



## **Michael Beckerle – 2025 MHLDA Lumber Person of the Year**

Mike Beckerle has been named the 2025 Lumber Person of the Year by the Mid-Hudson Lumber Dealers Association (MHLDA)—one of the highest honors awarded by peers in the lumber and building material industry. His journey into the industry was less of a career decision and more of a fatherly suggestion: one summer morning after his junior year of high school, Mike was rudely awakened by his dad, Pete Beckerle, who said, “You’re going to work today.” That moment marked the beginning of what would become a lifelong career at Beckerle Lumber Supply Co., Inc., the family business since 1940.

From summers in the yard and store to winter breaks doing inventory by hand (an experience he swore he'd never repeat), Michael absorbed the value of hard work firsthand. Pete, a 1994 Lumber Person of the Year himself, set the tone for both business and family. He was a man of principle, known for his integrity, humor, and deep respect for the industry. Pete always credited his soulmate Denise for all her support through their 66 years of marriage. Michael often reflects on his parent’s vision, guidance, and relentless standards—qualities that shaped both Beckerle Lumber and himself.

Though Michael went on to earn a bachelor’s and master’s degree in computer science, his path kept circling back to Beckerle. In the mid-1980s, Pete enlisted Michael’s help in modernizing the business with a point-of-sale and inventory system. Pete’s priority? Choosing a vendor that was “financially stable.” Naturally, the vendor they picked, FinServ, exited the industry shortly after. But in classic Beckerle fashion, they turned the setback into momentum. Beckerle and 18 other dealers—influenced by the leadership of Bob Curtis of Curtis Lumber—joined forces to acquire FinServ’s building material division, founding what became Spruce Computers. Michael recalls being “in the room where it happened” and still questions why they didn’t go with a stronger-sounding name—“Redwood” instead of “Spruce.”

By 1988, Michael had stepped into management at the Congers location, supporting his cousin Paul during a rough patch. Like so many in the industry, he learned by doing—tackling everything from customer service and operations to, ironically, inventory control, the very task he once swore off. Along the way, he credits industry education and the NRLA with giving him the tools to grow. Always inspired by the genuine, generous people who define our industry, Mike has remained a strong supporter, chairing the NRLA Workers’ Comp Safety Group 531 and joining NRLA Advocacy Days at both the state and federal levels.

Michael's contributions extend beyond the company and industry. He serves on the Rockland Business Association board and executive committee and twice led the Nanuet-West Nyack Rotary Club as president. He's a recipient of the Rotary Paul Harris Award and serves on the President's Council of St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, N.Y.

Despite a full professional life, Michael finds time for the things he loves. He's competed in at least one sprint triathlon every year since 1991 and continues to run, bike, and swim. He misses playing basketball and hopes to get back on the court again one day. A lifelong science enthusiast, he once pursued meteorology courses at City College of N.Y, and he's traveled to witness three total solar eclipses. Thanks to his mom, Denise, an accomplished piano player and actress, Mike learned to appreciate music and theater as well. He always enjoys a good science talk, and spontaneous New York City ferry rides with Maureen, his wife of 35 years. The two met at a Halloween party and have shared a love of travel ever since—fitting for a family steeped in curiosity and motion.

Maureen and Mike are most proud of their daughter Julia; a graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas College and currently enrolled in an accelerated nursing program at Pace University. And, in true Beckerle tradition, family is never far away—his three brothers, many cousins, and extended family remain rooted in Rockland County, N.Y. His brother, Larry, was honored as Lumber Person of the Year in 2006, making Michael the third in the family to receive the award—proof that commitment, humility, and humor run in the Beckerle bloodline.

Michael also remembers those who helped him grow into the leader he is today. Chief among them was Loretta Vessey, Beckerle's sharp and witty credit manager who served as his mentor. She taught him how to lead with grace, patience, and an appreciation for a well-timed comeback.

Michael lives—and leads—by a few simple but powerful philosophies:

*"The good thing about science is that it's true whether or not you believe in it."*

*"Keep looking up and remember to touch the grass."*

*"As long as it's 'Us' and 'Them,' there will always be war. Only 'We' can bring peace."*

And in typical Beckerle fashion, he leaves us with one last gem:

*"Never turn down an invitation—even if it's to honor the Lumber Person of the Year!"*