

Rochester Institute of Technology  
Saunders College of Business  
107 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, New York 14623-5608

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# SAUNDERS CHALLENGE

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SAUNDERS  
*College of BUSINESS*

Herbert W. Vanden Brul  
**ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARD  
LUNCHEON**

April 21, 2015

## 2015 HERBERT W. VANDEN BRUL ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARD RECIPIENT

### JOHN SMITH



John Smith  
*Chairman & CEO*  
*Brite Computers*

As an entrepreneur, John Smith has an impressive resume that spans more than three decades. If you ask him what his proudest achievement is though, he will tell you in no uncertain terms that it's his 46 year love affair with his wife, Joanne, and being blessed with their three children, Justin, Trevor, and Courtney, and 8 grandchildren. Along with an insatiable entrepreneurial spirit and curiosity for computer and information technology, it's his family-first philosophy that has made him as successful as he is.

One of eight children, John was ambitious from a young age. He grew up mowing lawns, walking dogs, and delivering newspapers, eventually discovering an athletic ability that afforded him the opportunity to sign with the New York Mets as a pitcher after graduating from Irondequoit high school in 1966. Two years later, John "retired" from a career in baseball to marry Joanne and start a family. While putting his interest in computers to full-time use at a few different companies in Rochester, John earned his Associates degree from MCC in 1972 and Bachelors from RIT in 1973.

But it was in 1980 that John began to realize the potential in his entrepreneurial spirit, founding JTS Computer Services—an IT staffing company that he built to 100 employees before selling to Ajilon in 1997. In the 30 years since JTS Computer Services opened its doors, John has started, acquired, or partnered in 12 other businesses, including: Restore, Able Data, Applied Database Marketing, Linden Associates, Bellot Smith, JTS Checqueout Solutions, Croop LaFrance (founded with David Croop), Brite Computers (acquired with his son, Justin), Solu Technology Partners (partner with his brother), Solu Digital Collaborative (formerly Storm Frog), CloudDOCX, and DealerDOCX. Presently, these businesses employ over 500 people in the Rochester area and several other cities across the country.

Beyond John's dedication to family and building successful small businesses, he also believes in giving back to his community, and the communities his businesses serve. He is a member or former member of the RIT Dean's Advisory Board, RIT Incubator Advisory Board, MCC Foundation (25 years, past Chairman), Hillside Children's Center Board (20 years, Board and Trustee Chair), WXXI Board, Red Cross Blood Services Board, and the Country Club of Rochester Board (since 1980). Additionally, his Cloud-based document management company, DealerDOCX, has established multiple scanning centers in conjunction with not-for-profits, providing hundreds of jobs for the handicapped throughout the north- and southeast.



### HERBERT W. VANDEN BRUL

Herbert W. Vanden Brul was born in Irondequoit and graduated from Aquinas Institute. After serving in the United States Navy, he attended the University of Rochester before earning a juris doctor degree from St. John's School of Law in New York in 1951.

Mr. Vanden Brul practiced law in Rochester from 1951 until 1966. In 1961 he was one of the co-founders of RF Communications, Inc., now a division of Harris Corporation. At the time of RF's merger with Harris Corporation in 1969, he was senior vice president. Mr. Vanden Brul then became partner with the law firm of Martin, Dutcher, Mousaw, Vigdor and Reeves. In the same year he founded Culver Management Corporation, which acquired industrial real estate from businesses moving out of Rochester. Culver Management eventually owned or managed nearly one million square feet of local industrial space - space that became home to many of the small start-up companies that have helped improve the area's economic climate.

Until his death in 2003, Mr. Vanden Brul pursued his business interests as a private investor in several new ventures. He served on the boards of Ormec Systems, Inc., and the Genesee Valley Trust Company, Inc. He was also active in the cultural and educational life of the Rochester community. Mr. Vanden Brul and his wife, Joan, who passed away in June 2007, had a long association with RIT and were active members of the Nathaniel Rochester Society. Their two sons attended RIT.

### ABOUT THE AWARD

The Herbert W. Vanden Brul Entrepreneurial Award was created in 1984 through an endowment fund established by Mr. Vanden Brul in conjunction with RIT's Saunders College of Business. The award is presented annually to an individual or business that has improved the economic life of greater Rochester or whose innovative management skills have changed the course of an existing businessness. The award recipient is selected by a committee of area civic and business leader and RIT faculty. Saunders College is excited that the Herbert W. Vanden Brul Award symbolizes the links that join RIT and the Rochester Business community.