

Nystrand Wins 2021 Insurance Professional of the Year

By Melissa Hall

Going deeper in his relationships, that's always the goal for Rick Nystrand.

"I want to connect with my agents and go deeper than just being their marketing rep. I want to connect with them and support them in ways beyond insurance," he explained. That dedication to forming real friendships has been evident in his career. Nystrand, CIC, CLCS, formerly with Mennonite Mutual Insurance Company is the recipient of the 2021 Big I Indiana Insurance Professional of the Year Award. He recently accepted a position as a sales manager with Synergy Insurance in Mishawaka, Ind.

In the five years he spent at Mennonite Mutual the company's annual premium volume increased from \$15 to \$27 million. He appointed 21 new agency partners during that time, up from just 11 in his territory. "The thing about the insurance industry is that people want to do business with people they trust. So when you have the knowledge to share with them and



Nystrand at work.

you care about helping them then they want to work with you."

Nystrand has found unique ways to connect with his agents and their potential clients. From providing lunch for farmers at the grain elevators where they dropped their harvest to 4H sponsorships and events that led to new farm policies and loss control inspections. "Being available to my agents when they need me is what sets me apart from most other territory representatives," he said. "I know they appreciate the quick responsiveness when they are working through something with their clients and need an answer. Maybe it's just a coverage question, quote clarification, or sometimes it's a last-minute inspection."

At Mennonite Mutual, Nystrand was involved with the company's



Nystrand with his wife Lauren and their kids.

annual Christmas auction. Each year all the employees and board members donate items and then bid on them. The proceeds from the auction go to a member of the community or an agent with a need. Two years ago, the recipient was one of Nystrand's agents who was adopting a son from Korea. The funds raised from the auction helped cover some of the adoption costs. "I got to personally deliver the check and later got to know Jackson, their son," he said.

"Outside of work, a lot of my time is spent pouring into my family or serving somewhere," he explained. That includes his time spent as a deacon at his church where he also serves on the worship team. He also has three daughters and a son with his wife Lauren. When he is working, his approach is to give it his all every day, no matter what else is happening. He explained,



The team at Mennonite Mutual.

"There will always be somebody who is a little bit smarter than you or might have a designation you don't have yet, but you can always choose to wake up and work harder than them." ■

For over half a century, our team of specialists at Burnham & Flower has been providing Comprehensive Property & Liability coverages to Indiana Public Entities. We know and understand the unique requirements of this challenging class of business.

Burnham & Flower...

- works exclusively through Indiana Independent Agents,
- represents multiple A-rated carriers with products for all sizes of Public Entities,
- provides traditional first dollar insurance and cost effective SIR programs for larger accounts.

Burnham & Flower
INSURANCE GROUP

You Serve Others. We Serve You.

315 South Kalamazoo Mall • Kalamazoo, MI 49007
800.748.0554 • bfgroup.com • info@bfgroup.com

