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ICON AWARDS

JIM TRACY

CEO and Founder | The Legacy Companies

For anyone who has met Jim Tracy, it's quickly apparent that he's a go-getter and someone who isn't afraid to jump in to try something new and get the job done while doing it.

Tracy said that, as a child, things didn't come easy. His mother was once told to put him in a state-owned institution for children with disabilities. She did not listen to that advice and instead fought the system by charging on and encouraging her son to find his gifts and walk in them.

"My difficulties with math and speech were overcome at the insistence, persistence and sheer will of my mother," Tracy said. "I went from a math disability to the boss of the chief financial officer. Further, I went from a slurred speech and stutterer to an accomplished public speaker and auctioneer. Obstacles are not to be overlooked, but they are there to be overcome and build character. Obstacles are merely opportunities that have been painted by pessimists."

Tracy got his start in the business world after graduating from the University of South Dakota, where he and his wife both worked full-time and lived in married student housing. Eventually, he ended up as the founder and CEO of The Legacy Companies, gaining more than three decades of expertise in the executive management of commercial construction, development and engineered products manufacturing.

He is also a serial entrepreneur who has played key roles in the building, cultivating and coaching of businesses in all stages of operations including mergers, acquisitions and private equity transactions. Now, he has the honor of being an author of two almost three books and travels regularly as a keynote and motivational speaker. In this role, he brings messages of real-life experiences that inspire hope, harmony and teamwork to leadership of organizations and companies across all industries. "Playing a role in forming and building organizations from the ground up has been a hallmark of my career," he said.



Tracy said that the mentors in his life have helped shape him and part of his life goal is to offer mentorship to others.

"I have so many mentors to credit that a book I authored is being produced about them," he said. "'Building Men' has been accepted for publishing by Morgan James Publishing and will be out late this year or early next year. My mentors came from virtually every age demographic and sector of society. My hope is that this book will encourage mentorship across every generation. I have been mentored by each and every generation from the early 1900s to my youngest Alpha grandchild."

The process of writing two books has stimulated a need to create and impart more of life's lessons to those coming behind him. "I look forward to developing a digital library to serve the people who I may not get to meet," Tracy said. "Embracing technology in the service of others while passing along some of life's lessons with low tuition for the next generations is stimulating and invigorating. The lessons I received from my grandfather will be lost unless they are formatted in such a way as they can be received by my grandchildren and their children."

Over the course of his life and professional career, Tracy has stayed active in the community and has served on multiple boards. He was the former director and former chairman of the board for the National Association of Tower Erectors. For the last 10 years, he's been the

president, founder and board member of Tower Industry Family Support Charitable Foundation, which has a trust that was established to extend financial and educational assistance to families of severely injured, permanently disabled or deceased tower workers who experienced injuries while working on communications towers.

When asked what advice he can give to those who may be just starting their careers, he said it's simple: Be a generous listener. "First, we listen with our ears, then our eyes while keeping our mouth shut and our mind focused on the other person's intent, issue or subject," he said. "In society today, much can be accomplished by formulating responses only after understanding the position or intent of the other party. Let people finish before beginning a response or rebuttal. Put down your technology and work hard at being a generous listener!"

As he looks beyond the immediate engagements he has and reflects on the rest of his life and career, he is excited about continuing to get to know people on a deeper level, learning what their needs and dreams are.

"The opportunity to be transparent about the difficulties, challenges and victories of modern leadership is amazing," Tracy said. "I love spreading messages that are positive and hopeful while sprinkling in a dose of humor with reality. I am looking forward to my 400th podcast and honing my craft as a presenter. I am eager to encourage the next generations with the timeless wisdom that I have been gifted with. I long to finish well!" When he isn't traveling, Tracy invests his time and love into his family his wife of 44 years, his five children and 14 grandchildren, who know him as "grampion."

"I want people at my funeral to say, 'There's a guy who loved Jesus,'" he said. "I would love to be remembered as a guy who cared for people with action and recognized that any credit for my success is merely a gift from my Savior and the result of the amazing people who chose to surround me."