

2025 TAKE THE HELM HONOREES

PATTI & JIM ANDERSON



The 29th Take The Helm Gala is proud to honor Patti and Jim Anderson — longtime supporters of The Helm, visionary leaders, and generous philanthropists whose lives reflect a deep commitment to family, community and innovation.

Jim, born and raised in Algonac, Seattle, Wash., and Marine City, pursued his education at Port Huron Junior College before transferring to Wayne State University, where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering. Wayne State later awarded him an honorary PhD in recognition of his groundbreaking work. Patti, born in Vassar and raised in Vassar, Flint, and Grand Blanc, graduated from Baker College in Flint.

The couple's story began when Patti was working at AC Spark Plug and Jim had just launched Urban Science while collaborating with Cadillac. Marriage soon followed, and together they built a life rooted in both Grosse Pointe and Charlevoix, where they raised their four children and now enjoy time with their 10 grandchildren.

Jim's early career as a civil engineering

instructor at Wayne State centered on environmental modeling and computer mapping — skills that became the foundation of his career as a technology entrepreneur. True to his belief that “it can be done,” Jim founded Urban Science in 1977 to solve what many thought was an impossible challenge for Cadillac. Nearly five decades later, he continues to serve as President and CEO, guiding the company's strategic vision across 22 global offices and more than 900 employees.

Patti devoted her early career to AC Spark Plug before focusing her energy on raising their family and leading the couple's philanthropic efforts. Her passion for education, innovation, and equity has created opportunities for countless students across Detroit and Michigan, particularly in STEM fields. Together, Patti and Jim have woven community responsibility into the fabric of their lives, supporting educational, civic and veterans organizations nationwide, with a special emphasis on Metropolitan Detroit and the Grosse Pointes.

Their support of The Helm is especially meaningful. Having cared for their own elderly parents, the Andersons deeply understand the importance of community resources for older adults. “We give back to the organizations that help us be successful as a community,” Jim reflects. “We want to make where we live desirable for all who live here now and for the generations to come.”

Through their generosity, leadership and vision, Patti and Jim Anderson embody the spirit of Take The Helm, and it is with heartfelt gratitude that we honor them this year.