



BUSINESS INSURANCE

U.S. INSURANCE AWARDS

Celebrating Today.
Creating Tomorrow.

The 2022 *Business Insurance* U.S. Insurance Awards celebrate teams working across the insurance and risk management sector that are providing solutions to problems faced by commercial insurance buyers and supporting the industry.

Finalists and winners include risk management teams improving return-to-work programs, brokers finding new capacity for their clients, underwriters providing coverage that responds to the evolving economy, and efforts by various companies to support their communities and improve their work environments.

The centerpiece of the awards event, which was held in New York in September, was the presentation of the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award to J. Patrick Gallagher Jr., chairman, president and CEO of Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., who was also inducted into the *Business Insurance* Hall of Fame (see profile page 33).

The team awards recognize the achievements of

groups of insurance and risk management professionals who collaborated on specific projects.

The nomination period for the awards opened in April, and we received more than 150 nominations. *Business Insurance* staff selected finalists in 10 categories.

The winners were selected by a panel of more than 30 risk managers who independently assessed each of the finalists.

The awards event also raised funds for the *Business Insurance* Scholarship, which was founded to help address the talent shortage facing the insurance sector and is administered by the Spencer Educational Foundation Inc. This year's recipients are Sebastian Czerwinski, a mathematics and actuarial science major at Illinois State University in Normal, and Sienna Sigmon, a risk management and insurance major at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

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Gavin Souter, editor

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BUSINESS INSURANCE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

J. Patrick Gallagher Jr.

BY GAVIN SOUTER

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After 50 years in the insurance business, J. Patrick Gallagher Jr. has seen a lot of change in both the sector and at the company that bears his family name.

Joining the market when it was common for large corporations to buy first dollar coverage, Mr. Gallagher participated in and later led Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.'s drive to provide a more sophisticated approach to insurance purchasing for its commercial clients.

The evolution also included the growth of claims administration services for buyers, which the firm first developed in the 1960s.

“Our industry, in general, is an industry where people either fall into the business or they’re born into it. However you get here, you’re lucky.”

Mr. Gallagher also led one of the most successful expansions ever of an insurance brokerage, helping as a producer and later as an executive grow the company from a largely Midwestern middle-market broker into a multinational risk management and professional services organization.

In 1972, when Mr. Gallagher joined the firm as an intern, it reported \$3.5 million in revenue and had 141 employees, according to *Business Insurance's* directory of insurance agents and brokers, and it did not make the ranking of the 20 largest brokers in the United States. In 1995, when he was named CEO, Gallagher was the 8th largest broker in the world, with \$412 million in revenue and 3,739 employees. Last year, Gallagher reported nearly \$7 billion in brokerage revenue — more than \$8 billion for the whole company — and ranks as the world's 4th



J. Patrick Gallagher Jr.

largest broker, with about 40,000 employees, over half of whom are based outside the United States.

In recognition of his achievements at Gallagher and his leadership position in the industry, Mr. Gallagher was presented with the *Business Insurance* Lifetime Achievement Award during the U.S. Insurance Awards event in New York in late September.

Mr. Gallagher puts his start in the insurance sector down to good fortune.

“Our industry, in general, is an industry where people either fall into the business or they’re born into it. However you get here, you’re lucky,” he said. “I look back and I go, ‘How lucky was I?’ I got born into a business that my grandfather absolutely loved.”

His grandfather, Arthur Gallagher, worked as a bookkeeper for a larger agency, before setting up his own shop in Chicago in 1927 selling insurance for the Hartford. His three sons all went into the business and developed the company into a commercial brokerage.

One of the pivotal moments in the company's history came in 1962 when it established its third-party administrator Gallagher Bassett Inc. and developed a pioneering self-insurance program for Beatrice Foods Co., a client it had won from a much

bigger broker five years earlier.

Mr. Gallagher first worked at the brokerage at age 14 during his summer vacation in 1966 as a file boy, traveling into the office in Chicago with his father; he immediately liked the working environment and the people he worked with.

Later, he attended Cornell University, where he majored in political science and government, and returned to the brokerage as an intern in 1972.

In 1974, he graduated, got married and started at the company full time as a commercial lines producer, focusing mainly on middle market business. He was assigned a small book of business, which covered his salary, and set about building it up.

“It was tough, but I began to get traction,” he said. “It’s a story that remains today: you have to put in your dues, you learn your craft, learn how to qualify prospects and understand what the prospect actually needs instead of just trying to sell them a product.”

In 1977, Mr. Gallagher returned to Cornell in his professional capacity and won the university's account. He still has the line slip on his office wall, he said.

