



The Sussman family



Lifetime Achievement Award

One of the highlights of the Awards Banquet at Charlotte this year was the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Jack Sussman of J. Sussman Inc.

Jack started in the 1940s as an apprentice to his father, Isadore, who was a master blacksmith from Poland. The tools they used were a hammer, anvil and forge. He went to school at night and learned welding and other metalworking skills. He turned his father's blacksmith shop into a twentieth-century metalworking shop. In the 1950s, Jack Sussman designed aluminum extrusions specifically for stained glass windows. It was a huge investment for a small metal shop, but the gamble paid off. He was able to produce a better window for less money. He designed and marketed aluminum extrusions to be sold as stock lengths, thereby creating a segment of the market devoted to protecting existing stained glass windows. In the '80s, he led the industry again with a thermally improved window designed for churches.

Today, the company that he developed is more than 100 years old. In his 80s, Jack was surrounded at the banquet by three generations of his family. On stage, four of his grandchildren gathered around him as the award was presented to him by President Andy Young and a fifth grandson, Jake Sussman.



Richard Mesmer of Northwest Art Glass served as auctioneer for the SGAA's live auction to raise money for the Stained Glass School.



Among the items for auction was a panel by David Fjeld, who donated 100% of the proceeds from its sale to the Stained Glass School. The panel (shown far left) is held by Katei Gross. Also up for auction was the Jewels of Light competition winning panel by Diane Eissinger (left, held by Jerome Durr). The sale of items like these help fund the Stained Glass School's scholarships, which are granted annually.