

ARKANSAS INSURANCE
HALL OF FAME

CLASS OF 2026 INDUCTEE

Richard L. Patterson

CLU, ChFC, ARPC, AEP



CAREER

New York Life agent since 1972

HONORS

Million Dollar Roundtable, 47 times

DESIGNATIONS

CLU, ChFC, ARPC, AEP

FAITH

Ordained Deacon, Catholic Church

EARLY YEARS

Richard Patterson, better known as “Dick,” resided in Ohio during his early years. While attending college at Bowling Green State University, he met a remarkable young lady named Suzanne, whom he dated for 4 years. After completing his business degree, they married. Richard also spent two years on active duty in the Army and rose to the rank of Captain.

A START AT NEW YORK LIFE

The Pattersons moved with their new son to Little Rock, Arkansas, from Cincinnati in 1972. During a training weekend with his Army Reserve unit, he learned that the Arkansas Office for New York Life Insurance was looking for new agents. Looking for work in this new city, Richard arranged an interview for a position with the firm, but on his first day found out that the friend who had encouraged him to apply had taken a position with a different company. The departure of the one person he knew in the company caused Richard to have doubts in a potential career at New York Life, but he decided to give it a shot.

Dick signed his contract with New York Life on April 1, 1972. Starting the insurance business with his young family in a new city was difficult because Dick knew no one. Determined to succeed, the resourceful new agent bought a door, flipped it on its side, and added legs to make a desk. Then he bought 500 index cards to form his own “Rolodex” and wrote the names of potential clients on each card.

BUILDING A CAREER

Although Dick’s first years included discouragements, Dick grew to love his clients and did his very best. He dedicated himself to learning the business and earned more professional designations such as Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) and Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC). He also earned the designations of Accredited Retirement Plan Consultant (ARPC) and the designation of Accredited Estate Planner (AEP).

Throughout his career, Dick has been honored as Agent of the Year several times for New York Life and was made a member of the Million Dollar Roundtable 47 times. He also has served as President of many

professional organizations such as President of the State Association of Life Underwriters for the State of Arkansas, President of the local CLU Association, President of the Parish Council, President of Birthright, and President of Retired and Senior Volunteers.

— TOASTMASTERS AND COMMUNITY

For 54 years, Dick has participated in Toastmasters International, a nonprofit organization that helps people build confidence, public speaking and leadership skills. Toastmasters has been very important for Dick and he loves to help people find their voice. He has also been President of the Hi Noon Toastmasters Club in Little Rock. Dick has earned the designation of DTM, which means Distinguished Toastmaster.

Dick also values giving back to his community, serving in many capacities, always striving to learn and contribute more. He has served as the Treasurer for the Salvation Army of Little Rock and the chairman of the March of Dimes. He is a member chair for the Estate Planning Council of Arkansas and has served in the past on the Board of the Hall of Fame.

— FAITH AND FAMILY

Dick has served as an Ordained Deacon of the Catholic Church for the last 27 years and has even written articles on the Book of Amos, the Book of Romans and the Book of Isaiah. After nearly three decades of leadership as an Ordained Deacon, Dick has been accepted by the Catholic Diocese of Arkansas to the rigorous years-long program to train as a “Spiritual Director.” Dick also has traveled to “The Strategic Coach” in Chicago every quarter for the past 11 years, returning from his most recent trip in late September.

Dick recounts his most prized years as the 59 years he’s been married to his bride, Suzanne. They have raised three wonderful children, Chris, Jon and Bethany. The Pattersons also have five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Although he was first

given the name Richard and known by most as “Dick,” some refer to him as “Deacon Dick,” “Mr. P.,” Dad, Grandpa or Great Grandpa.

— WORDS OF ADVICE

When speaking about his life and his work, the Distinguished Toastmaster can share countless stories and valuable pieces of advice, but if given the time, Dick surely will expound upon these:

- ◆ Insurance is not just about the finances; to Dick, his work is about being present with people. He believes his success came not from being a good agent, but from truly knowing and loving his clients.
- ◆ Dick believes that everyone should have a mentor, no matter their age, and continue to seek life-long learning opportunities, a belief he models himself.
- ◆ One of his favorite philosophies is: “If you want something, decide to want nothing. Then when you receive something, you’ll receive everything.”

Dick loves his life and loves what he does, and he always says, “if you want to know why, just ask” him. And even if you think you already know why, you should ask him anyway.

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If you want to know why, just ask.

RICHARD L. PATTERSON