“We have to recognize that an entrepreneur that’s built a \$10 million business is damn good at what he or she is doing, and for them to want to join us I try to call every one of them to thank them for picking us.”

“I’d gone back to Cornell and had a chance to call on their treasury department. They were buying all their coverage first dollar — it was kind of crazy — and we were successful at showing them how to use retentions, which in those days were still kind of modern thinking, and utilize a TPA,” he said.

Forty-five years later, the university is still a client with a multiline retention and Gallagher Bassett as the third-party administrator.

The TPA continued to evolve and in the 1980s it developed into a company that offered its services on a standalone basis, beyond its core base of Gallagher brokerage clients.

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ABOUT THE AWARD

The *Business Insurance* Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an individual whose outstanding contributions have had a lasting impact on the insurance and risk management sector. The honorees are also inducted into the *Business Insurance* Hall of Fame. The award was first presented in 2017 to Patrick G. Ryan, chairman and CEO of Ryan Specialty Group Holdings Inc. The 2018 honoree was Maurice R. Greenberg, chairman and CEO of C.V. Starr & Co. Inc; the 2019 honoree was Martin P. Hughes, executive chairman of Hub International Ltd.; the 2020 honoree was Kevin Kelley, retired vice chairman of Liberty Mutual Insurance Co.'s Global Risk Solutions business; and the 2021 honoree was Brian Duperrault, who retired as executive chairman of American International Group Inc. later that year.

LIFETIME AWARD

Continued from page 33

In addition to developing large retention business, during the 1970s Gallagher developed expertise in nonprofit, public sector and religious institutions business, which it maintains today, and enjoyed rapid organic growth.

Mr. Gallagher also progressed, becoming a unit manager with a handful of producers under him before he was named branch manager of Gallagher's Chicago operation. He held that position when Gallagher went public in 1984.

At the time of the initial public offering, the broker had \$63 million in revenue and the offering raised about \$13 million. The capital allowed the company to pay out some long-term equity holders who were retiring and start its now long-standing acquisition strategy.

"The driving force was to give those who had contributed to our growth their due and to give us a currency to grow the company with acquisitions," he said.

Since the IPO, Gallagher has made more than 500 acquisitions. While the deals have included some large companies, hundreds were tuck-in deals involving small brokers.

"We were growing pretty quickly with

acquisitions, and we were plugging people into positions that many of us weren't necessarily trained and ready for. It was learning on the job: learn how to do acquisitions, learn how to manage them," he said.

Mr. Gallagher took on increasing levels of executive responsibility after the IPO. In 1986, he was made vice president of operations. In 1990, he was promoted to president and chief operating officer and took over from his uncle Bob Gallagher as CEO of the company five years later.

"I'm very proud of the fact that the company had 500 interns this summer; I think there's clearly a day when we will have 1,000."

The acquisition strategy was and remains simple, Mr. Gallagher said. "Let's go out and find people that run really good businesses in our industry and, if we like them, let's try to convince them to sell to us and nobody else. That's it," he said.

The company has always been focused on culture — the 25 tenets of "the Gallagher Way" outline the company's approach to business ethics — and attracting the right firms into the culture has always been key, he said.

"We have to recognize that an entrepreneur that's built a \$10 million business is damn good at what he or she is doing, and for them to want to join us I try to call every one of them to thank them for picking us," he said.

In more recent years, the acquisition strategy has seen the company grow a significant international business.

Gallagher began its international operations in London in 1974, and about 10 years ago it began targeting some big companies in other English-speaking countries. Among other deals, in 2013 and 2014 Gallagher bought Australian conglomerate Wesfarmers Ltd.'s insurance brokerage operations for more than \$900 million and Canadian brokerage Noraxis Capital Corp. for nearly \$400 million, in addition to Giles Group of Cos. in the United Kingdom for about \$360 million.

"All those markets are comprised of a lot of small trading brokers, agents. We thought we could make a good home for them and do what we've done in the United States there, which has proved to be true," Mr. Gallagher said. "It was not an exercise in planting flags, it was an exercise in building out our earnings with an international component."

Its biggest deal to date was also international — the 2021 purchase of Willis Towers Watson PLC's reinsurance business.

The deal transformed Gallagher's reinsurance intermediary business from a mid-sized broker to the world's third largest. It also assisted its retail operations, providing insights into the dynamics of the wider insurance and reinsurance markets and the capital available in the sector, Mr. Gallagher said.

Insurance brokerage remains a great business that facilitates the operation of all other businesses, he said. But it's surprising how many companies have exited the sector, he added.

In 1985, a year after its IPO, Gallagher was the 11th largest U.S. brokerage and Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc. was the largest. All the other firms in the top 20 have since exited or been absorbed by competitors, with several combined to form what is now Aon PLC, he noted.

