



**IAAS Walks of Life 2007**  
**Thomas Sullivan**

Thomas C. Sullivan, a prominent industrialist, is the great-grandson of late 19th Century immigrants from Counties Cork and Tipperary who settled in Grafton, Ohio. His grandparents on his mother's side also came from Ireland.

In 1947, when Tom was 10, Republic Powdered Metals was founded in Medina by his father, Frank C. Sullivan. At the time of the latter's death in 1971, the specialty coatings and chemical company was doing \$11 million in business annually. Stepping in 1971 into the double role of Chairman of the Board and CEO, Tom moved proactively, in what he saw as a rapidly consolidating industry, to form RPM, Inc., a Medina-based holding company. By the time of his own retirement in 2002, with 40 independent operating units RPM, Inc. had become a world leader in specialty coatings, such as Rust-Oleum and Day-Glo, worth \$3 billion.

Tom Sullivan's gifts have not gone unrecognized. In 2003, the National Paint and Coatings Association, which represents some 400 manufacturers, suppliers and distributors presented him with the George Baugh Heckel Award, the industry's highest tribute. As NPCA's chairman, he had negotiated a milestone agreement establishing lead exposure warnings and education programs; made NPCA a persuasive proponent of asbestos litigation reform; and encouraged its participation in the U.S. Environmental Protective Agency's Sector Strategies program, which provides industry with performance-enhancing incentives and tools, and works to identify and remove regulatory barriers that stifle innovation and environmental progress. He has been named CEO of the Decade by Financial World magazine.

Sullivan's many present and past board affiliations include the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Malachi House, Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Foundation, Urban Community School, Culver Educational Foundation and City Year Cleveland.

Tom and his wife, Sandra Simmons Sullivan, are the parents of four sons and two daughters: Frank, Sean, Tommy, Danny, Kathleen and Julie.

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