

Allan Block

Always Better Wall of Fame

2021



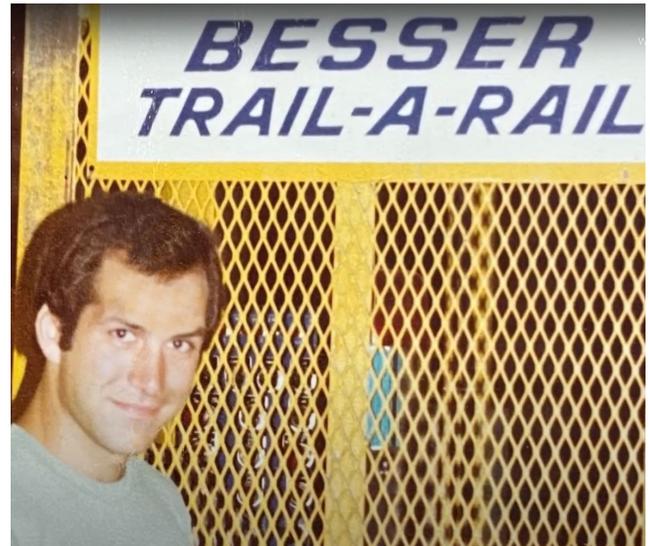
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Kevin Curtis
Besser Company
Alpena, MI

In 2016, when we started the Allan Block “*Always Better*” Wall of Fame, it was intended for people just like this inductee. Kevin Curtis retired this year as CEO of Besser Company, but over his tenure has contributed immensely to this industry and we are all better off for it. We are honored to add Kevin to the Wall as part of the 2021 class.

Kevin grew up in the industry. He had the opportunity to work with and learn from his dad while working at Besser’s offsite research and development site, and on the campus of Alpena Community College in the Besser laboratory and pilot plant. His actual Besser career started in 1978 after graduation from Olivet College and had a stint running a hotel and restaurant. Though the hospitality business didn’t pan out for him, the importance of stellar customer service was something that would drive him throughout his entire professional career.



Upon completion of management training in 1978, Kevin started his career as a Service Engineer for the Minnesota District. He applied his penchant for customer service to the job. His strong Midwestern work ethic, willingness to learn and the strong relationship he forged with his customers led to a promotion to Sales Representative in 1980.

His knowledge of the Minnesota District was invaluable for us at Allan Block as he helped our local production partner, Dave Peterson at Amcon Block (2018 AB WOF Inductee). Dave was investing in new Besser equipment and Kevin was very helpful in the selection and installation. Kevin knew that the right equipment can only do so much without a talented operator. Kevin’s keen eye for talent fell on a young Amcon employee, Vic Funk. Dave took Kevin’s recommendation to promote Vic Funk and the rest is history. Amcon has earned a reputation for the consistent production of high-quality units made by a skillful team that is in tune with the plant’s performance.

Kevin's climb to the top continued when he moved his family to Alpena, Michigan, site of the Besser World Headquarters. Here he took on the challenging roles of National Sales Manager in 1985, the VP of Sales and Marketing in 1993, and ultimately President in 1999. Kevin's unwavering commitment to customer service, his hands-on coaching, and vast industry knowledge, helped Besser transition from a privately held to an employee-owned company. Through example he's always shown that doing what's right for the customer is what's right for Besser Company.



Kevin was involved in the evolution of the SRW segment of the market. He recognized early on that retaining walls would change the complexion of the industry because of their utility and profitability for producers. Kevin has always viewed Allan Block as a partner in the industry and throughout the years, he and Tim Bott had many conversations on topics such as: how can we improve our partnership, how can Besser best support you, and what's next with product development? Since the early days Besser has assisted with unit drawings, inventoried mold parts, and promptly answered phone calls and emails as we help service our production partners. The mutually beneficial relationship we enjoy with Besser today is thanks to Kevin's leadership and the commitment the Besser Team has to always make it right.

If you know Kevin, you know that his top priority is his family. He and his bride Paula met while attending college and were married in 1974. Together they've raised two sons; Corey and his family reside in Texas while Alan and his family reside in Michigan. Spending time with their kids and grandkids is easy – they simply load up their dogs into their new motorhome and hit the road. Knowing Kevin, the way we do, we know there will probably be many stops to catch up with their industry friends as they crisscross the country. I'm sure that Tim Bott would be happy to welcome them to Hilton Head, South Carolina. Even though he is from Michigan, we know he is a closet Notre Dame fan.

Besser, the industry, and Allan Block are all stronger because of Kevin's contributions. Implementing everything that we've learned from him positions us all very well for continued success. He truly exemplifies both company's mottos: "Besser Means Better," and "Always Better." We want to thank him for his years of friendship, leadership, and partnership as we welcome him to the **Allan Block Always Better** Wall of Fame.