inc., in Coralville and The Fight With Flash Foundation. Craig and his wife Stacy, along with close family friends, established the foundation 2015 in honor of their son, Austin “Flash” Schroeder. In April 2014, Austin was diagnosed with a form of T-cell lymphoma at age 14 and passed away from the highly-aggressive cancer a year later. Amazingly, Austin’s life-long positive energy, zest for life, and “Win The Day” attitude continued – and even flourished – during his illness. The Fight With Flash Foundation was created to serve children, adolescents, and young adults, as well as their families, when faced with a cancer diagnosis.



Spirit of the Silver Lining recipients in Minnesota are:

Matt Clysdale, president of Maguire Agency, Inc. in Roseville, and Cradle of Hope Adoption Center, Inc. Cradle of Hope encourages life by providing financial aid to women and babies in crisis, especially those women who might not choose life because of financial pressures, and provides the help necessary to promote a healthy pregnancy, birth, and a future filled with hope. Cradle of Hope has been located in the Maguire Agency's office building for more than 20 years. The agency also shares supplies and use of its office equipment, allowing funding to go directly to the women and children who need it.

Jennifer Kolquist, account manager at Cartier Agency, Inc. in Duluth, and Shawn Sullivan, CEO of the MacKenzie Agency in St. Peter, and the Minnesota/North Dakota/South Dakota Chapter of the ALS Association. The mission of the ALS Association is to lead the fight to treat and cure ALS through global research and nationwide advocacy, while also empowering people with the disease and their families to live fuller lives by providing them with compassionate care and support. After it claimed the life of his father, Shawn got involved in raising money, including walks, and donating a percentage of their year-end profits. Jennifer served as a board member from 2009-2015 and Cartier Agency is very involved in local charity events for ALS fundraising.

Spirit of the Silver Lining recipients in Wisconsin are:

D.J. Rodrian, president of Rodrian Insurance in Brookfield, and Just One More Ministry, Inc. To combat the estimated 40% of food wasted in the U.S. each year, Just One More Ministry rescues and repackages prepared food, fresh produce, and bakery items from many Milwaukee suppliers and redistributes it to 13 Greater Milwaukee inner city churches that support pantries and community meal ministry programs. In 2016, Just One More Ministry donated more than 25 tons of rescued foods and provided around 125,000 meals. DJ created and maintains the organization's website and leads fundraising efforts.

"At West Bend, we have a proud tradition of giving back to the communities in which we do business," said Kevin Steiner, president and CEO. "The Spirit of the Silver Lining Award is a unique program that allows us to express our gratitude to our agent partners on whom we rely to identify the causes that matter most in our communities."