

NETA Annual Achievement Award

by Kristen Schmidt, NETA

Kerry Heid

NETA's 2010 Outstanding Achievement Award Recipient



“A good hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be.”

— Wayne Gretzky, NHL Player

Each year, NETA announces the recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award at its PowerTest Electrical Maintenance and Safety Conference. Selected by NETA's President, consideration is given not only to the contributions of the award recipient over the past year, but also the noteworthy character traits that stand out in a volunteer-based organization. This person always plays many positions on NETA's team, often filling in where help is needed without being asked. This year's Most Valuable Player is Kerry Heid.

Kerry is a lot of things to a lot of people. He is a business owner, a boss, a partner. He is a husband, a father, a coach. He is a hockey player, a fisherman, and a four-wheeling man's man. He is a volunteer, a Chairman, a past-President. He is a NETA Level IV Senior Certified Technician, a NETA Accredited Representative, and a comedian. (He likes to joke that the last piece of testing equipment he used was the vacuum at the shop.) He sits on the NETA Board of Directors, chairs the NETA Training Committee and Promotions Committee, and serves on the Application Review Committee and CTD Review Committee. In addition to this list, Kerry is a sports fan. He loves to play sports, watch sports, coach sports, talk sports, and hassle his friends about their favorite teams. What do sports have to do with Kerry receiving NETA's Outstanding Achievement Award? More than you might think.

Many people on the planet today could say that some degree of their working knowledge of the world was gained through participation in team sports. Fellow Canadian Wayne Gretzky is quoted as saying, “A good

hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be.” This is a common thread in any challenging activity; look where you are going, not where you are. In horseback riding if you look at the ground that's where you will find yourself. With motorcycles you look through the curve to keep your balance, before you even begin to lean.



NETA President John White presents Kerry Heid with the Outstanding Achievement Award at PowerTest 2010.

Kerry's ability to focus on what is possible rather than what is present has served him well in every area of his life, and is the quality above all others recognized by his peers at NETA. His ability to successfully navigate the daily minutia and inevitable setbacks while maintaining a forward-thinking outlook is something he shares in common with many of the world's greatest athletes.



Kerry Heid, Magna Electric, and Jim White, Shermco, man the NETA booth at a trade show.

John White, NETA's President, explains why Kerry was selected as the recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award this year. "Every organization needs an out-of-the-box thinker, and this is even more true when the dealing with an organization of engineers. So often these types of organizations are missing someone with both imagination and technical expertise. Kerry brings that to NETA."



John continues, "Kerry is an optimist. He is always reminding everyone why something will work, not why it won't. His work with the Promotions and Training Committees is especially demonstrative of this quality. He may be out with everyone at the cocktail hour having laughing

with friends, but his mind never stops working and the discussions often turn to new ideas and suggestions that carry over into the boardroom and beyond. His dedication to the Association and creative approach bring so much value to the organization," concludes John.

Jayne Tanz, NETA's Executive Director, has known Kerry since he joined NETA. She says, "One of Kerry's most notable qualities is his willingness to roll up his sleeves and work. Kerry stepped up to take on the role of President of NETA when there was an unexpected need to fill that role. He then proceeded to fulfill his expected term, becoming the President with the longest term in NETA's history."



Kerry's friends and family help celebrate his fortieth birthday, Canadian style.

Jayne continues, "Kerry's work ethic coupled with his enthusiasm makes working alongside him an enjoyable experience. Instead of asking, 'Why,' Kerry asks, 'Why not?' All these admirable qualities can be seen in every aspect of his life, from his work, to his relationships with his family and friends. I am happy to say that I know this first-hand, and am fortunate to call Kerry and his family friends."

Ron Widup, fellow NETA Board Member, friend to Kerry, and Cowboys Fan, has a lot to say about this year's outstanding achiever. "He has a high level of passion for the industry. He is definitely an idea guy, and does see things through to the end. Kerry is a great family guy. He spends a lot of time with his wife and kids; our families have a lot of fun together." Also, an avid sports fan, Ron says, "He is a great politician; he knows how to play the Redskins/Cowboys loyalties right down the middle."

“Kerry is genuine, with strong family values. He is an admirable person both professionally and personally,” says Ken Basset of Potomac Testing. Ken, a dyed-in-the-wool Redskins Fan, serves with Kerry on the NETA Board, in addition to their other NETA duties. Ken goes on to say, “Kerry’s leadership has elevated NETA’s recognition in the industry. The progress of NETA’s Training Committee under Kerry’s insightful guidance has allowed for some amazing technical tutorial modules that NETA Accredited Companies are able to utilize in training their technicians.” Never one to pass up the opportunity for some good-natured ribbing, Ken smiles and says, “For a guy that enjoys Canadian football, he really knows his hockey. And, after spending a lot of time with him, I can honestly say that we always have each other’s backs.”



Kerry and Ken at the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.

“Nobody’s a natural. You work hard to get good and then work to get better. It’s hard to stay on top.”

— Paul Coffey, NHL Player

From a young age, Kerry knew what a hard day at work was. His father is an electrician and although Kerry stayed in the electrical field, he knew he didn’t want to be an electrician or an engineer. Instead he enrolled in a program to become an Electrical Engineering Technologist. After completing the program, Kerry began working at Westinghouse Service, a large testing firm in North America. Kerry continued learning and developing his skills and on April 1, 1996 Magna Electric Corporation opened its doors for business with Kerry as a partner. Magna Electric Corporation provides electrical field testing and commissioning services to the industrial, commercial, and institutional sectors. It joined NETA as an Accredited Company in 2000, with Kerry taking on the duties as Accredited Representative for the company in 2001.