"They all gave up, which is crazy. It's the greatest business on the planet," Mr. Gallagher said.

And there are great opportunities for young people to enter the sector, he said. Gallagher's internship program has grown into one of the largest in the industry.

"I'm very proud of the fact that the company had 500 interns this summer; I think there's clearly a day when we will have 1,000. We're looking at ways to be more proactive with the community colleges, but my goodness this business is terrific," he said.

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Broker Team of the Year Willis Towers Watson

A U.S.-based global retail pharmacy chain wanted to use analytic tools to look at its risks in a different way when it changed its insurance broker to Willis Towers Watson PLC in 2020.

The company, with annual revenue of more than \$100 billion, wanted to take a strategic approach in a hard insurance market and get better value from its insurance program, which covers everything from property/casualty and professional liability to marine cargo and cyber risks, said Amy Mattle, Chicago-based executive vice president, global client advocate and co-retail industry practice leader for North America at Willis Towers Watson.

The pharmacy retailer wanted to “understand what insurable risks it was facing and how self-insuring portions of them would impact its balance sheet or operating margin,” Ms. Mattle said.

The WTW broking team began a risk optimization study of the organization’s insurable risks, using its analytics expertise and interviews with the company’s C-suite executives in risk, finance, treasury, legal and tax to better understand its risk tolerance.

Through those conversations, the broker gained insight into what the executives viewed as the company’s largest risks and



Amy Mattle

how they felt if something was uninsured.

The complexity of the company, because of its retail pharmacy and health care focus, means that it faces different risks than other retailers, Ms. Mattle said.

In addition to being a brick-and-mortar space where people can buy shampoo, it dispenses drugs, provides vaccinations and offers general health advice, she said. Druggist liability and cyber liability are

among its biggest risks, and the company is also making many acquisitions in the health care sector.

Using its analytics program, WTW ran thousands of potential scenarios, analyzing the company’s exposures and losses across different coverage lines and applying different deductible and retention structures to its projected losses.

The broking team developed different options to deliver the most efficient insurance program for the company’s 2021 renewal. As a result, the company decided to self-insure more of its risks — including business interruption and some of its professional liability — significantly increased its retentions and made greater use of its captive insurer, so that only catastrophic risks were being transferred to the insurance market.

The changes recommended by WTW resulted in more insurers being open to providing capacity and led to cost savings of several millions of dollars for the retail pharmacy at renewal, Ms. Mattle said.

Claire Wilkinson

FINALISTS

• **Aon PLC** — Aon used a multiteam approach to solve a large transportation

The client wanted to “understand what insurable risks it was facing and how self-insuring portions of them would impact its balance sheet or operating margin.”

Amy Mattle, Willis Towers Watson

company’s issue with legacy liabilities and secured reinsurance support to take on the exposures.

• **Baldwin Risk Partners** — The BRP Inc. unit’s management liability team created a National Center of Excellence that provides resources throughout the brokerage.

• **CAC Specialty** — The brokerage’s transactional liability team created a contingent risk market for portfolio litigation risks, developed a market for judgment preservation insurance and extended a market for tax insurance.

• **Marsh LLC** — Marsh’s excess casualty team developed a new policy wording, added capacity available to clients and created a consortium of insurers that are aligned on claims handling.

Community Outreach Project of the Year (Donations) Lockton

Lockton Cos. LLC’s annual golf tournament benefiting Move United’s Warfighters program, which provides wounded and disabled veterans with free adaptive sports programming and rehabilitation, has raised more than \$1 million since 2016, making it one of Warfighters’ most successful fundraisers.

Held each September at the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey, the Warfighters Sports Charity Challenge Golf Tournament was started by Hartford, Connecticut-based Lockton President Josh Olson, Managing Executive Gary Giuletti and Vice President and Managing Executive David Giuletti.

Mr. Olson said they were inspired to create the tournament after attending a Move United ski event several years earlier. They hoped to raise \$50,000 the first year and instead raised \$180,000. In 2021, Lockton reached a new milestone, raising \$500,000 for Warfighters at the one-day tournament.



Josh Olson

The money supports Move United’s more than 100 free Warfighters events each year. Since 2003, Warfighters has served more than 16,000 veterans,

providing sports programs, equipment, transportation and accessible facilities.

“They use sport to help injured veterans do something that they never thought they would be able to do again,” Mr. Olson said.

More than 228 industry representatives participate in the golf tournament each year, Mr. Olson said, including insurer executives, brokers, agents and clients, as well as 50 veterans who are members of the Warfighters program. Participants play in teams of four plus one veteran.

