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David Enmark Named 2026 NHPA Top Guns Honoree

May 1, 2026, INDIANAPOLIS—Celebrating its 20th year honoring trailblazing retailers in the channel, the North American Hardware and Paint Association (NHPA) has named its 2026 Top Guns Awards honorees, including David Enmark, CEO of The Helpful Hardware Company, based in Cumming, Georgia.

“Top Guns honorees are pillars of innovation and forward-thinking, and have helped grow their businesses through strategic leadership with consideration for their communities, their teams and the industry,” says Scott Wright, NHPA president and publisher. “They’ve grown their businesses, challenged the status quo and led their teams through some of the industry’s toughest moments—and they’re not done yet. This year’s Top Guns are prime examples of what bold leadership looks like in independent home improvement retail today.”

For someone who had no intention of being a part of the independent home improvement channel, David has made a major impact in the industry. During his time earning a criminology degree from Ball State University, David set his sights on becoming a federal agent.

After graduation, David spent his time working at his wife’s family’s hardware store in Indianapolis while he waited through the process to become an agent. In a short time, he moved into the general manager role. David pivoted his career goals and worked with his family in that store for five years. Ultimately, the business closed when competition from Lowe’s and Menards constricted the market and he started working in the software business in the automotive segment. David took a job with Epicor, which brought him back into the independent home improvement channel and would go on to work on the wholesaler side at Do it Best and True Value, ultimately ending up at The Helpful Hardware Company, joining the company as CEO in November 2023.

Growth for The Helpful Hardware Company has come through a purposeful focus on people, David says. The company’s focus on people can be seen in customer engagement as well. David says that as the business has grown, leadership realized that the company would need to engage customers differently and turn up the focus on that engagement.

As a leader, David says he has been fortunate to work with a number of excellent leaders in the industry and has had fantastic leaders who have challenged and pushed him to move the needle and embrace servant leadership.

“For me, it always comes back to people and the communities that we serve. I remind our team all the time that it’s about the people we have the honor to serve. They have a choice, and we want to be the ones they



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choose,” David says. “When I think about leadership, it’s really about what we do in the communities and the impact we have, whether it’s a customer or an associate.”

After David joined the company, he offered town hall meetings at every store because he wanted to give every associate a voice. The one common denominator that came out of these meetings—which has become a North Star of sorts for the company—is not failing in front of the customer. From there, David became focused on empowering employees so they won’t fail, making sure each employee has the equipment they need and the skills and training to complete their tasks.

Not failing in front of the customer is what David says will continue to set independents apart in the industry.

“When I look at the channel and what it’s going to take for us to be successful and the pressure we get from big boxes, we can’t fail,” he says. “As a channel, I think if we don’t start to embrace the empowerment of our people and give them enough rope to be successful, we’ll never get there as a channel. And we have to do that to differentiate.”

Winning the Top Guns Awards honor isn’t about David.

“It’s not the work that Dave does. It’s the work that The Helpful Hardware team does and the leaders in our organization,” David says. “It probably means more to me for our team to be recognized for the work that we’re doing and what we will continue to do as much as it is an individual honor, because it really is about them.

Each of the honorees will be featured in upcoming issues of *Hardware Retailing* and *Paint & Decorating Retailer* magazines. Top Guns honorees will be honored at the Independent Awards Gala at the 2026 Independent Home Improvement Conference held July 29-30 at the JW Marriott Grande Lakes in Orlando, Florida. The National Hardware Show: Concept to Commerce and DIY Con are the Top Guns exclusive sponsors.

For more information on the Top Guns awards, visit YourNHPA.org/top-guns. To learn more about the 2026 Independent Home Improvement Conference, visit ihiconference.org.

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