



The Business Excellence Institute

Excellence Hall of Fame

A. Jon Prusmack

Inducted 2016

Jon attended the University of Notre Dame on a football scholarship where he studied architecture. After two years, he transferred to the United States Naval Academy where, once he had completed Marine Corp basic training, he majored in math and mechanical engineering. He resigned from the Academy after three years to pursue studies in Art and Design at New York University and graduated in 1966 with a BA in Art and Mathematics.

Throughout his college years, Jon played football and was voted the NYU's Most Valuable Player in 1965/66. While at NYU, he discovered rugby which he was to play for 15 years before becoming a coach and referee. As a player, he played internationally against clubs in England, Ireland, and France and was captain of the USA Owls for their inaugural tour of England in 1977. He wrote the first American coaching book on rugby - [Rugby: A Guide for Players, Coaches and Spectators](#) - which was published by Hawthorn Books in 1979. Jon was inducted into the [USA Rugby Foundation Hall of Fame](#) in 2013 and is also a member of the NYAC Rugby Hall of Fame and the US Naval Academy Rugby Hall of Fame.

He started his business career as a professional artist and designer after graduating from NYU. He worked as an artist full time for decades. In parallel he was a successful entrepreneur setting up a number of companies. In 1986, with his wife Patrice, he founded Deployable Hospital Systems, a company based on an idea for a *Deployable Rapid Assembly Surgical Hospital* (DRASH). They struggled for 10 years but persevered to build [DHS Technologies](#) from zero into a business with well over \$150 million in annual sales, employing over 250 people in its manufacturing plants in New York and Alabama and with a subsidiary in the UK. Its equipment has been used around the world by military and civil defence forces, police and fire departments - it is now standard NATO, US Army and US Marine Corp equipment. Jon has 22 patents and was the 2003 EY Manufacturing Entrepreneur of the Year for the New York Tri-State area.

In 2012, the Prusmacks sold DHS Technologies and its two brands "Reeves" (which targets disaster relief) and "DRASH" (which targets military shelters) are now continuing without him. While at the helm of DHS, Jon earned an MS in Engineering from Polytechnic University in New York. He also holds an MBA from Bernard Baruch Graduate School of Business which he earned in the 1980s.

Since he discovered rugby, Jon has maintained his interest in it and has been the publisher of a rugby newsletter/magazine since 1968. Originally called *Scrumdown*, it is now an online publication called [Rugby Today](#). His love of the sport led him to purchase the [World Rugby USA 7s](#) event (part of the World Rugby Sevens Series) from USA Rugby in 2005. He moved the event from California to Las Vegas and has since built it into a major sporting spectacle in partnership with NBC Sports.

Jon established [United World Sports](#), which runs multiple events including the Collegiate Rugby 7s Championship and the Collegiate Varsity Cup Championship, which is the largest “15s” college rugby event in the USA. In 2014, he became the licensee for Rhino Rugby equipment and apparel for North and South America. Total revenues from the rugby event business and Rhino now exceed \$30 million. Thanks in part to Jon’s significant and ongoing efforts, rugby is now the fastest growing sport in the USA.

To continue building rugby as a major sport in the US, Jon has created the “Super 7s” Rugby League – the first professional rugby league in the US. “Super 7s” is 60 minutes of 7s rugby in a unique patent pending format that allows for the creation of city based teams to play one another. Jon is finalizing discussions with investors for the Super 7s for which NBC Sports will most likely be the broadcast partner.

Until 2013, Jon was also the owner of [APOGEE Wellness](#) and the international chain [Power Pilates](#), which according to Reuters in 2009 was the worldwide leader in “Pilates Education”.

Alongside his work, Jon has also kept up his love of art and is a member of New York’s Salmagundi Club where he most recently exhibited a collection of his work entitled “Istanbul to Venice” in 2014. He also entered a submission for the World Trade Center Memorial entitled “[The Phoenix](#)” designed to symbolize the past, present and the future and to express “hope and respect for a better and brighter future”.

He serves as a board member of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Small Business Council, the Rockland County Economic Development Corporation, and is on the Board of Trustees for Dominican College, New York, which named its new Health and Science Education Center the “Prusmack Center” in 2005 in honour of a significant donation made by Jon and Patrice to help build it.

In recognition of his achievement in multiple sectors of business and of his unflinching pursuit of excellence in his life, in his art, and in his work Jon was nominated for inclusion in the Institute’s Excellence Hall of Fame in December 2015. In January 2016, he was elected unopposed by the Fellows of the Institute as its inaugural member and he was inducted on February 19, 2016.

Don Haider, Professor of Strategy at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management congratulated Jon, commenting that: *“Prusmack is a multi-dimensional person who operates successfully in the worlds of business, arts, and sports. The story of how Jon founded, invented and pioneered deployable rapid assembly shelters is a tale of great vision and innovative thinking.”* He continued to say that *“Prusmack’s products help save lives”*.

Mike Henning, former Global CEO of EY, also congratulated Prusmack: *“Having spent 40 years with Ernst and Young I’ve met quite a few outstanding entrepreneurs. Jon would rank right up at the top of the group. He is an extremely creative person with a passion for the products he invents. He is fearless and does not know the meaning of the word failure. Having said that, he has failed on occasion only to rise up and succeed again.”* He called Prusmack *“a globalist”* and a *“great people person”* before concluding by offering him his heartfelt congratulations.

As Aristotle said; *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”* Jon Prusmack is a wonderful example of excellence in action.

The Business Excellence Institute

Dublin – Brussels – Oslo – Tokyo

BusinessExcellence.org