

Looking Back

NRHA Young Retailer of the Year Awards Through the Years

For the past 20 years, the North American Retail Hardware Association (NRHA) has honored up-and-coming home improvement retailers age 35 and younger for their industry achievements with the Young Retailer of the Year award.

“The individuals NRHA has honored as Young Retailers of the Year have grown in the industry and in their careers for the past 20 years,” says Bill Lee, NRHA president and CEO. “We have followed many of these individuals’ careers since winning and we are continually impressed by all of the wonderful things so many of them have gone on to accomplish. We’re thrilled to have been able to honor another set of extraordinary retailers for the 20th year in a row, and we look forward to continuing the tradition for many years to come.”

To mark the occasion, *Hardware Retailing* spoke to a handful of past honorees to learn what the award meant to them. Read their stories on the next page and at TheRedT.com/past-winners.

From becoming a business owner to growing their families, the winners we caught up with have continued to advance in their careers and in their lives. Whether they were able to gain the confidence they needed to build their careers or they went on to expand their businesses, the past Young Retailer of the Year honorees continue to stand out. ➡

Checking In With Honorees

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Young Retailer of the Year program, *Hardware Retailing* reached out to several past recipients to see what they’re up to today. Some have become NRHA board members, like Megan Menzer, and some have been named Industry Top Guns, like Jeremmy Melnick.

Head to TheRedT.com/past-winners to read about some of the past winners of this prestigious award and learn about their careers.



“I’m now able to work on my business, instead of in my business, to continue to make our store better and see where I can take it in the future.”

—Eventt Norris, 2009 Honoree,
Ossian Do it Best Hardware

“Many opportunities became available, and I was able to get my name out in the industry. I really attribute all of this to winning the award.”

—Megan Menzer, 2005 Honoree,
Newton’s True Value

Young Retailer of the Year Honorees: Where Are They Now?



Shannon Griffin Carney
Griffin Ace Hardware
Santa Ana, California
1999 Honoree

Before Winning: Shannon Carney grew up in the family business at Griffin ACE Hardware. She started working at the store full time shortly after finishing college, using her computer degree to write programs for department performance ratings and store metrics.

After Winning: Today, with her sisters, Carney is part of the third generation at Griffin Ace Hardware, which now has three locations in California. She is the president of the business and oversees operations. Her sister Kelly oversees inventory and her sister Stacey handles marketing. Her parents are also still involved..

Thriving in the Industry: Since being honored, Carney has become more involved with her co-op, especially on tech-focused teams. Her business has become more focused on niches and specialty items, such as the Yeti and Big Green Egg brands.



Karena Reusser
Modern Home & Hardware
Woodsfield, Ohio
2003 Honoree

Before Winning: Karena Reusser has been involved in her family’s business, Modern Home & Hardware, for 27 years. In 2003, Reusser was named one of the Young Retailers of the Year at a time she needed it most, she says. After winning the award, the confidence she gained helped her feel like she belonged in the industry, she says.

After Winning: “Previously, I would run into people and would hear things like, ‘So, Karena, what do you do now, just work in the hardware store?’ Between comments like that and always meeting opposition to my age, I wasn’t sure I was meant to be here. The award made me feel like I belonged in the industry and gave me a determination to succeed in the hardware business.” She now owns the business.

Exciting Additions: The business has grown, doubling in size in 2012. The store now includes a Little Caesars Pizza and an appliance center.



Rob Ferraro
Jerry’s Paint and Hardware
Narragansett, Rhode Island
2011 Honoree

Before Winning: Now-owner Rob Ferraro has been involved in the family business his entire life. After graduating from the University of Rhode Island in 2001, he took over as store manager and buyer.

After Winning: Ferraro has been able to expand the family business by creating a new branch of the company, called Aura Outdoor Products. “We manufacture a version of the ceramic Kamado Grill and 30-plus accessories that work with our grill and all other major brands,” he says.

Following in Dad’s Footsteps: Throughout his time in the industry, he has learned from his father, Bob. “My dad made many sacrifices both personally and financially earlier in the business, putting back every dollar of profit to strengthen the business,” Ferraro says. “He has taught me that the only way to succeed is through hard work. He is still involved in the business every day.”