

This year's Vander Hyden Award winner was born into a family of tradesmen. He was raised in Ann Arbor and was a student at Pioneer High School. After High School, he entered an apprenticeship program following the path of his family.

In October of 1980, he received his "Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship" and he went to work in the field. It did not take long for him to realize he was destined for larger things. He decided to create his own company, starting with small service work. The projects varied significantly in nature, and as more jobs came along, he started hiring employees. It was not always easy. There were times he even had to pull from his own personal savings to make payroll. Through his dedication and motivation, the projects continued. One job at a time, he began to build a reputation that helped his business grow.

While trying to build his company, he continued to strive for future success. He attended college at the same time as running his business and he received his Engineering degree from the University of Michigan in December of 1989.

His company was officially founded in 1987 and was formally incorporated in 1989. The focus of the business was to establish itself in the local community he grew up in by performing quality installations. To simply say he accomplished that would be an understatement.

In the 1990's he was able to grow his business through energy management controls, fiber optics, high voltage site utilities, and new cellular tower installations. In the late 90's to the early 2,000's, his company also began to specialize in Healthcare and Academia while still developing his expertise in Energy Management Systems. His business continued to grow exponentially from there with many milestone projects completed over the years. From the simple beginnings of a few employees, he has expanded his company to roughly 250 steady employees and there is no aspect in his industry that he doesn't have experience with.

In addition to managing his company, he has served the industry and the community by participating on many different boards and committees throughout the years and he has been committed to his family and watching that family grow through generations.

Through his hard work, extreme attention to detail, and his amazing ability to create and maintain relationships, Thomas Kittel has made Huron Valley Electric what it is today. Throughout his 50+ year career, he has gained the utmost respect of his employees, subcontractors, suppliers, trade partners and customers.

Tom has said many times that "all we do is provide a service". It's that humble approach that laid the foundation for his company and made him the BEST at what he does. We FULLY SUPPORT and would like to congratulate Tom for receiving the Vander Hyden Lifetime Achievement Award.