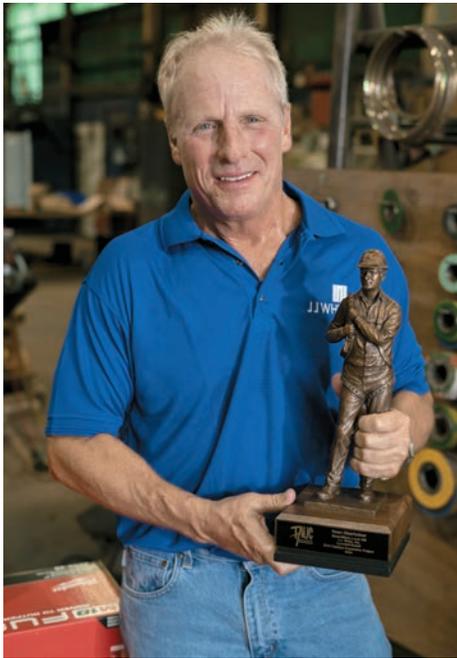


# Sean Oberholzer Named 2021 TAUC Craftperson of the Year

BY DAVID ACORD, TAUC DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



Sean Oberholzer

*"Sean never, ever brought just a problem to us. He always brought a solution."*

**Timothy Goodson,  
LyondellBasell**

Sean Oberholzer has been named the 2021 TAUC James J. Willis Craftperson of the Year, sponsored by TAUC Legacy Partner Milwaukee Tool.

Sean is a member of Steamfitters Local 420 in Philadelphia. He was nominated by JJ White, Inc. for his exemplary performance on the EDO Catalyst Expansion Project in Edison, New Jersey, for client LyondellBasell.

The goal of the project was to erect a new process unit to dramatically increase the client's ability to produce the catalyst used in the production of polypropylene. It had a relatively small, vertical footprint. This represented a complex challenge for Sean, who had to manage around 100 steamfitters working on the project.

In addition, the scope of work was daunting, and included 55,000 linear feet of piping; 22,000 piping welds; 2,600 valves; 11,000 individual pipe supports and welded attachments; 30,000 square feet of grating; and 300,000 feet of power, communication and instrument cables.

"This was a very large project," said Doug Creighton, Project Manager for JJ White. "Nominating Sean was a very easy decision for us internally due to his exceptional performance with all facets of construction management."

"He built a lot of confidence, which made things really go pretty smooth for us," noted Timothy Goodson, Project Manager for LyondellBasell. "This is really the measure of a true craftsman to me. You can

build something, but whenever you run into problems out in the field, how do you react? Sean never, ever brought just a problem to us. He always brought a solution."

"I'm really proud of Sean and his team to be able to execute that work," said Joe Crowley, Vice President of Health, Safety and Environment for JJ White. "We had zero OSHA-recordable injuries, no lost time on a project of that magnitude. That says a lot about the leadership of Sean and the rest of the team."

"You get curveballs here and there, but you just go through it – you just keep going," Sean told TAUC. He added, "You've got to figure out what people you have and how to use them to the best of their abilities. These are people who are dedicated to their particular profession. That's why I like union labor so much better on a job. It's not even close. I worked non-union when I was really young, and I'm going to tell you right now, that's not where I wanted to wind up."

"I want to thank JJ White for nominating Sean for this award as it gives us an opportunity to recognize the personification of what truly makes the union construction and maintenance industry tower above its competition," said Daniel Hogan, CEO of TAUC.

In addition to the impressive award statue, Sean also received a large array of cutting-edge tools from TAUC Legacy Partner Milwaukee Tool.

From everyone at TAUC, congratulations to Sean on this incredible honor!

## About the James J. Willis Craftperson of the Year Award

The James J. Willis Craftperson of the Year Award honors outstanding labor-management cooperation and quality craftsmanship in the union construction and maintenance industries. It is given to building trades members who have a gift for recognizing the vision of a project and can bring that vision to fruition in a professional manner.

The recognition program was originally created in 1989 as the Craftsman of the Year Award. TAUC changed the name in 2008 to memorialize James J. Willis Sr. He was a dear friend and supporter of TAUC and an authentic leader in the union construction industry for more than five decades. Jim started out as an apprentice ironworker in 1945 at the age of just 16 and eventually rose to the rank of First General Vice President in the international union. He also served as President and Labor Co-Chairman of the National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) from 1988 to 2000.

Jim was hugely influential within the union construction industry, and his steadfast commitment to fairness and cooperation was legendary. It is fitting that the award bearing his name honors a union worker who demonstrates unparalleled leadership and professionalism, because Jim exhibited the same qualities throughout his life.

The James J. Willis Craftperson of the Year Award recognizes five categories of achievement:

- Safety and Health
- Schedule and Budget Productivity
- Cost Savings
- Innovation
- Outstanding Craftsmanship

Projects must be completed in the calendar year of the award. Nominations are forwarded to our judge's panel to be evaluated and ranked in each category. This year, the members of the James J. Willis Award Task Force were: Rusty Brown, Kiewit; Timothy Hoch, APM; Don Austin, Worley Industrial Services; and Dave Daquelente, Master Builders' Association of Western Pennsylvania.

Choosing the Craftperson of the Year is a tough job because we receive so many incredible nominations from our contractors. TAUC would like to honor this year's runners-up for the prestigious award. We salute their hard work and dedication to safety and wish to thank the nominating contractors, their labor partners and the owner-clients for assisting in the nomination process.



### First Runner-Up (Second Place)

Lee Meiring, nominated by the Rudolph Libbe Group for his work on the Iron Units/Cleveland-Cliffs foundation package in Toledo, Ohio. Lee is a carpenter with Local Union 351. "As a result of Lee's efforts, Rudolph Libbe was known as the contractor that met its schedule dates," Rudolph Libbe said. "This was a direct result of Lee's management efforts in scheduling. Daily, weekly and lookahead scheduling efforts by Lee were critical to Rudolph Libbe's ability to meet each of its schedule obligations for the project."



### Honorable Mention (Third Place)

Rob Gadson, nominated by the Barton Malow Company for his work on Ironunits LLC's hot briquetted iron facility in Toledo, Ohio. Rob is an ironworker with Local Union 147. "Eager to learn new things, Rob embraces challenges that require collaboration and creativity during planning and execution," Barton Malow said. "He is a detailed planner that looks beyond the ironworker scope to identify efficiencies throughout the project's entirety. Rob's dedication to developing a positive and productive team culture is shown through the successful relationships he builds with clients, subcontractors, and all individuals on site."