When asked his favorite aspect of his career, he replies, “I have often thought, ‘What am I going to do when I retire?’ I enjoy every moment – just the everyday challenges of running a business. It is a motivator when you have helped grow



Kerry living out his motto with some of his NETA friends. Work hard, play hard.

a company to a point where you have a lot of people that depend on you for their livelihoods – it makes you want to be sure that you are doing your job the best you can because you know they are doing the same.”

Kerry shared that one of his proudest achievements as an active NETA member was attaining his NETA Level IV Senior Certified Testing Technician status. This milestone is a testament to his commitment to self-improvement, continuing education, and quality. As NETA’s Training

Committee Chair, Kerry is able to apply what he has learned by completing all levels of certification along with his experience in the field to create tools that are valuable to all NETA technicians. His creativity is key when approaching promotions and marketing for the Association. As the Promotions Chair, he excels at generating new approaches to the age-old challenges of narrowing information down, targeting an audience, and driving the message home. He asks questions, prompting discussions that may not have taken shape without his unique approach to the task at hand.



Diane and Rod Hageman of PRIT Service share dinner and drinks with Kerry and Pam.

Kerry continues his education by staying involved in numerous standards development activities, both in Canada and in the United States. He is an active member on the CSA Z462 standard and participates in the development of numerous American National Standards.

The glory of sport is witnessing a well-coached team perform as a single unit, striving for a common goal and ultimately bringing distinction to the jersey the players represent."

– Dick Vitale, Sportscaster and former coach

Kerry is one of those rare people who understand what it means to be a leader. He is not a leader because his business card declares it, nor because he sent out an email proclaiming that he should be followed. Kerry is a natural leader; his charisma attracts an audience and his knowledge and drive keeps them involved. Kerry is always leading a rowdy crowd, from his employees that have become an extension of his family over the years, to his NETA Committee participation, to the social hours following meetings that stretch into the wee hours of the morning more often than not.



Kerry spending time with his wife, Pam, and sons, Brendan and Colby.

When asked how his involvement with NETA began, Kerry remembers, "It all sort of started in 2002 with the NETA meeting in Vancouver. I was volunteered to be the Accredited Representative for Magna Electric. I attended the winter meeting in Puerto Rico and was asked if I would join the Board of Directors. In 2003 I was nominated and elected to the Board."

Curve balls are what bring Kerry to the office. Each day he wakes up and thinks, "What can they throw at me next? There are a lot of great challenges that are part of running a business." Often times the people one manages present the biggest challenge, but when managed well, they become the greatest asset.

Dave Huffman, fellow Board Member and Training Committee Member has spent a lot of time working with Kerry over the past few years. When asked why he thinks Kerry is a deserving recipient of the Award he says, "He has unbridled hope. He sees something that he wants to do and then he finds a way to do it. He focuses on the solution and transfers that inspiration to the people around him. It makes it easy to put forth the effort because you know he is doing the same." Proof positive that Kerry not only talks the talk, but walks the walk.



John White presents Kerry with a plaque in recognition of Kerry's Presidential term with NETA.

About being NETA's President for almost three years Kerry says, "Getting the membership involved in the organization, growing the organization – you have to accept those goals and run with them the best that you can." When asked what's in it for him, he replies, "I think that camaraderie I share with the other members has probably been the most valuable part of NETA for me personally. I don't know where else you can go to talk to others with the same experiences that I have in my business. I can talk to people that may be my competitors, but that are so open and free with their experiences because they are on NETA's team."



Kerry and Pam hit the slopes.

Every team requires unity. A team has to move as one unit, one force, with each person understanding and assisting the roles of his teammates. If the team doesn't do this, whatever the reason, it goes down in defeat. You win or lose as a team, as a family."

—Jack Kemp, NFL Player

John White agrees, "It is a good group of folks and everyone has fun together. There are more than a handful of people in the group with a sense of humor that really set the tone for the social activities. Kerry is a huge part of that – the social part. In my 40 years in the industry I have learned that when you know someone socially it makes the business a lot easier to deal with. When it comes time to talk about tough issues there is no animosity – we all work together to solve the problems."

"There are so many good things to say about him, it's hard to say one thing," laughs fellow Board Member Mose Ramieh. "Kerry was very instrumental when I joined NETA by helping me understand how the organization works and what roles I might take on down the road. As a result, he and I have become very good friends. Secretly, I think he was just happy that I replaced him as the new guy," he chuckles.



Kerry loves snow!

Mose recognizes that the true test of a leader comes when the chips are down, saying, "Kerry stepped in when there was an unexpected need for leadership. As the person observing that changing of the guards I would not have realized that he was relatively new to the Association. He learned quickly, was professional and well informed. When he is presented with situations that weigh heavily on his mind he takes them to heart and appreciates and respects what impact his decisions have on his peers. He always puts the organization first and is not afraid of hard work."

Kerry's commitment to building a strong team around him extends beyond his professional aspirations. He and his wife, Pam, have been married since 1991. They have two children, Brendan, 14 and Colby, 13, who are following in their father's footsteps when it comes to a love of the game. Both boys play hockey for the team Kerry coaches, and he cheers them on while they play football. Kerry and Pam's NETA friends think of them as the most gracious of hosts; they are easy to get to know and easy to get along with. It is plain to see that they are moving in the same direction, no matter what life throws their way they greet it side by side with a sense of humor.



Pam and Kerry enjoy a Belizean sunset together.

Kerry may not always have a title to go along with every hat he wears. He probably will not receive awards for the countless hours spent pouring over technical documents or the overtime he puts in to make sure the lights stay on and his clients continue to receive superior service. And that is fine by him... that's just what MVP's do.