Many Warfighters participants have been part of the event every year, Mr. Olson said, including one veteran who lost both of his hands and legs. It’s remarkable to see their strength and progress each year, he said.

“You get to really know the warriors and hear their stories,” Mr. Olson said. “These people were injured in the course of battle while defending our freedom. It’s really a moving event.”

The tournament also includes a donation drive with PGA golf pros Pat McGovern, Tommy Hug and Andrew Eigner, a silent and live auction, and dinner. Though the pandemic forced some changes in 2021, like holding the dinner and auction

outside, Mr. Olson said the industry still came out to show its support.

“The veterans are there thanking us for having this amazing place to play golf, and we’re the ones that really want to thank them for their service and do whatever we can to help,” he said.

Amy O’Connor

FINALISTS

• **AssuredPartners Inc.** — After a series of tornados ripped through Bowling Green, Kentucky, last year, the brokerage contributed to organizations providing relief to displaced families and rebuilding efforts.

• **Harford Mutual Insurance Co.** — The insurer’s Gives Back Program partners with more than 70 charitable organizations to provide volunteer and financial assistance.

• **IAT Insurance Group** — The insurer supports Wreaths Across America, an organization that lays wreaths on the graves of soldiers.

• **IMA Financial Group** — The brokerage created the IMA Foundation nearly 40 years ago, and, after the company’s rapid growth in recent years, the fund increased by more than 170% in 2021.

“They use sport to help injured veterans do something that they never thought they would be able to do again.”

Josh Olson, Lockton

Community Outreach Project of the Year (Pro Bono and Volunteer)

USI

USI Insurance Services LLC's decision to celebrate its 20th anniversary in August 2014 with an extended community service program was so popular with employees that it has become an annual event.

"In April of 2014 I started planning how we were going to celebrate our birthday," said Kim Van Orman, senior vice president and chief human resources officer at the Valhalla, New York-based brokerage.

"We came up with the idea to have our entire organization spend the month of August 2014 giving back to our communities," she said. Because they would be dedicating 20 days of the month to volunteering, they named the event 20 for 20.

Employees in offices around the country

"One of the groups volunteered to help a local zoo. They ended up cleaning out the elephant enclosure, so a handful of elephants are included in the number of animals we have helped."

Kim Van Orman, USI



Kim Van Orman

volunteered in their communities during the first 20 days of August. Since there were 21 workdays in August 2014, the 21st day was given to them as a holiday, Ms. Van Orman said.

Employees embraced the program, and the company has continued to do it ever since, she said.

Employees have also been encouraged to incorporate the values of USI's diversity,

equity and inclusion program into their nonprofit partnerships to help underrepresented or marginalized groups, she said.

In 2021, 60% of their 238 volunteer events supported one or more diverse or underrepresented groups, "and we're hoping to expand that even further," Ms. Van Orman said.

Since the program's inception, there have been more than 1,500 volunteer events at which USI employees have helped more than 2.5 million people. Office teams have volunteered with local food banks and depositories, senior care centers, mentorship programs and outdoor beautification projects.

Over the years, they have also helped 31,000 animals by volunteering at local animal shelters — walking dogs, helping at adoption events and cleaning facilities.

"One of the groups volunteered to help a local zoo," Ms. Van Orman said. "They ended up cleaning out the elephant enclosure, so a handful of elephants are included in the number of animals we have helped."

Volunteering became very challenging during the month that fell during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, she said. "We did things virtually and did

things like making gift baskets. So, we kept things going," she said.

Outdoor group volunteer events were resumed in 2021. USI has also extended the duration of its volunteer campaign to run throughout August and September, to give local office teams more flexibility to plan their events while adhering to COVID-19 safety measures.

Caroline McDonald

FINALISTS

• **American International Group Inc.** — The insurer's pro bono program provides free legal advice to individuals and non-profits.

• **CNA Financial Corp.** — The insurer's Thurgood Marshall Early Innovators Program teaches high school students to devise plans to solve community challenges and provides scholarships.

• **ICW Group Insurance Cos.** — The insurer started a six-week Black Youth Initiative Intern Program, in which ICW staff worked with and coached students.

• **Midwest Employers Casualty Co.** — The insurer's staff tutored and mentored local school students to forge community connections that give educational and social support.

Diversity & Inclusion Initiative of the Year

Gehring Group

Employees at Gehring Group Inc. were shaken when they learned about the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020.

"The nation was alarmed and shocked at the gravity and inhumanity. We all saw it and felt the same thing," said Rodney Louis, senior risk management consultant at the Palm Beach Gardens, Florida-based unit of Risk Strategies Co.

Kate Grangard, managing director, national public entities practice, wanted to provide an opportunity for employees to get together as an organization and not ignore what had happened.

