

## 2015 Will J. Hayek Award Recipient

### Tom Reinier - "Uncle Tom"

Tom Reinier enlisted in the military in July of 1967. He served as an Infantryman until 1969. During his career toured in Vietnam. While in the service, he earned the Army Commendation Medal in 1968, the Bronze Star in 1968, and the Silver Star in 1970. Following his military service, Tom worked for the Bandag tire manufacturing company for 29 years. Following his retirement, he has continued work as a facilities manager for the University of Iowa. Outside of this work, Tom spends almost all of his free time raising donations for the needy.



At least once a week, he brings a full truck of much needed supplies to Pearl City Outreach. He's also visited children in Kalona and the Clark House low-income elderly residents. He got his nickname, Uncle Tom, from some of those Kalona kids, and it stuck. Now, when he walks into the Pearl City Outreach, everyone calls to him, "Uncle Tom!"

Tom is originally from Muscatine where he grew up as one of six children. His family got by, but they weren't well off, and he saw how programs like the Salvation Army and the Red Cross helped people. His uncle used to perform a similar service on his own time. He has a son who's said he wants to carry on the work when Tom no longer can. He is married with two children.

He began his charity work when a friend had trouble paying some bills, and Tom looked around for a way to help him. Tom said he can't quite explain it, but things "sort of opened up from there."

When Tom is asked how he would describe his community service, he says, "I am just a janitor who cares. I want to help people." He also helps people so they have the opportunity to help others. "Help people, help people," is what he says. When asked how many hours a week he spends doing his community service, he shrugs and replies, "Whenever I leave the house." In total, his deliveries to the community exceed 500 deliveries of goods per year. He donates food, clothing, toys, school supplies, and other needed items to families, churches, food banks, and Armed Services in the community.

