

## HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2022

### INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, October 6, 2022

## Thomas Babik

It is my pleasure and honor to introduce Thomas M. Babik as our next Hall of Distinction inductee. Tom is a 1969 graduate of Canton South and someone I have had the pleasure of knowing for 60 years ever since first going snipe hunting together in Boy Scouts. At South, he was both a scholar and athlete, a member of Red Ash's basketball team his senior year after serving as team manager.

He then attended Bowling Green State University receiving a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Chemistry and was co-captain of the basketball team. He also received a Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology from the University of Tennessee Center for the Health Sciences and completed graduate studies at both the University of Oklahoma and the University of Memphis in Public and Healthcare Administration. He is certified in his profession by the American College of Medical Practice Executives. Somewhere in there he found time to serve two years in the U.S. Air Force and eight years in the Air Force reserves.

Here are just a few of the ways he has distinguished himself in the healthcare administration field:

1) For 21 years he was Chief Executive Officer of the Graves-Gilbert Clinic, a large, 60 physician, multi-specialty medical practice in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He directed operations, physician recruitment, financial management, community outreach, and management of both an urgent care center and a joint venture with an area hospital.

2) He then went on to be the Executive Director of the Cox Health/Ferrell-Duncan Clinic in Springfield, Missouri for 10 years. He oversaw the growth of the practice to 135 physicians and facilitated its merger into Cox Health and its 800-bed tertiary facility.

3) He is recognized in the industry for early-on developing and managing innovative, collaborative partnerships within health care services and continues to provide consultative services to physicians, group practices, and healthcare systems. He has been described as a "Master"

at balancing the independence of physicians along side the needs of the hospitals even though he was a "suit" as one doc appreciatively described him.

A hallmark of Tom's life has been his passion for community service, his genuine caring for the well being of others, and giving back. A quote from philosopher Cornel West comes to mind when describing Tom - "You can't lead the people if you do not love the people. You can't save the people if you don't serve the people." The list is long but a few of the organizations that have benefited from his dedication include Chambers of Commerce, the American Heart Association, Kiwanis, Boy Scouts of America, local/regional development corporations, airport boards, the National Multiple Sclerosis Association along with organizations focused on providing nourishment and healthcare to the poor and homeless. He has enthusiastically taken on top leadership positions in these endeavors.

In Canton South, he and his siblings established the Thomas and Dorothy Babik Scholarship to honor their parents. For the last eight years and still running, they have granted a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving Canton South graduating senior.

I would be completely remiss for only talking about Tom's accomplishments, so here are a few comments on Tom the person from others he has touched on his life journey:

- A valuable role model.
- Performing community service with no recognition was reward enough for him.
- Tom Babik is who I want to be when I grow up.
- His commitment to this community, I think, is unparalleled.
- An unbelievable work ethic.
- Tom is less likely to be on TV talking about an event and more likely to be standing out in the rain with a makeshift parka out of a plastic garbage bag pulled over his shoulders, parking cars. This actually happened giving him the good-natured nickname "Hefty Man."

# HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2022

## INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, October 6, 2022

### Thomas Babik

- Tom is one of the most compassionate, humble, authentic, and genuinely caring individuals that I have ever encountered.

- The perfect example of the “servant leader.”

- He is one of the finest people I’ve ever met in my life.

- An “All-star leader.”

- I owe my chosen life career to his generosity in mentoring me along the way.

- Always first in line to volunteer taking on the most important or most menial task. Whatever needed to be done, Tom Babik would do it.

One wonderful honor was being chosen to be one of the Torch bearers for the 2002 Olympics as the Torch made its way through Bowling Green, Kentucky. This was after already receiving many community honors including being named Volunteer of the Year for Bowling Green – Warren County. To share the experience with family and friends, he gathered various items related to his civic and church activities, and a note card on which were printed the names of persons who had played an important role in his life. He put them in a plastic bag which he then placed inside the jacket of his Olympic relay uniform. That’s Tom!

Of course, everyone has his moments and Tom is no exception. One of his very good friends, Terry, made me promise to tell a quick story. It involves Tom and other friends pulling a prank that almost drowned Terry on his birthday. As Terry said, Tom almost drowned his best friend! They remain best of friends to this day. Then, the retired head of the Springfield, Missouri Chamber of Commerce told me he was shocked to see that Tom had the absolute messiest office he had ever seen in his lifetime. His filing system was huge stacks of paper piled everywhere, but Tom claimed he knew where everything was. I assume Tom, that had nothing to do with your love of an occasional good bourbon, which someone also mentioned to me.

Tom and his wife Nancy settled in Westerville, Ohio a few years ago. They brought two beautiful children, Lindsay and Brian, into the world and enjoy spending time with their five grandchildren in both Westerville and Golden, Colorado.