



Famed Flashbacks

August in October

Annual Honors kick off National Health Care Supply Chain Week

By Fred W. Crans

SCHAUMBURG, IL (October 2, 2024) – August and October share one thing in common: They are both months of the year.



Fred Crans, Bellwether Class of 2020, speaks at BLFIRE16 on Oct. 2, 2023

So how could it possibly be “August in October?”

Well, Grasshopper (for that older generation) or Padawan (for that younger generation), it just so happens that “august” has an alternative meaning. Per the American Heritage Dictionary: au·gust (ô-güst'), *adj.*

Respected and dignified: *The august presence of the monarch.*

Organizations can be august, as can their members.

The Bellwether League Foundation (BLF) is an august organization, as are its honored.

On Monday, Oct. 7, 2024, the BLF will be hosting its annual educational event/induction ceremony at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Campus. The BLF annually bestows three prestigious awards recognizing three different types of professionals: Future Famer, Ammer Honoree and Bellwether Honoree.

Future Famers are people in the early stages of their career. The award was implemented in 2015, and its awardees are people in the early stages of their careers. To date, including the 2024 awardees, there have been 42 winners. The 2024 Future Famers are:

- Angie Bruns, The University of Kansas Health
- Chico Manning, PIH Health
- Corey Schmidt, The University of Kansas Health

Ammer Honorees are executives in the middle of their careers. The award, named after the first BLF's inaugural inductee into the Healthcare Supply Chain Leadership Hall of Fame™, Dean Ammer, Ph.D., was implemented in 2020. To date, including 2024, there have been six Ammer Honorees. The 2024 Ammer Honorees are:

- Amanda Chawla, Stanford Medicine
- Amand Joshi, M.D., New York Presbyterian Hospital

The final awardees, Bellwether Honorees, represent seasoned or retired contributors who have served the discipline over careers that have equaled or exceeded 25 years of service. The BLF and the Bellwether Hall of Famers were founded in 2008. Since then, there have been 148 Bellwether Honorees, including those being inducted in 2024. This year's Bellwether Honorees are:

- Ron Denton
- Dave Hunter
- Gail Kovacs
- Eugene Schneller, Ph.D.
- Celeste West

Every little boy or girl that picks up a baseball, basketball or football dreams of the day when he or she will be inducted into the Hall of Fame for their accomplishments in their chosen sport. To them, the Hall of Fame is *aspirational*.

Along the way, there are intermediate awards for excellence, such as Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player, Cy Young Award, etc. Those awards are aspirational and voted on by the players' peers and sports media writers. The Future Famer and Ammer Honoree awards are similar in that they represent recognition along the way.

Bellwether Honoree status represents the ultimate recognition. In every single measurable way, it is an award equal in prestige to induction into any of the other Halls of Fame. In fact, the case could be made that while Ted Williams' lifetime batting average of .344 was truly remarkable, his greatest accomplishments were serving as a pilot in two wars and the work he did helping to save lives with the Jimmy Fund.

Last time I checked, none of Barry Bonds' 762 home runs saved a single life.

But Clara Barton, Bellwether Class of 2019, sure did.

As did so many of her fellow Bellwether inductees, whose work improved processes, hastened the acquisition and delivery of key supplies in the most trying of times and adeptly answered or averted every kind of challenge – at salaries far, far, far below those who play games for a living.

So, on October 7, in Milwaukee, an august group of inducted Hall of Famers and other BLF honorees will welcome a new group to this august group.

For the Future Famers and Ammer Honorees, the evening will represent recognition of their promise and steady contribution to the industry. They will receive their honors, see the Hall of Famers receive theirs and, hopefully, commit themselves to strive for the ultimate recognition.

The Bellwether Honorees will feel the pride of a life of service that may have been often overlooked or taken for granted. They will share their moment with peers, friends and family. As time goes by, the gravity and prestige of the award will mean more and more because the award they were given was voted on and bestowed upon them by a panel of their peers.

They will carry the honor with them for the rest of their lives.

They will feel pride – not only while still among us but also with the knowledge that their recognition will extend even beyond.

As well they should.

Fred W. Crans, Bellwether Class of 2020, has more than five decades of healthcare supply chain experience and service in a variety of executive leadership roles that spans military and private-sector communities as well as provider, supplier, group purchasing organization and consultant segments. He currently serves on the Advisory Council of Bellwether League Foundation and as Healthcare Business Development Executive for St. Onge Co. For more, visit Bellwether League Foundation's web site at <https://www.bellwetherleague.org/>.



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