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Zetmeir Named Cardinal Citee



Emil Frank "Sonny" Zetmeir has been named the 2008 Cardinal Citation Award winner by the Labette Community College Alumni Association and LCC. This is the highest honor that is bestowed on an individual for lifetime achievement.

The Cardinal Citation Award is presented annually at Commencement. The criteria are: nominee must be a living person who has had significant lifetime achievements to his or her profession, community, state, or nation; nominee must have a current or past association with Labette Community College; nominee does not have to be a graduate of LCC.

Each year LCC and the LCC Alumni Association recognize an individual for a lifetime of outstanding service to their community and/or to the college. A distinguished panel of community members review nominations and recommend a Citee. The Citee is honored the evening of Commencement during a reception for all former Citees, their families, invited guests, and the public. The Citee is presented a plaque and is a speaker at Commencement. The Citee's framed portrait is hung in the Gallery of Cardinal Citation Recipients in the college's main administration building.

Zetmeir grew up in Kansas City Missouri and attended Kansas State University upon high school graduation. At KSU he met and married his wife, Sophia. The couple then moved to

Norfolk, Virginia because Sonny was called to active military duty with the US Navy Reserves. They spent two years in Virginia before returning to Kansas City.

When he returned to Kansas City, he began working full-time in his father's cabinet factory. When his father decided to move Grandview Products to Parsons, he asked Sonny to run the cabinet plant. After three years running the cabinet plant, Sonny took on a series of other jobs within the company that spanned several years. He got involved in sales, became a pilot and for 15 years traveled a sales territory in an airplane and was also the company pilot, accumulating 3,500 hours flying time. During that time he became Sales Manager. He also spent time as Production Manager and became involved with purchasing and human resource management. His original plan was to stay in Parsons long enough to help get the company going, but he ended up working well with his parents, like the small town life in the community and fell in love with being a manufacturer.

In January of 1982, he bought the company from his parents when they decided to retire. 1982 was a very depressed time in the housing market; therefore the company was down to only 24 employees, including him and one truck driver. Today, Grandview Products has 430 employees, including Sonny, and that same truck driver is still on the staff, but he is now one of 35 truck drivers.

Other projects he has donated to include the Youth Crisis Shelter, Girl Scouts, several kitchens for Habitat for Humanity all over the United States, the United Way of Labette County, Stella Wells Christmas Basket program in Parsons, and Zetmeir sponsors half of the 4th of July fireworks display for Parsons through the Chamber of Commerce.

He has received many awards including the Parsons Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year, the Parsons Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame inductee, Kansas Department of Human Resource Department on Aging Kansas Employer of the Year, Kansas Association of Career and Technical Education Award of Merit, United Way Pacesetter Award, the Kansas Department of Commerce Manufacturer of the Year Award for the Southeast Kansas region, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Award for being the most improved recycling company in the state of Kansas. Mr. Zetmeir was also this year's recipient of the Jerry Metz Award which is given to one person a year nationally for outstanding commitment in safety, quality and productivity in woodworking.

Sonny and his wife, Sophia, have three grown daughters Ellen Ellefsen, Joan Douglass, and Amy Zetmeir.

Zetmeir will be honored during the Cardinal Citee reception Friday, May 16 at 5:30 pm in the Carnegie Arts Center.