



James Scheil, Summit Mechanical

When asked about James Scheil, those who know him always use the same words: honest, loyal, and hard working.

“I have never known anyone who is harder working than Jim,” says Bill Fishering, Attorney, Beers Mallers Backs & Salin. “His success is built around his general motto, which is to be hard working, loyal, and honest.”

Jim Scheil opened Summit Mechanical in 1983 after increasing his mechanical contracting skills as an employee of Cupp, Inc.

“Jim worked for and became a partner in the business after learning on the job and developing into a fine mechanical designer,” Bill Cupp says of his business partner. “When we sold the business, Jim started Summit Mechanical from scratch, building it through honest, hard work, and a customer-oriented philosophy.”

Cupp says that as a businessman, Scheil understands people. “By putting in the time to be successful,” Cupp says, “Jim has done a remarkable job of running his company and turning it into a first class business.”

Kyle Witwer, owner of Witwer Construction, has worked with Scheil for many years. He says “there is no one in our community with more knowledge about mechanical systems and how to design them, from one that is inexpensive to one that’s very elaborate.”

“Jim was born with the ability to analyze a problem and find an economical solution in a timely manner,” says Chuck Chaffee, a long-time friend and business associate. “He’s a dedicated coach, mentor, and boss who works hard to help others be better people.”

“I worked for Summit Mechanical all through college,” says Joe Dye, Scheil’s stepson. “Dad instilled in me the value of hard work, respect for people at every level, and a high

standard of ethics. These lessons have served me my entire career.”

Summit Mechanical provides full-service HVAC work and related HVAC equipment, automated controls, indoor air quality, and energy management and plumbing. Backed by 24-hour service, the company serves customers primarily in northeastern Indiana.

Delivering engineering design for a range of industries, Summit Mechanical’s projects have included, for example, Trine University’s Thunder Ice Arena, Parkview Mirro Center for Research and Innovation, and numerous automotive dealerships, manufacturing facilities, and office and medical buildings.

“Jim’s first priority is taking care of the customer, never leaving a job without the customer being satisfied,” Witwer says. “For him, money is secondary to having a customer get the best value for the dollar.”

“Summit Mechanical has experienced marvelous growth over the years,” says Tom Grant, CPA. “As its leader, Jim’s success relates to the type of individual he is. You won’t find a more honest or loyal person, not only to his customers but also to employees and tradespeople.”

Scheil is looking ahead to Summit Mechanical’s future, too. A planned transition in ownership is ensuring the company he built remains successful.

“I started working for Jim in 2000, and his advice has been invaluable. When I ask him, ‘How do you know that, how did you come up with that?’ his response is always, ‘In 40 years you’ll get there,’ ” says Wes Steele, the new owner of Summit Mechanical. “I’m not sure I’ll ever reach that plateau, but it’s a good goal.”

While running his growing business, Scheil also spent years on the Allen County Building Department’s Board of Directors.

“Jim spent 20-some years on the Building Department’s Board of Directors, a non-paid advisory role,” Fishing says. “Through that dedication of hours to community service, he was helping oversee local contracting projects and protecting the public’s interest.”

Similar to his community service and his additional real estate investment and development efforts, Scheil is also quiet about the ways he gives back through gifts to charitable organizations.



“Jim has a passion for giving back to the community, and he’s done that in such a fashion that we don’t really know about most of it,” Grant says. “That speaks volumes about the type of guy Jim is. He gives behind the scenes and truly believes in the projects he is supporting.”

“The old adage is that character is what you do when no one is looking. He is passionate in his beliefs and supporting what he believes in,” Dye says. “Dad works very hard for his family, his friends, and his community. Dad is a true son of Fort Wayne.”

