

Kent McElhattan

Chairman and Co-Founder, Industrial Scientific



Kent McElhattan held various positions in operations, sales, product management and customer service during 15 years at the Mining Machinery Division of National Mine Service Company in Ashland, Ky. His commitment to "employees first" was born from firsthand experience in an environment of mistrust. He resolved to form a corporation that was not only physically safe but psychologically safe enough to liberate the creative voices of all employees, regardless of position. That would require placing employees above customers and shareholders.

The opportunity to implement an Employees First philosophy came in 1985 when Kent and his father acquired the Industrial Safety Division of National Mine Service Co. They began independent operations under the name Industrial Scientific Corporation. Kent served as CEO from 1985 until 2010. Under his leadership, the company grew to become the market leader in gas detection for safety purposes with operations in 18 countries.

Today, Kent is the Chairman of Industrial Scientific. In addition, he serves as Chairman of the National Safety Council based in Chicago, Ill. The National Safety Council is a nonprofit, nongovernment public service organization that saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy.

Kent was awarded a doctorate in science from Clarion University, Clarion, Pa., and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W.Va.

He serves on the boards of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh and the Beard Center of Leadership & Ethics, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pa. Among other affiliations, he is a director and past finance chair of the Boy Scouts of America Greater Pittsburgh Council and holds membership in the Society of Mining Engineers.