

CONGRATULATIONS

MURRAY SECURUS

Several elements of Murray Securus's DNA impressed past Agency of the Month winners who voted for the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, firm as our *Rough Notes* 2016 Agency of the Year.

One past winner was particularly impressed by "how they built out the agency in response to client needs." Others echoed the sentiment, citing the agency's formation 80-plus years ago and the subsequent launch of its human resources consulting offering.

The firm's 95% client retention rate was mentioned as another reason the agency deserved the honor. And a number of previous winners found compelling the fact that Murray Securus is a "53% ESOP company with a great culture."

Murray was formed in 1930—during the depths of the Great Depression—by Lancaster County entrepreneur Paul G. Murray. Paul focused strongly on treating customers fairly and providing a choice of products and services. The agency's first big project was bonding construction for what would become Veterans' Memorial Bridge, the largest concrete arch bridge and the largest public works project of its time.

Paul had the trust of the community and his clients. He had the knowledge of the project and the insurance needed to protect against loss or delay. And he was innovative in his use of a highly technical line



2016 AGENCY OF THE YEAR

of insurance. The three elements—trust, expertise, and innovation—continue to permeate the firm's culture.

A few years ago Murray Securus surveyed clients to see what they valued most about their relationship with the firm. "We have a retention rate that is always above 95%, and we wanted to keep it that way," explains Sheri Riley, vice president and business development officer. "What they told us, after all the results were in, could be narrowed down to those three words."

"We keep those words constantly in mind as we work on new initiatives," says Rick Rankin, CIC, chairman, president, and CEO. "We always want to make sure that we don't lose sight of what is most important when we make changes at the agency." A quick look at some of the initiatives

that have occurred over the years bears that out.

In 1983, Murray added a claims and risk control department to work directly with clients. "We work with them as a TPA, tightly managing claims, evaluating specific needs, and working with each client to design a custom solution to enhance its claims management program," says Rankin.

The agency started a health benefits division in 1987. Two years later it opened a personal insurance center. Shortly thereafter it expanded its footprint by acquiring a construction specialist and surety bonding agency.

In 1994, Murray Securus became employee owned. "Our people are one of the principal reasons for our success," Rankin says, "and the ESOP, which owns 53% of the agency, has been instrumental in creating an atmosphere where they know they are valued and they realize that every action they take has a direct impact on the success of the agency."

In 2012, Murray purchased The Securus Group, thus adding to its product mix a specialty in agribusiness, as well as wealth management, HR and employee benefits TPA solutions.

Today the firm employs nearly 200 people and offers a full suite of products, including property/casualty coverages, life and health insurance, employee benefits, and investment options, all designed to handle all aspects of risk management and risk mitigation for a wide range of clients. ■