



Wake Forest University Baptist
MEDICAL CENTER

Recognizes
Tom Trollinger as a
Lifetime Achievement
Award recipient



Business Trailblazer



Trollinger receives the Governors Award in 1979.

Tom Trollinger has had the kind of business success story that all entrepreneurs dream about. His hard work and focus on providing the best customer service possible have made Trollinger one of the city's most respected and admired business people.

His story began 25 years when he had a promising job as assistant vice president of purchasing at Wachovia Corp. Among his responsibilities was purchasing furniture for the bank's headquarters and branches. With keen insight into what makes a good office furniture business, he left Wachovia to start his own office furnishing firm, Contract Office Furnishings Inc.

At first the times were lean. It was just Trollinger and his wife, Kay, in the beginning.

"I would go out and sell in the morning and install it in the afternoon," Tom Trollinger told *The Chronicle*, describing his work schedule during his company's infancy.

Trollinger's easygoing nature and desire to satisfy quickly increased his client roster, and his willingness to share his keys to success with upcoming entrepreneurs gained him respect in business circles.

Last year, Trollinger's company celebrated its 25th anniversary. The company has supplied furniture for such companies as Wachovia,

BB&T, R.J. Reynolds and BellSouth, and offers its services not only in the city but throughout the Southeast. Trollinger now employs more than 25 people. Many of them are getting opportunities with Trollinger that would be hard to come by anywhere else. For example, Trollinger has provided an opportunity for African-American work-space designers to excel. (There are very few blacks in the competitive furniture design field.)

More than being a successful business pioneer, Trollinger has been a good neighbor to those who live in the community around his business. He has provided financial support for the annual Boston Community Round-up.

"He is a part of Boston," Sharon Wright, president of the Boston Community Round-up, told *The Chronicle*. "He knows what it is to give back to the community."

Trollinger has also provided support for others who want to follow in his shoes. He was among the group that helped start the East Area Council, a wing of the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce for black business owners. He has also been one of the strongest supporters and a former board member of the Best Choice Center. Trollinger is a member of United Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church. He and his wife have two adult children.



Tom Trollinger receives an award from Phi Beta Sigma.

