



Simone honored with lifetime achievement award from Boys & Girls Club of Mount Vernon

August 04, 2020 - Front Section

Pat Simone

Mount Vernon, NY The Boys & Girls Club of Mount Vernon (BGCMV) presented community and business leader Pat Simone, founder of Simone Development, with a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award, the organization's highest honor, at its Annual Gala, which was held virtually this year. The Annual Gala and Awards celebrate the ongoing work of the club and honor individuals and businesses who have demonstrated a commitment to area youth and families.

In addition to Mr. Simone, BGCMV presented the Leadership Award to Robert Weisz, president and CEO of RPW Group; the Corporate Citizen Award to April Horton, external and government affairs officer for Verizon; the Alumni Honoree Award to Jack McArdle, vice president of Arthur Gallagher & Co.; and the annual Youth of the Year Award to member Jhaydan DeV Vaughn.

"My father left a lasting legacy, not only in the business he helped to build, but also in the difference he made in each and every life he touched," said Joe Simone, president of Simone Development Cos., accepting the award on his father's behalf.

"It is so special that this award comes from The Boys and Girls Club of Mount Vernon – because my father moved here in 1958 and we lived there for 36 years. It is where my brother and I grew up and where I went to school. It is also a fitting honor for my Dad because he personified the mission and vision of this fine organization, which is to build character; to provide a plan for the future; and to enable all young people, especially those who need it most, to reach their full potential as, productive, caring and responsible citizens. My father not only believed in that mission, he lived it."

Born in East Harlem in 1927 to immigrant Italian parents, Pat Simone got his first business experience as a young helper on his father's ice delivery trucks during school holidays and summer vacations. That "apprenticeship" was interrupted by his enthusiastic desire to join the Navy as World War II was entering its third year.

Pat rejoined his father's ice business as a route driver after WWII, but with the demand for ice

rapidly decreasing in the 1950s, his entrepreneurial ambitions and talents kicked in: first with a trucking business and then a junk yard in the Bronx.

In the mid-1960s his new focus became real estate, personally buying, building and leasing the junk yard property and gaining a reputation as one of the few who saw the inherent value of commercial properties in Hunts Point and other South Bronx areas. Soon he was also using his vision and energy to buy, build and/or renovate and lease properties in Mount Vernon and other towns and cities in Westchester County. The owner of a “little junk yard in the Bronx” and Mount Vernon resident was now a real estate developer.

In the mid-70s, Pat became aware of what modern-era junk yards had become – immediate disassemblers of vehicles and distributors of used parts – and he and his young sons started Hunts Point Auto Parts. Both of the businesses moved forward successfully during the 80s and 90s, and then in the late 1990s, a Nasdaq-listed Chicago-based automotive parts distribution business wanted to enter the New York market area and bought the well-known and respected Hunts Point Auto Parts business as its tri-state area flagship location.

Immediately after the 1999 sale, Simone’s real estate business started an even-greater growth trajectory. Today there are more than 150 Simone-brand properties totaling 6.5 million s/f in the tri-state area of New York City, Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Putnam and Orange counties in New York, as well as nearby counties in Connecticut and New Jersey.

Pat was humble about his business successes, but was very proud of working collaboratively with a few tri-state real estate families in acquiring and developing several properties, especially the Hutchinson Metro Center in the Bronx, one of the largest and most successful projects in the history of the Bronx.

In his later years he took great comfort about the future of the company he founded under the new leadership of his son Joe Simone and the active involvement of two of his granddaughters as the current and next-generation of the Simone family continues to partner with investors, communities and government to continue this American success story.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540