



IFA HALL OF FAME

INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION

1979



WILLIAM ROSENBERG



1980



A.L. TUNICK



1981



HENRY BLOCK



1982



BERNARD BROWNING

General Business Services

1983



RAY BURCH



1984



ELMER WINTER



1985



WARREN ROSENTHAL



1986



SELICHI SUZUKI



1986



RAY KROC



1986



COL. HARLAND SANDERS



1987



ARTHUR BARTLETT



1988



IRVINE ROBBINS



1989



KEMMONS WILSON



1990



MARION WADE



1991



FRANK CARNEY



1993



DAVID THOMAS





IFA HALL OF FAME

INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION

1982 HALL OF FAME AWARD WINNER

BERNARD S. BROWNING

Founder, General Business Services

Born in Browning, Missouri, Bernard S. Browning entered Northeast Missouri State University on a scholarship at the age of 15. After studies at the University of Richmond and Georgetown University, he bypassed the Bachelor's degree by being admitted to Harvard University's Graduate School of Business Administration, where he was awarded an MBA Degree at the age of 23. A doctoral program was later pursued at New York University, with further studies at George Washington University.

During World War II, Mr. Browning entered the U.S. Navy as an Apprentice Seaman and later became a commissioned officer serving in both the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters. He helped reorganize the Navy Exchange Resale System serving as a retail store manager and later as training director for the entire retail chain. During 28 years of active and reserve duty, he rose through the ranks to Rear Admiral becoming the second youngest reserve officer selected for that rank in the history of the United States Navy Supply Corps. His last mobilization assignment before retirement was Auditor General, U.S. Navy. Bernie is a founding member of the Naval War College Foundation and the Navy Supply Corps Foundation.

A believer in small business, Mr. Browning has owned and operated three small businesses. In 1962, he founded General Business Services, Inc., as a small business consulting firm pioneering a new concept of business counseling on a mass basis. As President of GBS, he guided its growth to become the largest in the nation with 1,100 franchises in 50 states prior to relinquishing the CEO position in January 1986. As a member of the Board of Directors of the International Franchise Association, in 1974, Mr. Browning became the first former franchisee ever elected Chairman. He was the fourth person inducted into the Franchising Hall of Fame in 1983 as a pioneer in serving franchising. In February 1991, Louisiana State University and the International Franchise Association included Mr. Browning in the first group of 15 to be designated "Certified Franchise Executive." The franchising community recognized Mr. Browning's many contributions over the past four decades by dedicating National Franchising Week to him in April 1993.

Mr. Browning was elected Chairman of the National Small Business Association twice, having served in various capacities as a Trustee since 1978. He has served as Chairman of the Advisory Board of the International Council for Small Business, and was one of nine persons designated "Fellow" by that organization in 1985 for outstanding service to small business. He is listed in Who's Who in Finance and Industry and Who's Who in the South and Southwest.

Other private groups where he has helped small business include: member of the Business Council on Reduction of Paperwork, one of the first citizen advisory councils in government, founded in 1942; member of the Advisory Board for the first University Business Development Center at the University of California at Pomona; member of the Executive Committee, Council of Small Business, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Trustee for the Citizens Committee on Paperwork Reduction; National Advisory Board for the Center for Economic Studies and as a member of the Board of Governors, Boston College Center for Franchise Distribution and Small Business. He was named Honorary Life Trustee in November 1991 by National Small Business United in recognition of a lifetime devoted to small business.

During 1975-76, he served on the first Small Business Advisory Council to the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Mr. Browning was first appointed to the Small Business Administration, Washington, D.C. District Advisory Council in 1973 and to its National Advisory Council in 1975, where he was named Chairman on July 1, 1976. He became the first chairman to receive the SBA's Meritorious Service Award for leadership provided during his term. During Small Business Week in 1987, the White House and the Small Business Administration honored him as the "Accountant Advocate of the Year" selected from 53 state and territorial winners. Six fields of endeavor supporting small business are so honored each year.

Mr. Browning was a delegate to both the 1980 and 1986 White House Conference on Small Business. General Business Services had the largest number of delegates from any private sector organization attending both conferences. Browning is a founding Director of First Fidelity Bank of Rockville, Maryland (now Riggs National Bank of MD), which, in the first two years, grew to \$50,000,000 in assets. Mr. Browning, now semi-retired, serves as a Senior Advisor to a few selected clients.

Mr. Browning died on March 22, 2005 at 81 years of age.

