

Advocate owner to be posthumously inducted into junior achievement hall of fame

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Pictou native Bruce Murray, one of the driving forces behind Advocate Printing, has been inducted posthumously into the Junior Achievement Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame.

Born in 1941 in Pictou, Murray's entry into the world of printing started at the age of six, when he began working as a paperboy for Pictou Advocate, then owned by his father, George C. Murray.

Eventually, Murray worked through the ranks of newspaper production, with jobs including janitor, printer's devil, press operator, advertising manager and finally president.

The company was sold following his father's death in 1962, and between 1965 and 1989, Advocate Printing experienced numerous employee and ownership transitions, during which Murray bought into the partnership.

By the end of the 1980s, Murray co-owned the company with Dirk VanVeen, and under their leadership, the Advocate's focus shifted to commercial printing, causing the company to grow by leaps and bounds.

In 1994, Murray bought out his last partner and began moving into new marketplaces beyond Nova Scotia, leading the trend into the full-service marketplace and averaging a 20 per cent annual growth rate and becoming Atlantic Canada's largest commercial printer. It is also one of Pictou County's largest employers, with 490 employees.

Murray was also a dedicated community builder and, after his death in 2004, the Bruce F. Murray Family Foundation was introduced as a way to recognize and carry on his interest in supporting local and international efforts.

Murray will be inducted into the Junior Achievement Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame on June 10, with his family accepting on his behalf, at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax.

Other inductees this year include North Sydney native Annette Vershuren, president of the Home Depot Canada, and Glace Bay entrepreneur Bill Ritchie, who has served as a founding director or advisor to businesses like Empire Company and Sobeys Inc.

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