



The
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GIPC, Mayor recognize John Neighbours, Sallie Rowland with 2009 Charles L. Whistler Award



INDIANAPOLIS – This morning, Mayor Greg Ballard, in collaboration with the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) honored John T. Neighbours and Sallie W. Rowland with the 2009 Charles L. Whistler Award.

The prestigious annual award recognizes one or two individuals who, outside the regular duties of their chosen profession, have brought together the public and private sectors for civic improvement in Indianapolis. Mayor Greg Ballard presented the Whistler Award to Neighbours and Rowland during a ceremony at Conseco Fieldhouse.

“Mr. Whistler undoubtedly understood the importance of public/private partnerships and dedicated much of his service to promoting that throughout Indianapolis,” Ballard said. “He served as a role model for future residents who share that passion and without his leadership; this organization would not be the guiding light that it is today.”

“In order for us to remain a successful city, we must always find new and innovated ways to partner with our private sector, composed of men and women just like you, who take pride in our businesses, our communities and our schools,” Ballard continued. “We must all work together now to build a brighter future for the next generation and I thank each and every one of you for helping us grow the roots of leadership that were planted by Charles Whistler and the many others who came before us.”

A partner at Baker & Daniels, Neighbours serves on the Executive Committee of the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Board of the United Way of Central Indiana, where he is the immediate past chair (for 2006 and 2007). He was also the founding board chair for the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated Learning High School and is co-chair for the Legal Committee of Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis, co-chair of the Central Indiana Transit Task Force, and a member of the boards of the Indianapolis Zoological Society and the Christian Theological Seminary. He was chairman of the board for the Zoological Society from 1987-1991, a period during which construction was finished and the new zoo opened.

Previously, he was appointed by Mayor Stephen Goldsmith to serve on the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee from 1994-2000, and by Mayor William Hudnut to serve on GIPC from 1990-1992. He has served as vice president of the Indiana Sports Corp., and on the local organizing committee of the 1987 Pan American Games. Neighbours has also held positions on the boards of the Indianapolis Symphony, the DePauw University Board of Visitors, National Art Museum of Sport, Marion County Commission on Youth, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Greater Indianapolis Crime Stoppers, Penrod Society, Cathedral Arts, International Violin Competition of Indianapolis and Meridian Street Methodist Church.

“John Neighbours has provided outstanding leadership to so many organizations through the years, and his energy and vision have truly helped make the Indianapolis community a better place,” said Murray Clark, GIPC Board member and Chair of the 2009 Charles L. Whistler Award Committee. “John chaired the United Way of Central Indiana for two years and played an instrumental role in successful fund-raising campaigns despite challenging economic conditions.

“Additionally, he has spent substantial time in recent years working on initiatives to lift inner-city students to higher academic performance so they ultimately may attend college,” said Clark. “John is truly deserving of joining the prestigious list of Whistler Award winners who have made Indianapolis an extraordinary place.”

Rowland founded Rowland Design, Inc., an interior design firm, for which she is now Chairman Emeritus. She was one of the founders and original officers of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership and is credited with recognizing the need for corporations throughout the state, and not just in Indianapolis, to work together to solve the economic problems faced in many Hoosier communities. She traveled throughout Indiana, convincing business owners and leaders to join this movement.

Rowland was the first female president of the Economic Club of Indianapolis and the first female campaign chair for the United Way of Central Indiana. She has served on the boards of Hanover College, the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, along with the IU Kelley School of Business Dean's Advisory Board and the advisory board of the Girl Scouts of Central Indiana. Rowland has held key roles as Director Emeritus for the Christian Theological Seminary, and on the Honeywell Foundation's Art and Design Committee. She was an early president of The Gathering, a group of more than 100 women who come together several times a year to address community affairs. She recently co-chaired the Urban Design Oversight Committee for the purpose of establishing urban Design Guidelines. She is a recipient of the Sagamore of the Wabash award and the Distinguished Alumni Service Award from Indiana University.

“Sallie Rowland is that most rare of community leaders: a person who sees what needs to be done and quietly persuades others to participate with her in achieving it, without ever seeking credit or publicity,” said Deborah Daniels, GIPC Chair and a member of the Whistler Award Committee. “Her supremely competent, insightful, congenial and low-key approach to solving critical community problems has led to vast improvements in Indianapolis, Central Indiana and the State as a whole for which she has never requested or received recognition. She is a true pioneer, a servant-leader, and a person who exemplifies the spirit of the Whistler Award in every way.”

In its 25th year, the Charles L. Whistler Award continues to honor the legacy of Whistler, a lawyer and community leader in the grand tradition, who gave his time and extraordinary abilities to the Indianapolis community without asking for power or position in return. At the time of his death in 1981, he was a senior partner at Baker & Daniels and chairman of both the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee's Urban Growth and Revitalization Task Force and the White River State Park Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Award recipients' names will be added to a limestone and granite monument located in the Charles L. Whistler Memorial Plaza at the City Market in downtown Indianapolis.

Past Whistler Award Recipients:

1983: Thomas H. Lake
1984: Thomas W. Binford & David R. Frick
1985: Frank P. Lloyd
1986: Phillip R. Duke & Thomas W. Moses
1987: Mattie M. Coney
1988: Donald W. Tanselle
1989: Ramon L. Humke & Henry C. Ryder
1990: Richard O. Morris

1991: Eldon Campbell
1992: Michael A. Carroll
1993: William W. Mays & James T. Morris
1994: Fred C. Tucker, Jr.
1995: Robert H. Reynolds
1996: Thomas M. Miller & Sam H. Jones
1997: Dr. Gene Sease
1998: Jack Shaw & Dan & Lori Efroymsen
1999: Andrew Paine & Yvonne Shaheen
2000: Rev. T. Garrott Benjamin & Michael Maurer
2001: Jerry Semler & Fay Williams
2003: Alex Carroll & Rev. Charles Williams
2004: Dr. Beurt Servaas & Gerald Bepko
2005: Joseph D. Barnette, Jr. & G. Frederick Glass
2007: P.E. MacAllister & Marge Tarplee
2008: Patrick J. Early
2009: John T. Neighbours & Sallie Rowland

More about Charles L. Whistler:

As an Indianapolis Star editorial noted shortly after his death in 1981, "Charles L. Whistler was a visionary, talented and energetic prime mover who had a leading role in shaping the Indianapolis of today and its modern political structure. He loved the capital city and the Hoosier state, town and county, urban scenes with beauty and character, and the great outdoors. He had the persuasive ability often associated with the authors of constitutions, and used it to win strong support and positive contributions from others, often representing diverse interests, for the array of projects and programs that he helped conceive and bring to fruition. He wrote much of the legislation consolidating city and county governments under UniGov. He also had a leading role in the modernization and beautification of downtown Indianapolis and the creation of the City Center on Monument Circle, the adaptive reuse of the Indiana Theater, the downtown retailing mall concept, and the planning of the White River State Park."

2009 Charles L. Whistler Award Criteria:

- Demonstrates visionary and enthusiastic leadership in serving the community
- Provides outstanding service in bringing together the public and private sectors for civic improvement (typically as a volunteer and not through one's employment)
- Ineligible: Currently appointed government employees and elected officials