

For release January 3, 2008

file in
date order in
news release
order.
KF

Evansville Business Hall of Fame to induct four

Four Evansville business leaders will be inducted into the Evansville Business Hall of Fame. Dr. H. Ray Hoops, president of the University of Southern Indiana and chair of the selection committee for the Business Hall of Fame, announced the members of the Class of 2008 today.

The individuals are Dan W. Mitchell, former president and CEO of Old National Bancorp., Robert E. Griffin, founder and chairman of the board of Escalade Inc., plus, Robert L. Koch Sr. (1913-1989) and Joseph E. O'Daniel (1912-2001), two men who made significant and notable contributions to the Evansville community during their lifetimes.

The Evansville Business Hall of Fame is sponsored by the Junior Achievement of Southwestern Indiana and the *Evansville Business Journal*, a publication of the *Evansville Courier and Press*.

Mitchell's career with Old National Bank spanned 46 years starting as a credit analyst and advancing to vice president, senior vice president, executive vice president and member of the board of directors, president, and chief executive officer. In that time he participated in and led the expansion of ONB into the largest financial services holding company headquartered in Indiana. He has long been associated with a professional association of bank loan and credit officers and served as national president in the mid 1970s.

Griffin is an innovative leader at Escalade, Inc., a global company in the sporting goods industry. He played an integral part in establishing a nationally recognized wellness program that provides insurance rate discounts for employees who maintain healthy lifestyles. He has served as fund-drive chair for United Way and Junior Achievement and given direction to numerous initiatives at the University of Southern Indiana including serving as chair for the Board of Directors of the USI Foundation and a member of the College of Business Board of Advisors. He was awarded an honorary degree from USI in 2003.

Joseph E. O'Daniel spent half a century working to ensure access to higher education for others. O'Daniel had to forfeit his own education when he left school at the age of 16 to help support his family, with nine brothers and sisters. Because of that experience, he had a great reverence for education. An owner of a successful car dealership, O'Daniel joined forces with then-Evansville Mayor Frank McDonald, Sr., in lining up support for public higher education in southwest Indiana. Their efforts, along with other businessmen, resulted in establishment of Southern

Indiana Higher Education, Inc. (SIHE) which raised close to \$1 million to purchase land to establish the University of Southern Indiana. He was awarded an honorary degree from USI in 1971.

Robert L. Koch Sr. is a businessman who worked for the betterment of Evansville and offered support for public higher education as chair of the SIHE, Inc. An astute businessman and valued advisor, Koch was one of nine children and the third son to join George Koch Sons, Inc., the family business. Koch steered the company through steady growth, increasing sales from \$1 million to \$200 million during his presidency.

The selection committee identified these men as meeting the criteria for excellence, courage, vision, and community mindedness this recognition is designed to honor. The induction ceremony will take place on March 13, 2008, during a 7:30 a.m. breakfast at The Centre.