

City of Hope names leaders from DEWALT, Oatey and Champion Power Equipment as 2027 Spirit of Life honorees

Maria Ford, Michelle Newland and Dennis Trine will lead the hardware and homebuilding industry's yearlong fundraising campaign, launching February 1 in Las Vegas

LOS ANGELES — [City of Hope®](#), one of the nation's largest and most advanced cancer research and treatment organizations in the United States, has named **Maria Ford of DEWALT**, **Michelle Newland of Oatey Co.** and **Dennis Trine of Champion Power Equipment** as the National Hardware & Homebuilding Industry's (HHI) 2027 *Spirit of Life®* honorees.

The three executives will lead the industry's yearlong fundraising campaign, uniting manufacturers, retailers, distributors and industry partners in a shared commitment to ending cancer together by building what comes next.

The campaign will formally launch at the [44th Annual Spirit of Life Gala & Golf Classic](#) on **February 1, 2027, in Las Vegas**, bringing together industry leaders to celebrate the honorees and inspire collective support for City of Hope's lifesaving cancer research, treatment and compassionate patient care.

The event's return to Las Vegas coincides with the [2027 NAHB International Builders' Show \(IBS\)](#), taking place February 2–4, creating an opportunity for industry leaders gathering in the city to connect around a shared philanthropic purpose.

The Spirit of Life Award is City of Hope's most prestigious philanthropic honor, recognizing visionary leaders whose achievements, generosity and commitment to improving lives embody the organization's mission. Honorees are celebrated not only for their contributions to society, but for helping shape a future of greater hope, innovation and progress against cancer and other serious diseases.

Founded in 1983 by industry executives committed to City of Hope's mission, HHI has raised more than \$285 million to support research and care for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases. Its longstanding partnership demonstrates the extraordinary impact possible when an industry comes together to make a difference for patients and families.

"For more than four decades, the hardware and homebuilding industry has demonstrated what can happen when business leaders unite around a purpose greater than themselves," said Mary Beth Pate, vice president, marketing communications and donor experience at City of Hope. "Maria, Michelle and Dennis embody the leadership, generosity and collaborative spirit that have made this partnership so impactful. Together, we're building on that legacy and creating new opportunities for the industry to help accelerate discoveries, advance treatment and bring hope to more people facing cancer."

Maria Ford, president of U.S. commercial and industrial sales for DEWALT, leads a multibillion-dollar business serving construction, infrastructure, manufacturing and industrial customers. Since joining the company in 1998, she has held leadership roles across sales, product management, marketing and commercial strategy. Ford is also a strong advocate for workforce development and expanding opportunities for women in construction and manufacturing.

"Our industry understands what it takes to build something that lasts: skilled people, strong partnerships and a shared commitment to a common goal," said Ford. "This campaign gives us an opportunity to bring those same strengths to City of Hope's mission. I am honored to work alongside Michelle, Dennis and our industry partners to help more patients and families benefit from advances in research and care."

Michelle Newland, executive vice president and chief retail and international officer for Oatey Co., brings more than three decades of industry experience and a longstanding commitment to City of Hope. She joined the HHI Executive Council in 2016 and has served as chair since 2022, helping strengthen industry engagement and support for the organization's mission.

"Serving on the HHI council has shown me how much this industry can accomplish when we give people a meaningful way to get involved," said Newland. "Behind every campaign are individuals and companies choosing to make a difference for someone facing a life-changing diagnosis. I'm honored to join Maria and Dennis in carrying that commitment forward and inviting more of our industry to take part."

Dennis Trine, founder of Champion Power Equipment, brings nearly five decades of hardware industry experience. Since founding Champion in 2003, he has built a business grounded in quality, customer service and strong relationships with retail partners. His commitment to service extends beyond the industry through involvement with humanitarian and community organizations.

"I've spent my career seeing what dedicated people can achieve when they take care of their customers and one another," said Trine. "Supporting City of Hope is an extension of that responsibility. Maria, Michelle and I have an opportunity to bring people together around a purpose that reaches far beyond our businesses, and I'm eager to help turn that support into greater hope for patients and their families."

Industry leaders unite in Las Vegas

The 44th Annual Spirit of Life Gala & Golf Classic will take place February 1, 2027, featuring golf experiences at Shadow Creek Golf Course or Red Rock Country Club, followed by an evening gala at Resorts World Las Vegas honoring Ford, Newland and Trine.

The event will mark the beginning of a yearlong effort to engage the hardware and homebuilding industry in fundraising, sponsorship and partnership opportunities benefiting City of Hope.

As the industry looks ahead, its commitment remains rooted in the belief that progress is possible when people work together — bringing the same spirit of collaboration, innovation and determination that drives their businesses to the mission of ending cancer for all.

For more information about the 2027 campaign, sponsorship opportunities or tickets to the Spirit of Life Gala & Golf Classic, visit cityofhope.org/hhispol or contact HHIevents@coh.org.

About City of Hope

City of Hope's mission is to make hope a reality for all touched by cancer and diabetes. Founded in 1913, [City of Hope](https://cityofhope.org) has grown into one of the largest and most advanced cancer research and treatment organizations in the United States, and one of the leading research centers for diabetes and other life-threatening illnesses. City of Hope research has been the basis for [numerous breakthrough cancer medicines](#), as well as human synthetic insulin and monoclonal antibodies. With an independent, National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center that is ranked among the nation's top cancer centers by U.S. News & World Report at its core, City of Hope's uniquely integrated model spans cancer care, research and development, academics and training, and a broad philanthropy program that powers its work. City of Hope's growing national system includes its Los Angeles campus, Orange County, California, campus, a network of clinical care locations across Southern California and cancer treatment centers and outpatient facilities in the Atlanta, Chicago and Phoenix areas. City of Hope's affiliated group of organizations includes [Translational Genomics Research Institute](#) and [AccessHope™](#). For more information about City of Hope, follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About the National Hardware and Homebuilding Industry (HHI) Group

Inspired by the guiding humanitarian principles of City of Hope and motivated by the institution's commitment to innovative medical research and compassionate patient care, a group of key industry executives founded City of Hope's National Hardware-Homebuilding Industry (HHI) philanthropy group in 1983.

In its more than 40-year history, the group has raised over \$285 million for City of Hope and has been honored by some of the most influential figures in the industry. With a tradition of uniting professionals from around the country, HHI represents a community of executives, professionals, and colleagues in every segment of the home improvement category including manufacturers, retailers, distributors, manufacturers' representatives and related members.

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(2\)](#)

<https://dewalt.mediaroom.com/2026-10-22-City-of-Hope-names-leaders-from-DEWALT,-Oatey-and-Champion-Power-Equipment-as-2027-Spirit-of-Life-honorees>