

John D. Cooke III Biography



John D. Cooke III was born in 1928 in suburban Chicago, and over the years rose to the top of his profession as a Senior Vice President and Corporate Ombudsman for the McDonalds Corporation. He and his wife Margarete, also a senior level executive at McDonalds spent their professional careers promoting excellence within the corporation and delivering value to McDonald's ever-growing list of employees and customers.

After they retired, they settled in the Galena area and focused the same effort and passion they demonstrated in their professional careers to a variety of community activities and projects, including but not limited to the following:

- He was a Director on the Board of the River Museum in Dubuque, Iowa, and helped develop the new Galena & Jo Daviess County Historical Museum.
- He was a key supporter of the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation, and actively participated in the 2020 plan for Business Expansion in Galena.
- Starting in 2011 he led the effort, along with six other partners, in conceiving and building the Prairie Ridge Senior Living and Memory Care facility in Galena.
- And perhaps most importantly to him, he was a Founding Board Member of Northwest Illinois Economic Development.

Throughout his life his message to his children, family and others was that the path to success was action, independence, and a willingness to stand on their own two feet and face life squarely head on every day. In his view, a critical key to that success was a good education. So, he was committed to that premise, pressing others to get that solid education, and supporting a variety of educational institutions, including his board membership of Northwest Illinois Economic Development.

His family is honored that the annual NWILED entrepreneurial scholarship was renamed in his memory to the 'NWILED John D. Cooke, III Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship', and his message to its recipients would be undoubtedly be, "Congratulations and press on to excellence"!