The Rough Notes Company, Inc., publisher of Rough Notes magazine—the insurance industry’s leading publication—is pleased to announce that Jim Masiello, founder, chairman and CEO of the Strategic Insurance Agency Alliance (SIAA), is the recipient of the 2016 Dr. Henry C. Martin Industry Achievement Award. Dr. Martin, an agent himself, founded The Rough Notes Company in 1878.

Martin was passionate about the insurance industry as is Jim Masiello. Masiello began building a national network of agencies in 1995 to help independent agency start-ups and small existing agencies grow their book and profits without having to meet minimum volume requirements imposed by carriers. The group consists of master agencies which give smaller agencies access to competitive companies.

Over time, SIAA has added numerous value-added products and services—professional development and education, access to program and specialty markets, as well as lead generation—so member agencies can increase sales, retention, revenue and value.

Since its inception, SIAA has created more than 3,000 new start-up agencies coming predominantly from former captive agents. The agency alliance has more than 5,500 member agencies and premium volume of almost $6 billion.

In presenting the award, Walter J. Gdowski, president and CEO of The Rough Notes Company, said, “For over 137 years it has been the Rough Notes tradition to recognize the tremendous contributions that insurance agents make to our industry. The influence that SIAA has had on our industry over the past 20 years is a testament of Jim Masiello’s commitment to strengthen the independent agency system. He has provided ownership opportunities to former captive agents and has created access to markets for SIAA’s members that they wouldn’t have been able to arrange on their own.”