



The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Ohio Valley Chapter has selected this year's Gold and Silver Circle Honorees. Each has devoted many years to broadcasting, education and community service and are highly deserving of this prestigious award.

Silver Circle is one of NATAS' highest honors, which recognizes television professionals who have performed distinguished service for 25 years or more. Gold Circle inductees have served for 50 years or more. In the words of NATAS Ohio Valley Chapter Silver/Gold Circle Committee Chair, Jim Timmerman, "Silver and Gold Circle members are honored for more than their longevity -- they are honored for making an enduring contribution to the vitality of the television industry and for setting standards of achievement we can all hope to emulate.

These honorees also give back to the community as mentors, educators and volunteers." The 2023 Gold and Silver Circle honorees will be formally recognized during the 59th annual NATAS Ohio Valley Chapter Emmy Awards Ceremony on July 29th at the Lawrenceburg Event Center. This year's honorees are . . .

## **Bob Aaron - Reporter, WCHS TV Charleston, WV**



In Fairmont, WV in 1965, a voice hit the air on WDTV. It was both announcer Bob Aaron. Bob found his calling that day because he found the value of an informed public. Aaron continued to hone his skills in Columbus, Cincinnati, Cedar Rapids, West Palm Beach

and Minneapolis. In 1982, he followed his heart to WCHS in Charleston. Bob believes that being a native of the state gives him a decisive edge when covering local news. From coal strikes to politics, Aaron is home where the action is. A 2011 West Virginia Broadcasters Hall of Fame inductee, Bob still uses that voice on air, as a mentor for the next generation of journalists, and as a staunch supporter of Parkinson's Disease research. When you love what you do, you live for it every day. Little did he know that he would go on to become the longest serving television reporter in West Virginia history.

## **Mike Blake – Sports Director, WFIE TV Evansville, IN**



We can identify media personalities by their station, with a city or, in the case of Mike Blake, both. Munster-raised, Iowa-educated, Viet Nam-tested, Mike then adopted Evansville and WFIE-TV as his home. This was 1970. Yet as revered as he is as Sports Director on-air, he is front and center in his

community even more. Knowing few things unite us like sports, he is a champion for all area teams - approachable by athletes, open to parents, fair to coaches, and a supporter of schools and their missions. In 1978, a time not known for live crisis reporting, Mike covered the University of Evansville basketball plane crash as he considered every soul aboard to be family. The Jerry Lewis telethon was hosted by Blake from 1971 to 2014,

also, Mike finds joy in emceeding countless events for area nonprofits. Seven sports and broadcasting halls of fame proudly call Mike Blake an inductee. Colleagues credit his lasting impact on the tri-state to 50+ years of putting viewers first and never taking a time-out.

## 2023 Silver Circle Honorees

### Mike Taylor – Assignment Editor, WLEX TV Lexington



They say the assignment desk is the toughest job in the newsroom, but that's only half of it. Add to it the internship program, political analysis, and a steady hand of leadership through ownership and news strategy changes and it adds up to the professional life of Mike Taylor. From

1980 through his retirement in 2020, Mike spent his entire career with WLEX TV 18 in Lexington. While a photojournalist at heart, his work was mainly behind the scenes helping reporters and anchors shine. His instinct on which stories would most significantly impact communities enabled WLEX to propel its leadership in the market. On election night especially, Mike was the go-to expert for interpreting voter trends and calling races with near surgical accuracy. Co-workers past and present revere Mike as a mentor who groomed journalists for success. The family man is a two-time regional Emmy recipient, a noted supporter of the Academy, and enjoys giving back by building homes for the impoverished in Haiti and Peru. Another tough job, done well.

## **Renee Shaw - Director of Public Affairs, Kentucky Educational Television**



To hear her co-workers describe it, they know it's Renee by her joyous laughter as she walks down the halls. But behind the mic there is little room for levity. Beginning in 1997, this anchor and producer of KET's *Kentucky Edition*, *Kentucky Tonight* and annual legislative coverage has demonstrated an ardent pursuit of the facts. Elected officials and policymakers she interviews respect her tireless research knowing she will ask, unapologetically, tough questions. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Western Kentucky University and hales from just below the border in Portland, TN. To date, she holds three regional Emmys and is a Kentucky Civil Rights hall of fame inductee. The joy in her voice, we believe, is because she's happy to make Kentucky a brighter, and more informed, place.

## **Bill Hager - Managing Editor, WLWT TV Cincinnati**



WLWT TV has enjoyed a storied history. A quarter century, 1997 – 2002, is credited to Bill Hager. Fans, family and staff only wish he were still with us to enjoy this honor. So, this is their time to speak for the managing editor who spoke so highly of them. “Bill embodied the highest standards of journalism.” “He stood for fairness, accuracy, objectivity and service to the public.” “When we lost Bill, our community lost an exceptional champion working on its behalf.” “Bill was the pulse of the newsroom.” “He had an impeccable writing style with uncanny wit.” “His management of election night coverage was unrivaled.” “He truly was at the center of News 5’s commitment to excellence.” “He made me a better journalist” “We have all learned so much from you, Bill.” He was there during a changing time in television, from the early days of *First. Fast. Accurate* and *Nobody Brings You Closer*, a grim reminder how quickly times do change. Bill Hager. Gone at 51, but always in our hearts at 5.

## Duane Pohlman – Chief Investigative Reporter, WKRC TV Cincinnati



Investigative reporting is vital in news and Duane Pohlman is a master at his craft. Widely recognized as one of the foremost investigative reporters in the nation, his efforts have resulted in full-scale government investigations, indictments, prosecutions, the enacting

of new laws, and for his stations – integrity. Relentless pursuit of the unanswered question has always been *rule one*. His resume includes WEWS-TV Cleveland, KING-TV Seattle, WTMJ-TV Milwaukee, WLKY Louisville, and WCMH-TV Columbus. In 2016, he joined WKRC-TV in Cincinnati as Chief Investigative Reporter. Since 1987, Pohlman has been *Reporter of the Year* in several states; he has garnered countless regional Emmys, the Edward R. Murrow award and honored by nearly every esteemed press association in the land. To complete the package, his reputation punctuates *Eye on Ohio - The Ohio Center for Journalism*, the non-profit news organization he co-founded. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Broadcast Journalism from Bowling Green State University and enjoys his home state of Ohio with his wife Sharon.