

For immediate release

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Middleton & Company of Newton, New Jersey Named Merchants Insurance Group's 2022 Agent of the Year



Buffalo, N.Y. – May 11, 2023 – Merchants Insurance Group has announced that **Middleton & Company** of Newton, New Jersey is the company's 2022 **Agent of the Year!**

Since 2009, Merchants has presented this esteemed award to one outstanding agency each year, recognizing its consistent growth and profitability, strong relationship with Merchants, commitment to customer service, and demonstration of Merchants' core values of integrity, respect, loyalty, teamwork, and the aspiration to improve. Merchants Insurance Group partners with more than 1,000 independent insurance agencies.

“We are thrilled to present the prestigious Agent of the Year award to Middleton & Company,” said Charles E. Makey III, President of Merchants Insurance Group.

Middleton & Company has been appointed with Merchants since 1991 and has qualified for President’s Club, comprised of an elite group of Merchants’ independent insurance agent partners, seven times.

“Middleton & Company aligns with Merchants on delivering quality service, building long term relationships, and giving back to their communities,” said Mr. Makey. “We are proud to work with such a talented team of insurance professionals, and we are truly honored to count them as one of our elite agents.”

Founded by Arthur and Edith Middleton in 1937, Middleton & Company has been a family-owned business since Eli Gaynor joined the company in 1969. Richard Gaynor, Eli’s son, assumed the presidency in 1995, after 16 years with the agency. Upon completing their bachelor’s degrees, David and Brandon Gaynor started at the company in 2008 and 2012, respectively, offering “**fresh young minds, business technology, spirit, and energy**,” as the third generation to join the family-run agency.

“Middleton & Company is a very loyal and exceptionally profitable agency partner. Specifically, Richard Gaynor’s stated mantra that ‘no one wins with a loss’ permeates the agency relationship with Merchants and aligns with the interests of the policyholder,” said **Rich Chichester**, Regional Vice President of Merchants’ Midlantic Regional Office. “Their professionalism and transparency with our team makes winning together truly possible!”

Located in Newton, New Jersey, Middleton & Company serves policyholders in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York, striving to be “the premier Insurance protection provider in the Tri-State area for small and medium size businesses including personal lines and Group Benefits, for those clients who appreciate a Trusted Advisor relationship,” according to the company’s **Mission & Vision** statement. The agency specializes in coverages for industries such as landscaping and irrigation; pool and spa; excavation and site work; builder and remodelers; metal fabricators and manufacturers; plastic manufacturing; wood manufacturing; and technology.

This year's Agent of the Year was nominated by Merchants' Midlantic Regional Office, located in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, noting not only the agency's impressive growth and profitability, but their strong relationship with Merchants and their policyholders: "As outstanding as the production numbers are, the relationship is even better. They are trustworthy, responsive, professional and supportive in addressing issues/concerns. Importantly – they are committed to producing profit for the agency, their policyholders and Merchants."

"Richard and his team have been fantastic to work with since I came on board with Merchants last fall," said Mark Smith, Territory Manager at Merchants' Midlantic Regional Office. "I really feel that they get who we are as a carrier, and their mutual respect for us is evident in all their actions."

Middleton & Company takes part in several philanthropic initiatives. The agency acts as the insurance advisor for trade and business associations across New Jersey, providing educational seminars and publishing relevant articles on topics such as risk management, loss control, risk transfer, and other insurance industry interests. They participate in various charitable endeavors in the community, such as the Sussex County Food Bank and the "Stuff the Bus" donation drive, raising both food and monetary donations.

"Middleton & Company is a true agency partner with Merchants," said Tim Smith, Regional Underwriting Manager at Merchants Insurance Group. "It's a pleasure working with the principal owners and staff as they are committed to producing excellent results with Merchants over the long haul."

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& COMPANY** | INSURANCE

About Middleton & Company

Middleton & Company is a professional and trusted advisor providing innovative Insurance Protection Solutions. We take time to inform you, our clients, of the best coverage and cost effective options. Providing solutions, clear communication, frequently, so you can make informed decisions and feel confident that your concerns are thoroughly addressed. We use a three layered approach: Loss control, Risk Management/Risk Transfer and the ultimate backstop: the Insurance coverages; to protect your future financial stability.

"How you make your money is your business. **How you protect it is our business.**"

To learn more, visit <https://middletonins.com/>.

About Merchants Insurance Group

Merchants Insurance Group offers personal and commercial insurance through a network of more than 1,000 independent insurance agents throughout the Northeast and North Central United States. With corporate headquarters and regional operations located in Buffalo, N.Y., Merchants also operates offices in Hauppauge, N.Y.; Mount Laurel, N.J.; and Bedford, N.H. For more information, visit www.merchantsgroup.com.

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