They held a town hall in early 2021, "where many people spoke and were extremely moved," Mr. Louis said. "A lot of us were sharing experiences with regards to discrimination or lack of inclusivity."

At the end of the town hall, the decision was made to form a committee to raise awareness about diversity and inclusion.

"Just because we're from a different place, or have an accent, doesn't make us separate from one another. We want to honor and celebrate those differences."

Rodney Louis, Gehring Group Inc.



Rodney Louis

Kate Grangard

"More than 60 people out of 94 employees volunteered to join, to be a part of 'Culture of Inclusion,' which is what we called it," Mr. Louis said.

The decision was made on what they should concentrate on, and they broke into three groups, focusing on education, awareness training and communication.

The education group decided "to give an unbiased history lesson about legislation and court doctrines from 1865 until today," Mr. Louis said. "They focused on the legislation that created where we are today."

They then worked with a production company to make a film. "We used footage and video, and had it narrated," he said. "It ended up being 40 minutes of U.S. history that you never learned in school."

These employees also participated in a privilege walk. "Everyone lines up and several questions are asked about advantages," Ms. Grangard explained.

Questions were asked such as "Did you have more than 20 books in your home?" and "Is English the first language spoken in your home?"

"If you had a positive situation you took a step forward. If not, you took a step back," Mr. Louis said.

"Most participants kept their eyes down, and when they looked up and saw where their coworkers were, they were

surprised," Mr. Louis said. "Some broke down in tears."

Looking forward, the goal is for people to understand that "just because we're from a different place, or have an accent, doesn't make us separate from one another. We want to honor and celebrate those differences," he said.

Caroline McDonald

FINALISTS

• **Alliant Insurance Services Inc.** — The brokerage launched the Alliant Insurance Foundation to promote diversity and broaden access to the insurance industry to underrepresented people.

• **CNA Financial Corp.** — The insurer implemented its Company of Allies program to advance a culture of inclusion through training and education programs.

• **Falvey Insurance Group** — The agency introduced Women at the Helm, the company's first-ever speaker series, which spotlighted challenges facing women.

• **Guidewire Software Inc.** — The software company implemented a company-wide diversity and inclusion strategy that seeks to embed inclusiveness throughout the organization.

Insurance Consulting Team of the Year Corporate Risk Solutions

An analysis of the total cost of risk, coverage, contractual gaps and overlaps, as well as insights into a company's risk management program and operational path, was the beginning of a risk management makeover for a multinational transportation and logistics company.

New York-based Corporate Risk Solutions, an independent risk and insurance adviser, was engaged to review the company's insurance structures, which included a significant real estate portfolio. Within the resulting analysis, CRS unearthed various operations that had been discontinued or incorrectly protected. This resulted in adjustments to accurately reflect location values, thereby

"Our goal in every engagement is to identify tailored strategies to streamline risk management, maximize protection and mitigate cost."

Jim Fay, Corporate Risk Solutions



Danielle Lenzi

Jim Fay

reducing insurance costs.

CRS also negotiated a reduction in the company's collateral obligations, freeing up working capital.

"This is an example of the kind of results we can achieve for our clients," Danielle Lenzi, senior vice president at CRS, said in an email. This is accomplished, she said, by working closely with and actively listening to clients' needs and

goals identified by executive teams and safety and risk experts.

The company also coordinates cost benefit analyses to advise on alternative risk transfer options such as risk retention groups, captive insurers or other structures "to allow clients to have greater control over insurance purchasing decisions to reap the rewards of loss control efforts," Jim Fay, managing director at CRS, said in an email.

CRS' approach also enhances market competition, he said.

"In this case, the client saved more than \$15 million in premium expense on its casualty coverage alone and achieved other needed operational efficiency," Ms. Lenzi said.

"Our goal in every engagement is to identify tailored strategies to streamline risk management, maximize protection and mitigate cost," Mr. Fay said.

Caroline McDonald

FINALISTS

• **BDO USA LLP** — BDO assisted a client in selecting an insurance broker, restructuring its risk department, evaluating its risk management information system and other tasks that resulted in

"In this case, the client saved more than \$15 million in premium expense on its casualty coverage alone and achieved other needed operational efficiency."

Danielle Lenzi, Corporate Risk Solutions

multimillion-dollar savings.

• **Galway Strategic Solutions** — This unit brings real-world expertise to Galway's portfolio companies to develop solutions to problems, including creating a turnkey digital platform targeting the small-business commercial insurance sector.

• **Paragon Risk Engineering** — Paragon worked with steel industry clients to evaluate risks through a severity study that eliminated inefficiencies and drove improvements.

