

Mike Brien

2025 Inductee



Mike graduated in 1975 from St. Francis Xavier University with a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). He subsequently continued his education earning industry designations in Banking (FICB) and Insurance (CAIB) and a designation from the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD.D) and many development courses including Harvard.

After university graduation Mike started his career in the banking industry working with a few banks in increasingly progressive roles finally as a District Manager of Atlantic Canada and Ontario. In 1979, to avoid a permanent move to Ontario Mike accepted a position as Vice President Operations of a regional trust company ultimately becoming COO. It was here that he realized he had an ability to take a bad situation and make it better.

In a need to feed the entrepreneurial spirit Mike ventured out on his own in 1985 establishing a consulting practice where he provided real estate and turn around management services. A consulting contract as CEO of a regional insurance company provided Mike's introduction into the insurance industry. Once completed, Confederation Life Insurance, the then owner of Pat King Group hired Mike to perform a strategic review which ultimately resulted in Mike purchasing the entire group. After a major restructuring, the insurance brokerage operation was the major asset remaining which grew substantially and was sold to a public company consolidator. In 2001, ING Insurance, the owner of Macdonald Chisholm Insurance approached Mike to become involved in the business. Unable to purchase the entire company a 50/50 partnership was formed and the company went on to become a multi award winning brokerage and one of the largest in Atlantic Canada with 21 offices and a team in excess of 140. In 2014, Mike sold his interest to Intact Financial Corporation through their subsidiary BrokerLink and retired from the industry.

Mike has always donated his time to many worthwhile industry and charitable causes, first being a JA mentor, past Chair of Nova Scotia Community College and Board member Nova Scotia Community College Foundation, Board member Mount Saint Vincent University, President, Insurance Brokers Association of Nova Scotia, President, YPO Atlantic and national board member, President, Northumberland Golf Club, President Basketball Nova Scotia and many local for profit businesses to name a few. For his efforts Mike has been awarded the STFX Lifetime Xaverian Patron Award and honorary alumni Mount Saint Vincent University for his contributions and The Frank Baldwin Award recognizing him as a significant builder of the game of basketball in the province. Basketball has played a large part in Mike's life and he and his family have been involved in all aspects of the sport. Mike was an initial investor and volunteer CEO of the Halifax Hurricanes Professional Basketball Club which brought a national professional championship to Halifax in its first year of operation.

Mike is a strong believer and supporter of the local business community acting as a mentor, investor and director to a number of early stage and mature business ventures. Mike and his family also strongly believe in giving back to their community and Province and have been significant financial contributors to causes such as ST.FXU, Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation, Nova Scotia Community College, NS Sports Hall of Fame, Mount St. Vincent University, Cystic Fibrosis (grandson has the disease) and many Nova Scotia community based causes such as local charities, food banks, library, churches etc.

Mike is married to Beth, they have 6 children and 12 grandchildren and he enjoys sports of all kinds especially basketball and golf, travelling and cottage life.