



665 Rodi Road Suite 305
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Phone: 412.244.0440
Fax: 412.244.9090
www.HMAmembers.org

"Counting Growth Rings: Building Upon a Legacy of Hardwood"

HMA NextGen Leaders Council

Lights – Camera – Action! As a kind of hardwood industry time capsule, HMA's NextGen Leaders Council set into motion a video project documenting the experiences, wisdom and insights of a number of accomplished hardwood veterans.

The finished product, **"Counting Growth Rings: Building Upon a Legacy of Hardwood,"** premiered at HMA's 2019 National Conference and Expo. And following the video debut, a panel, moderated by Council Coordinator, Claire Getty, and comprised of industry Veterans and NextGen-ers, continued the conversation as they discussed the reciprocal facets of mentoring.

Veterans

Skipper Beal

Beal Lumber Co.

Troy Brown

Kretz Lumber Co.

Bob Miller

Frank Miller Lumber Co.

Nordeck Thompson

Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods

NextGen-ers

Geoff Henderson

Anderson-Tully Co.

Claire Getty

Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods

Nathan Thompson

T & S Hardwoods

Nick Thompson

Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods

From the Veterans:

- "My father was my mentor. He loved this industry and said, 'Son, I'm going to help you because I don't want you to make the same mistakes I made. And remember, your word is your bond. Follow through and honor your commitments.'" (**Skipper Beal**)
- "It's hard to go it alone. When you have a relationship with a mentor, they provide valuable and reliable information. Dan Kretz told me, 'Know your costs to the penny. It's not a sale until you get paid. I don't care what you did last night. Be at work in the morning on time!'" (**Troy Brown**)
- "I don't like to fail. Mentors help alleviate failures because they can provide the tools to help you succeed personally and professionally. My father was and still is a workaholic. I was 12 years old when he had me working in the mill with him. 'Work comes first,' he said.'" (**Bob Miller**)

- “My Dad was my main mentor in the mill. ‘The sawmill has a rhythm,’ he said. ‘Set a momentum/pace for your operation. Lead your people. Find the right timber. Don’t make big mistakes. Or a lot of small ones! Work smart.’” (**Nordeck Thompson**)

The NextGen-ers said:

- “I look to my mentor for his experience, to help me avoid big and costly mistakes. But we are the ‘tech’ generation, more savvy, and we can help in that regard. This industry needs a certain kind of person, and you have to seek that person out.” (**Nathan Thompson**)
- “Honesty is what I want from my mentor. Give it to me straight. We have little to teach, and mostly a lot to learn. My generation wants a sense of belonging and an opportunity to grow. Ours is an ever changing industry. And we will need the ability to change quickly, as the industry changes.” (**Geoff Henderson**)
- “You need to invest the time to learn what each employee needs and what motivates them. Our generation wants something to believe in. The hardwood industry has an incredible story, and what we do is very valuable to society. Yes, products are changing, and we will figure out what to do with our raw material. It will be our job to innovate to the future.” (**Nick Thompson**)

Tune in to the Members Only section of www.HMAmembers.org for the entire panel

discussion. And take a few more moments to view “**Counting Growth Rings: Building Upon a Legacy of Hardwood.**”