• **Xceedance Inc.** — Xceedance was tasked by a top specialty insurer to boost underwriting profitability and productivity by reducing work repetition and improving processes.

Underwriting Team of the Year Burns & Wilcox

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant disruption in the construction sector, which affected the types of risks the industry faced and companies' insurance needs.

To help meet those changing needs, Burns & Wilcox developed ProConstruct, said Michael Muglia, Farmington Hills, Michigan-based national underwriting director within the underwriting manager's professional liability practice.

The program had its first full production year in 2021 and Burns & Wilcox has written "hundreds" of policies, which are backed by Lloyd's of London syndicates, Mr. Muglia said.

"We're an internal program division within Burns & Wilcox, and we really create programs based on brokers' needs and needs we see in the marketplace," he said.

Design and construction professionals' jobs have evolved to include tasks such as making sure materials arrived on time,

"We really create programs based on brokers' needs and needs we see in the marketplace."

Michael Muglia, Burns & Wilcox



Michael Muglia

checking to see they were not damaged in transport, or adjusting for something that may have changed at the jobsite after the original order, he said.

Other policy forms were silent or "gray" on a lot of things, "and from the brokerage side, we know some carriers have denied claims" in areas "that we very much thought should have been covered, based on what we knew the contractor was doing" at the time of the underwriting, he said.

In addition, as the pandemic hit, projects were shut down, contractual wording came under scrutiny, and there were time delays and material shortages because of the global disruption, Mr. Muglia said.

This created an opportunity, he said. As Burns & Wilcox personnel transitioned to working from home, the underwriting team could "really work on something without a ton of disruptions," he said.

The whole program fell into place in about a month and a half. It was "lightning fast, but it really speaks to the expertise of underwriting that we have on the team," Mr. Muglia said.

The program reflects the pandemic's impact. With the work stoppages, for instance, construction professionals and contractors were storing chemicals on site because they could not access disposal sites due to unusual hours, lack of staffing

or others trying to use them, Mr. Muglia said. But insurance had covered only delivery services.

The Burns & Wilcox form addresses this issue, Mr. Muglia said, adding that competitors have since followed its lead in offering this coverage. "It's flattering, but it's aggravating," although it also shows "we've got it right," he said.

Judy Greenwald

FINALISTS

• **American International Group Inc.** — The insurer devised an insurance program for the complex risks that come from special purpose acquisition companies, or SPACs.

• **Ascot Insurance Co.** — Ascot's ocean marine team scaled up its operations to meet increased demand in a difficult market and provide responsive services to policyholders.

• **Constellation Affiliated Partners** — The CRC Insurance Services Inc. unit launched a technology-enabled large fleet commercial trucking program.

• **Westchester** — The Chubb Ltd. unit worked with wholesale brokers to institute changes that improved products and distribution strategies.

Legal Team of the Year Liberty Mutual

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Liberty Mutual Insurance Co.'s 900-person field legal department to drastically adjust claims litigation handling as courtrooms across the country went virtual, from case depositions to trials and everything in between.

While the insurer had technology to respond when the world shut down in March 2020, said Arlene Zalayet, senior vice president and general attorney for Boston-based Liberty Mutual, the legal team wasn't necessarily prepared to handle all court business outside of a courtroom or office.

"Nobody could be in the same room, even the lawyer and the client. ... This was a whole new way of lawyering," she said.

In response, the insurer's legal training program was quickly expanded to include skills for virtual advocacy, Ms. Zalayet said. The mandatory trainings covered how to conduct virtual proceedings such as depositions and mediations with virtual

"Nobody could be in the same room, even the lawyer and the client."

Arlene Zalayet, Liberty Mutual



Arlene Zalayet

simulations by senior attorneys. A mentor and buddy system, as well as checklists, were also created to help attorneys keep up with the constantly changing rules across jurisdictions.

As courts responded to the evolving pandemic, so did the training program. New training was introduced when virtual jury trials started in the summer of 2020, Ms. Zalayet said. It was challenging, as

trials operated differently in different venues, with jurors in the courtroom with the judge and lawyers in some places and at home in others, she said.

In one instance, Ms. Zalayet said, the attorneys had to stand with their backs to the judge while facing the jurors on a giant screen.

"Our lawyers had to be trained on how you connect and make your points effectively in these strange physical settings," she said.

Other departments were brought in to help, including Liberty Mutual's actuarial team, which analyzed the situational data's effect on case outcomes. According to that data, the team's trial defense success rate was consistent with that of pre-pandemic.

The legal team also detailed its winning cases in a podcast series called "The Way We Win."

Ms. Zalayet said the experience was a team-building and learning opportunity.

"We still have ongoing monthly meetings with the claims leaders, the actuary leaders and the national training coordinator because we didn't want to let that synergy go," she said.

