

The Houston NABIP Chapter proudly nominates Rusty Rice for the 2025 Harold R. Gordon Memorial Award in recognition of his exceptional leadership, unwavering dedication, and transformative contributions to the insurance industry. With a career spanning over three decades, Rusty has been a driving force in legislative advocacy, professional development, and community service. His visionary leadership has left an indelible mark on NABIP at the local, state, and national levels, shaping policies, mentoring future leaders, and fostering meaningful industry advancements. Rusty's tireless commitment to improving the profession and uplifting those around him makes him a truly deserving candidate for this prestigious honor.

Rusty Rice entered the insurance industry in 1993 after a 12-year career in the grocery industry. Following a three-year tenure selling Medicare Advantage products for PacifiCare of Texas, he was given the opportunity to develop a vision HMO product for Eye Care Centers of America. Excelling in the group product sector, Rusty realized the importance of connecting with more insurance agents and joined NAHU in 1998. What he discovered was an association far beyond his expectations, and he quickly became involved, serving on various committees for the San Antonio chapter. His dedication led to his presidency in 2005.

During his presidency, Rusty and his wife, Lori, adopted Douglass Academy, an inner-city school in need of community support. They initiated several programs, including a mentor reading club composed of SAAHU members who read to students every Friday. When the school underwent expansion, Rusty mobilized the association to assist with interior painting—an oversight in the district's budget—and raised funds to install picnic tables in the courtyard, ensuring students could enjoy their lunch outdoors. Additionally, he and Lori organized efforts to purchase grade-level books, securing a donation of 2,500 books from a local publishing company. For his outstanding contributions, Rusty was named SAAHU's Underwriter of the Year in 2007 and received the prestigious Dave Clark Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

Rusty's impact extended to the state level, serving as TAHU President in 2009, during which the chapter earned numerous awards. He implemented strategic planning that balanced immediate chapter needs with long-term goals. He also revived the state's annual golf tournament, raising over \$20,000 for the Treehouse Day School, a center for preschool children with autism. His leadership earned him the NAHU Distinguished Service Award and the NAHU Presidential Citation. Further accolades include the 2012 Shirley Hutzler Legislative Excellence Award, the 2010 Ken Martin Excellence in Communication Award, and the highest honor in Texas, the 2016 Hollis Roberson Award.

A champion of legislative advocacy, Rusty has attended every TAHU Legislative Day and NAHU Capitol Conference since 2004. His expertise led to his participation in then-Governor Rick Perry's healthcare think tank, a mock congressional hearing with Austin Community College and the University of Texas, and testimony before the Texas Senate Commission on State Affairs alongside Beth Ashmore regarding the critical role of insurance agents.

With the introduction of the Affordable Care Act, Rusty developed continuing education courses that simplified the complexities of the legislation. He has since taught over 200 hours of CE courses to association chapters, employer groups, clients, and Chambers of Commerce across Texas. A dedicated educator, he has also conducted over 100 hours of Ethics CE classes and numerous sessions on various industry topics.

In 2013, Rusty was elected as NAHU Regional Vice President, progressing through the ranks to serve as NAHU President from 2018 to 2019. His campaign emphasized long-term strategic planning and enhanced member communication. As Secretary, he collaborated with Jim Stenger, Mike Embry, and then-CEO Janet Trautwein to develop Vision 2020—a strategic plan aligning NAHU with industry evolution, focusing on legislation, membership, and professional development. He also integrated professional development into the Board of Trustees to ensure member training remained a priority.

During his presidency, Rusty launched the Futures Task Force, designed to anticipate industry shifts over the next five to ten years and position NAHU for continued success. The task force's findings influenced the NAHU 2025 strategic plan. He also spearheaded the expansion of the NAHU mobile app, enhancing communication with members through targeted messaging, legislative updates, and event announcements. Rusty remained involved in its development until its replacement in 2024.

Beyond his presidency, Rusty continues to serve NABIP, facilitating strategic planning for local and state chapters. His sought-after planning sessions have helped struggling chapters restructure and achieve new milestones.

In 2021, Rusty established the Rusty Rice Foundation, which is dedicated to providing free eye exams and eyeglasses to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Partnering with local schools and children's shelters, he ensures every child has the opportunity to succeed in school.

Rusty has been with Avesis LLC since September 2003, holding multiple roles and now serving as Director of Commercial Sales. He leads a team of Sales Managers nationwide, oversees the Texas and Central U.S. markets, and focuses on national reinsurance

opportunities. He is an 18-year member of the Leading Producer Round Table and a Lifetime Qualifying Carrier Golden Eagle.

Rusty resides in Boerne, Texas, with his wife, Lori, an insurance agent, and their two sons, Quinten and Skyler. His daughter, Morgan, lives in Temple with her husband, Derrick, and their children, Brazley and Ledger. In his free time, Rusty enjoys golfing or spending time at his family ranch in South Texas, where he relishes the outdoors with family and friends.