

Herbert A. Sklenar Summary of Accomplishments

Herbert A. Sklenar's life reads like a "how-to" manual on the American Dream.

The story begins in 1913 when, as a 20-year old, Herb's father emigrated from Czechoslovakia to the United States. He arrived at Ellis Island with \$60 dollars in his pocket and a strong desire to pursue the opportunities of a new life in America. Making his way west, Herb's father eventually settled in Nebraska where he married a first generation American whose parents had emigrated from Moravia in the late 1800s. Herb was born in 1931, one of seven children who received their first lessons in hard work on the family's small farm.

Throughout elementary and high school, Herb excelled at academics and athletics, showing a particular talent for basketball. Following high school, Herb attended what is now the University of Nebraska at Omaha, where he graduated *summa cum laude* with a degree in business administration and a varsity letter in basketball. Herb then attended Harvard University's Graduate School of Business Administration from which he received an MBA degree in 1954.

Following two years of service in the Army, Herb went to work for the West Virginia industrialist, Bernard P. McDonough, who recruited Herb first to Parkersburg-Aetna Corporation, then to Marmac Corporation, and finally to the Cudahy Company in Phoenix, Arizona. In 1972, Herb joined Vulcan Materials Company as Vice President of Finance. He was elected a director of the company in 1973.

Over the years, Herb assumed positions of increasing responsibility at Vulcan. Following promotions to executive vice president, finance, in 1974 and to chief administrative officer in 1979, he was elected president and chief operating officer in 1983. He became chief executive officer in 1986 and assumed the additional position of chairman in 1992. After 25 years of service, Herb retired as an employee in 1997 and, as chairman emeritus, continued to serve on Vulcan's board until 2001.

In addition having served on Vulcan's board, Herb is a past director of AmSouth Bankcorporation, Protective Life Corporation and Temple-Inland, Inc., in Austin, Texas.

During his years at Vulcan, Herb provided the strong leadership that helped Vulcan maintain its position as the leading producer of construction aggregates in the United States. Herb was the driving force behind the creation of Vulcan's mission statement, which, among other things, formally defines ethical conduct at the company. Herb and his management team were also instrumental in establishing Vulcan's formal commitment to standards of leadership in safety, health, and environmental stewardship.

Herb has many civic, philanthropic, and humanitarian affiliations. He currently serves on the Board of Distinguished Advisors, the American Committees on Foreign Relations, the advisory board for the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library and serves as a director or trustee of Birmingham-Southern College, Leadership Birmingham, Region 2020, and the Birmingham Committee on Foreign Relations. Herb's past service affiliations include INROADS/Birmingham, the Alabama Symphony Association, Leadership Alabama, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Alabama Ear Institute, the National Conference of Christians and Jews (now known as the National Conference for Community and Justice), and the Business Partnership for Alabama School Reform.

Herb made one of his most important contributions to the community as co-chair of the very successful capital campaign for the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. For his service, Herb received the Brotherhood Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews. In accepting the award, Herb said, “. . .equality of opportunity must be — at the very least — a steadfast foundation of capitalism. The pursuit of economic gain — the American Dream, if you will — must be a fair game for all of our citizens regardless of their ethnic or racial origins.”

In November 2002, the Civil Rights Institute held its first annual Fred L. Shuttlesworth Human Rights Awards Dinner. Herb received an award of appreciation for his leadership of the Institute's capital campaign and joined a distinguished group of honorees that received special recognition from the Institute.