Most courts will continue to have virtual case components going forward, Ms. Zalayet said, so the virtual advocacy

training program will operate alongside the company's in-person training program indefinitely.

"Everyone still needs virtual skills in their toolbox. From now on, our view of training is it's not either or," she said.

Amy O'Connor

FINALISTS

• **Anderson Kill P.C.** — The firm helped secure coverage victories for commercial policyholders in cases ranging from COVID-19 business interruption disputes to asbestos-related liability claims.

• **Cohen Ziffer Frenchman & McKenna LLP** — Cohen Ziffer is a recently formed law firm that has attracted numerous corporate policyholder clients to work on pandemic-related claims and complex liability claims.

• **Covington & Burling LLP** — The firm successfully represented policyholders in disputes including coverage for cyber-attacks, pollution and losses related to COVID-19 shutdowns.

• **Pasich LLP** — The boutique insurance recovery law firm scored numerous wins for policyholders, including securing event cancellation coverage for concerts canceled during the pandemic.

Risk Management Team of the Year Bass Pro Shops/CorVel

Bass Pro Shops, a privately held specialty retailer focused on hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities, wanted to improve its return-to-work and temporary total disability tracking.

David Jones, director of risk management at the Bridgeport, Connecticut-based company, enlisted the help of risk management consultants and workers compensation administrator CorVel Corp. to help implement the recommendations of Bass Pro's risk management team.

"They wanted to assemble a dedicated team of nurses that would essentially perform as an extension of the risk management department and ensure that injured workers received the most appropriate and best level of care possible," said Aurora, Illinois-based Bill Koerner, vice president, national accounts at CorVel.

The period between the original vision and the implementation of the program was about 90 days, "but the program has evolved over time," Mr. Koerner said. "It took about a year to realize that additional nursing resources were needed to make the program truly successful."

The program was designed to improve the tracking of temporary total disability claims and workers' return to work while lowering



Bill Koerner

medical costs and ensuring that injured workers received the appropriate level of care with the appropriate treating providers.

Taking the initiative companywide involved several different Bass Pro and CorVel teams, including risk management, safety, human resources, operations, workers compensation coordinator teams, and dedicated CorVel adjusters and nurse case managers.

Weekly temporary total disability meetings were held to help track workers compensation claims more diligently, Mr. Koerner said.

Bass Pro now has a dedicated team of CorVel nurses and coordinators working with adjusters, providers and employees to promote effective and timely return to work with maximum medical improvement. Mr. Koerner said.

"Early intervention and communication — starting with the intake process and continuing 24/7 — are getting patients to the right providers at the onset of the claim," Mr. Koerner said.

Follow-up by the nurses and the support team helps injured workers achieve more timely return to work and lower medical costs.

Program results also include a decrease in case management costs and the number of injured workers on the temporary total disability report, Mr. Koerner said. There has also been a decline in litigated claims since the program began, he added.

Matthew Lerner

FINALISTS

• **The town of Greenwich, Connecticut, and Greenwich Public Schools** — The

"Early intervention and communication ... are getting patients to the right providers at the onset of the claim."

Bill Koerner, CorVel

risk management department spearheaded a cybersecurity program for the public entities and implemented procedures to ensure contractor compliance with insurance programs, among other initiatives.

• **Carpenter & Co.** — The company partnered with CorVel to improve claim closure rates for a workers comp trust.

• **KKR & Co. Inc.** — KKR's risk management team has brought innovation to developing a suite of programs to support the investment firm's portfolio of companies, including cross-portfolio programs.

• **Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc.** — The company's insurable risk team worked with internal and external partners to develop and implement a new strategy and insurance program to tackle the evolving risks facing the company.

TPA Team of the Year Broadspire

Managing workers compensation claims for New York's largest health care organization during the COVID-19 pandemic was unlike any challenge the Broadspire Services Inc. team had experienced before, said John Lastella, vice president of claims.

Broadspire, the third-party administrator arm of Crawford & Co., has handled Northwell Health's workers compensation program since 2013. The health care system has more than 80,000 employees across 23 hospitals, said Hauppauge, New York-based Mr. Lastella.

"When the pandemic hit, Northwell was hit really hard," he said. "A lot of their employees were exposed to COVID, and they didn't have a choice but to take care of people."

Broadspire worked with Northwell to

"COVID was something that was totally new, and they had to learn really quick and use their best judgment ... They were just tremendous."

John Lastella, Broadspire



John Lastella

determine how many employees were exposed to the virus on the job, which amounted to about 7,000, Mr. Lastella said. Workers comp claims were then opened for each employee who contracted the virus, totaling about 2,500, to compensate for missed work time and any medical needs.

