

## CIBPA 2008 Professional Award by Bernard Kruchak

# Tony Awards



Tony Taronno and Tony Cesario enjoy life. Sit with them for a while and it becomes clear very quickly that their ebullience is driven by passion for their profession and industry and a deep affection for their clients, community and families. Their journeys to success are distinct, yet entwined, a testament to their respect for each other as insurance professionals and as friends.

Both Tonys are longtime brokers who launched their careers in their 20s and who now work alongside each other at Horizon Insurance. Now 53, Tony T. is Partner of the firm he helped build into a leading insurance provider with 13 outlets in Winnipeg and eastern Manitoba. Forty-four year-old Tony C. is a Partner of the firm for Horizon Leipsic Insurance.

"It's a pleasure to work with Tony," says Tony T. "I recruited him to Horizon Insurance and he's done extremely well over the years. Indeed, it's a double pleasure to share this award with him."

For both Tonys, winning awards isn't the reason they dedicate so much of their time to their industry and community. As Tony T. explains, they're motivated on the one hand to build a strong insurance industry and inspired by their Italian heritage on the other.

"I've spent many years working to better my profession through the Insurance Brokers Associations of Manitoba and Canada and I know that both Tony and I are just as passionate about giving back to our Italian roots."

Devoting time and energy to developing a vibrant community is something Tony C. has been doing since he first joined the Sons of Italy at 27 years of age. He became one of the organization's younger presidents and he's also a former recipient of the Vince Bova Memorial Award, given annually to dedicated participants.

"I know there are hundreds of others who are worthy of these awards and it's truly an honour to be considered their equal. Now, to share an award with Tony is just icing on the cake," Tony C. relates.

Affability is a virtue in the insurance trade and both Tonys bring a load of good-natured sociability to their business relationships. "It doesn't hurt to be Italian; everyone wants to be one," chuckles Tony T. "We bring our natural enthusiasm to the table and this spirit has earned us many new clients and friends over the years."

No clients are as loyal as Italian ones, cites Tony T. He says their devotion is something he never takes for granted. "They're incredibly loyal. They live all over the city and they'll make special trips to see me. They don't know how much I appreciate that."

Accolades aside, there is something more than personal recognition at play in these awards. Both Tonys acknowledge that any success they experience professionally is grounded in their families. Without their wives and children, Tony C. says awards are hollow honours. "The support of your family is what makes all this success worthwhile."

