

# **“We Must Give Everyday, Ordinary People the Chance to Earn Their Own Success”**

**Award Acceptance Remarks by Richard W. Schwartz  
Chairman of the Board, Winsupply Inc.  
Dayton Business Hall of Fame Induction by Dayton Magazine  
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Like all of you, I’m a proud member of our Dayton community.

I’m also a student of Dayton history.

That’s why I’m so grateful to Dayton Magazine for creating this Business Hall of Fame – which not only celebrates Dayton’s heritage of business accomplishments, but also our rich tradition of success and civic involvement.

Think about those words.

Heritage.

Tradition.

Success.

Sounds just like Dayton, doesn’t it?

Because it brings to mind some famous businesspeople and entrepreneurs:

- Colonel Edward Deeds and Charles Kettering, the founders of Delco
- Ermal Frazee, who invented the pull-top can and started Dayton Reliable Tool
- And John H. Patterson, the owner and builder of National Cash Register, known for his salesmanship – and ultimately his leadership! – that saved thousands of lives during the 1913 flood in Dayton 105 years ago this month.

**We have every right to feel proud!**

**Because these Daytonians were everyday, ordinary people – just like you and me! – who worked hard, pursued happiness and eventually earned their own success, with help from others.**

Bestselling author Mr. Arthur Brooks – who’s speaking at the University of Dayton in two weeks about “Living Your Life Like a Startup” – works every day to make sure all Americans have access to free enterprise.

And why?

**Because free enterprise makes earned success possible!**

**And when people earn their own success, they flourish!**

I know this because I’ve seen it every day since 1972, the year I joined Winsupply.

You know us as a national supplier of construction materials. We distribute everything from faucets to furnaces, pipes to pumps and lighting to landscape irrigation.

Back in the 1970s, Winsupply only had about 40 locations. Each location was on its own, but received help, advice and back-end support services from Winsupply. As a young man, it was my job to develop these services and systems to grow the organization.

**Today, The Winsupply Family of Companies has 600 locations – from Maine to California.**

The president at each wholesaling location is the minority owner of an independent corporation, with Winsupply as majority owner.

Most of these local owners have humble beginnings because they often start at the very bottom. But Winsupply gives them what we call the Spirit of Opportunity: the chance to drive a truck or work in the warehouse for a while, get promoted and earn their success as president of their own wholesaling location.

You can imagine how proud these local owners are since they own a substantial part of their own company. The risks they take, and the rewards they make, create in them this feeling of earned success – the same feeling experienced by Deeds, Kettering, Frazee and Patterson so many years ago.

**At Winsupply, what makes it all possible is free enterprise: the system that's fueled our philosophy, our business model and our collective success.**

Since 1956, hundreds of courageous, capable, hardworking entrepreneurs have built Winsupply into the great company it is today: a 3-billion-dollar wholesaler. My job was simply to help: to be a coach, cheerleader, guidance counselor, ambassador – some days a preacher! – and back in my earliest days, a software engineer.

For 62 years, Winsupply has eliminated obstacles and provided support to give people with desire the chance to earn their own success.

This is our moral purpose.

Our higher calling.

And the reason we exist.

**I believe that Dayton's continued prosperity – in every economic, cultural or civic program we undertake – depends on people who believe in free enterprise and are willing to help others participate in it.**

As business leaders in Dayton, all of us need to do whatever it takes to create jobs and opportunities for others so they have the chance to work hard, pursue happiness and earn their own success.

It is this difference that has defined the course of Dayton's history.

It is this difference that has molded Dayton's heritage, tradition and success.

It is this difference that helps everyday, ordinary people flourish.

**Tonight, I humbly accept this Dayton Business Hall of Fame honor on behalf of the 600 local owners at Winsupply – men and women who have been able to maximize their opportunity, own a wholesaling location and earn their success.**

They believe in free enterprise.

They've created thousands of jobs.

And they continue to add value to our society.

Thank you.