To improve the efficiency of the claims-handling process, Broadspire built

a database to track COVID-19 exposures, testing and claims across Northwell's hospital system. Each claim was categorized by seriousness of exposure. Workers with significant illness, or long COVID, were assigned Broadspire nurse managers who ensured they received proper medical care.

"Each claim had a different approach, and we tried to categorize them and provide whatever resources, depending on the severity of the case, as quickly as possible."

There were also health care worker claims related to mental and physical exhaustion, as well as other physical injuries.

"Everybody was pulling double or triple duty — I don't know how they did it," Mr. Lastella said.

Today, about 40 to 50 claims remain open. Though the experience didn't compare to what Northwell's health care workers endured, Mr. Lastella said, it took a toll on Broadspire adjusters, many of whom worked 16-hour days, five to six days a week for several months straight.

"COVID was something that was totally new, and they had to learn really quick and use their best judgment in a lot of scenarios. They were just tremendous," Mr. Lastella said.

Most of the 2,500 claims occurred

between March and August 2020, when there were a lot of unknowns. It was a scary time, but Mr. Lastella said he's proud of how his team came together to support Northwell's health care workers through compassion and cooperation.

"That was the focus — there was nothing else. It was just how do we get them through this and what is the best route," Mr. Lastella said.

Amy O'Connor

FINALISTS

- **Cannon Cochran Management Services Inc.** — CCMSI implemented artificial intelligence in its claims operations, enabling the company to identify complex claims earlier and automate tasks.
- **CorVel Corp.** — The company worked with a retailer client to improve its claims process, including its pharmacy program.
- **Gallagher Bassett Services Inc.** — The company developed its Waypoint Litigation Solution, an artificial intelligence tool that identifies problem claims.
- **Helmsman Management Services** — The Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. unit uses its early severity model to identify workplace injury claims that are likely to be more complex and expensive.

Wholesale Brokerage Team of the Year RT Specialty

What started as a need to fill a capacity void in the cyber liability insurance market in 2013 has become a rapidly growing segment for RT Specialty. So much so, that a team was formed to handle the business and identify other areas in the market where coverage is needed.

Jonathan Reiner and Patrick Richmond, executive vice presidents at RT Specialty, a unit of Chicago-based Ryan Specialty Holdings Inc., head this team within the RT Professional and Executive division.

The team combined their cyber experience with the knowledge of former cyber underwriters and data analysts to form an RT-exclusive facility backed by five insurers.

"We worked together with a few key trading partners at the facility to replenish some of the supply of the cyber catastrophes market," he said. "That had been due to hardening conditions that drove the supply and the market down quite a bit."

They have since seen rapid growth, with a premium growth rate of 96.3% in 2021, following a 137% rate in 2020.

This expansion has necessitated a larger staff. "RT Specialty is an amazing plat-



Jonathan Reiner

Patrick Richmond

form," Mr. Reiner said. "It has allowed us the freedom and the resources to go from a staff of two to more than 80."

The team's success can be attributed to these personnel, he said. "They have come in with passion, desire and value," he said.

Of the new employees, about half were underwriters before entering broking. "We also have success hiring people from

outside the industry, most often right out of college," he said.

There is one trait they all have in common, however, "and that is heart," he said. The team shows this by giving back to the community, supporting Laugh Your Face Off, a Chicago-based comedy fundraiser devoted to finding a cure for trigeminal neuralgia and neuropathic face pain.

"It's very challenging to live with and it wasn't getting the proper funding," Mr. Reiner said. "We wanted to help raise awareness and funds for research." Over the past several years they have raised more than \$300,000.

Looking ahead, the team's strategy is to find gaps in the market. "We spend time with and talk to our clients," Mr. Reiner said. "When they tell us they are having pain somewhere, our goal is to figure out a way to help and take pressure off them so they can be better for their clients."

Caroline McDonald

FINALISTS

- **Pathpoint Inc.** — The wholesaler Pathpoint developed an online excess and surplus quoting, binding and policy issuance process for retailers.

• **PL Risk Advisors Inc.** — The Axis Management Group Holdings Inc. division developed specialty expertise for hard-to-place risks, including cyber, professional liability, cannabis and transactional liability.

• **SolePro Inc.** — SolePro developed an insurtech platform for the workers compensation industry that provides retailers with multiple quotes and comparisons.

• **Synapse Partners LLC** — Synapse designed a proprietary data management platform that provides insights into the specialty market and benchmarking analysis.

"When (clients) tell us they are having pain somewhere, our goal is to figure out a way to help and take pressure off them so they can be better for their clients."

Jonathan Reiner, RT Specialty