

It is with respect that I nominate Mr. Russell "Rusty" L. Rice for the Harold R. Gordon Memorial Award. This award, reserved for individuals who exhibit the visionary spirit and leadership of Harold R. Gordon, is one that Rusty deserves for being a mentor, leader, and friend who has impacted my journey within NABIP and beyond.

My current role as NABIP Utah Chapter President was also my first significant leadership endeavor within our organization (scary, right?). Immediately, I realized I was in over my head, until Rusty stepped into the leadership role to become both a mentor and a beacon of support and wisdom. His warmth, immediate offer of support, and follow through demonstrated mentorship at the very core. He wasn't just present; he was a hero, flying into Utah to personally assist in steering our chapter towards a direction that promised growth and vitality.

Rusty's influence is not just a tale success; it's a story of genuine, heartfelt dedication to uplift others. His engagement with our chapter transformed it from standstill to a chapter with hope. The goals we set under his guidance weren't just achievable; they were inspirations that motivated us to be proud of our NABIP UT Chapter.

He's no stranger to awards and prestige (the Avesis Sales Producer of the Year) and with his significant contributions as TAHU and NAHU President - he makes a difference everywhere he goes. Unfortunately, these honors cannot fully capture the depth of his impact on a personal level (I doubt I am the only one to receive his support and mentorship over the years)—the countless hours spent in mentorship, the open-door policy for advice and support, and the selfless dedication to the growth of others.

Rusty is the very essence of the Harold R. Gordon Memorial Award—visionary leadership, commitment to service, and a profound influence on the health insurance industry. I am proud to nominate Rusty, not only for what he has achieved but for who he is—a mentor, a leader, and someone who is dedicated to the future success of our industry. His nomination is a nod to his professional and personal contributions to my local community and the National NABIP Community, making him the embodiment of the industry's Person of the Year.

With deepest admiration and respect,

Nicole Kuhni

NABIP UT Chapter President 2023-2025