

THE 2016 PIA NATIONAL AWARDS—

AUGUSTO RUSSELL NAMED 2016 PROFESSIONAL AGENT OF THE YEAR

AUGUSTO RUSSELL, CIC, OF Farmington, Connecticut, has been named the 2016 Professional Agent of the Year by PIA National. Russell is a partner with May, Bonne & Walsh Inc. in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

"This award is PIA's highest honor," said PIA National President Robert W. Hansen, Jr. "It recognizes the achievements of one Professional Insurance Agent who is an outstanding member of PIA."

The PIA National Professional Agent of the Year award is the association's highest national award of distinction. It is presented annually to one outstanding professional insurance agent who is a member of PIA. Nominations for this award are made by PIA state and regional affiliate associations.

"Augusto Russell's life and his career path have both been characterized by caring," Hansen said in presenting the award. "After entering the insurance industry in Boston in 1986, he left the industry in 1999 to work as director of development for HOPE Worldwide—a charity that works to deliver community-based services to the poor and needy. He resumed his insurance career in 2003, when he and his family moved to Connecticut."

Russell has been an active member of PIA of Connecticut since 2005, serving as its President in 2013-14. He has served with distinction on many PIA committees and was honored as the PIA of Connecticut Professional Agent of the Year in 2015.

In addition, Russell participates in efforts to give back to his community, which he believes is

a necessary ingredient to being a good agent. He is President of the Board of The Arc of the Farmington Valley (Favarh), and chair of its \$2,000,000 capital campaign which is nearing completion. Favarh serves a large client population with intellectual disabilities. Russell is also Chair of the Economic Development Commission for his home town of Farmington, Connecticut and past President of the Farmington Rotary Club.

"In my opinion, which is not just that of a Governor but as someone



Augusto Russell (left), PIA National President Rob Hansen.

raised in a family of insurance brokers—I recognize the value of a committed professional who cares deeply for both his customers and his community. Mr. Russell exemplifies that in every regard," wrote Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy in support of Russell's nomination for the PIA award.

Former Insurance Commissioner of Connecticut Thomas Leonardi said that while there is much discussion about the need to attract bright young people into the industry, "Augusto has actually done something about it!" He was referring to how Russell initiated a program with Goodwin College to create a course curriculum to allow students a pathway into an insurance career. Board members of PIA of Connecticut collaborated in the effort.

"I believe he is one of the finest human beings I have come across in my career," Leonardi added. "He genuinely cares about people, his community, and his profession."

The PIA National Professional Agent of the Year award was presented during a gala luncheon ceremony on April 8, 2016, in Arlington, Virginia, held during the national PIA meetings, which followed the 2016 PIA Federal Legislative Summit (FLS). 

