

IAAP's Industry Leadership Award

The goal of this award is to recognize IAAP member companies and individuals that have demonstrated leadership excellence within our mining industry. Leadership can be demonstrated in part by employee participation in IAAP committees, achieving awards, and participation in events. However, more significantly, leadership may be demonstrated by member companies engaged in efforts to promote and advance the image and well-being of the industry, company, and its employees that may not be related to IAAP activities.

Now in the 5th year, IAAP members once again recognized a mining company and an associate member company whose contributions to the IAAP and industry are significant and long lasting. All IAAP members were eligible and encouraged to submit nominations. IAAP staff and committees submitted nominations as well.

Steve Thelen and Thelen Sand & Gravel

Thelen Sand & Gravel has mined in Illinois for more than 70 years and was recognized with the Producer Member award. It's one of the most steadfast supporters of the IAAP attending and sponsoring events, is a PAC Rock Star, and sponsors area teachers attending the IAAP's Teachers Workshop.

Company employees were part of an educational presentation on solar installations at the IAAP convention and the first joint IAAP/IEPA educational workshop for CCDD operators. Employees actively serve on IAAP member committees, as well as local organizations that work to address community concerns about mining. The company hosts open houses and informational meetings for the general public to learn about expansion plans and reclamation efforts and welcomes any neighbor or school students that want to visit and learn what's going on beyond the fence.

One of the company's mining operations is less than 1000 feet from a residential neighborhood. As good neighbors, and without being required to do so, the company erected a building over their screens and crusher to reduce noise and dust, blanketed a portable jaw crusher to reduce noise, and installed a solar powered noise meter that also records actual sounds to help identify the source.

This past summer, local elected officials and state legislators toured the company's site witnessing mining and clean fill operations and learned about responsible practices that ensure safe operations.



Steve Thelen (left) accepts the award from IAAP President, Aaron Ozinga

Thelen Sand & Gravel was the first recipient of the sustainability award for its solar installation, clean fill and recycling operations, and sustainability cycle of “farming to composting to mining to reclamation then back to farming”.

But the company’s leader stands out as an inspiration to us all. Steve Thelen remains a long-time, active IAAP Board member and even served as a past president. He goes to Springfield for “lobby days” and is always one of the first members to reach out to his legislators on key issues important to this industry. He was a strong advocate for the recently enacted capital bill and against the legislation to mandate water monitoring at CCDD sites. And finally, Steve believes in sustainably supporting the IAAP by recruiting new members to this association, making it stronger and wiser.

Buckley Powder Company

One associate member company has been present at the IAAP convention throughout the years and taken home Rock Solid Safety awards numerous times. Buckley Powder Company’s generosity and support for the IAAP and its work extends to event sponsorships and donated items for the silent auction benefiting the industry’s political action committee.



Keith Henderson (right) accepts the award from Aaron Ozinga

Every year Buckley Powder helps a teacher attend the IAAP’s Teachers Workshop where they learn how the industry mines & processes rocks & minerals. Keith Henderson participates in that learning opportunity by explaining to teachers how science, engineering and math are some of the most important elements in the mining process. Teachers ask Keith questions and comment that they have taught kids that would be ideal candidates for this particular career. And on the final day of the workshop when participants are viewing the mining process first hand by visiting active operations, Brian Jockisch treats them to a free barbeque lunch and thanks them for taking time out of their summer vacation to learn about our industry.

When called upon by the IAAP safety committee two years ago, the company put together a blasting safety presentation for the safety conference. Each year they conduct eight-hour refresher courses for Illinois and Missouri blasters so they may renew their license.

In Missouri, the Buckley Powder sponsors a fishing tournament with proceeds funding a scholarship program at Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla and along with university students they host camps each summer for high school students wanting to learn how explosives are used in mining.

I trust you will agree Buckley Powder is an industry leader among our associate member companies and Thelen Sand & Gravel is a mining industry leader as well. Congratulations to these two fine companies and all of their employees.