



HONORING THE LEGACY BUILDING THE FUTURE

a campaign for the National Western Center



December 2019

Editor's Note: [The Honoring the Legacy...Building the Future](#) campaign for the new National Western Center boasts a [leadership team](#) with some of the West's most prominent business leaders and philanthropists. This occasional note shares their insights and experiences as Stock Show and National Western insiders. Featured in this installment is Doug Jones, a campaign vice chair and chairman of the Western Stock Show Association board of directors, which oversees the National Western Stock Show.

Doug Jones: *Honoring the Legacy Vice Chair*
The JONES Realty Group & Western Stock Show Association Chairman

From greeter to board chairman in a few short paragraphs



Fate works in mysterious ways. My own experiences surrounding what has become three decades of National Western volunteering make for a nice case study supporting that truism.

To start at the beginning, I grew up in Dallas, Texas. It's a western place, but my deep affinity for agriculture and ranching actually has midwestern roots. As a boy I spent summers and holidays at my maternal grandparents' farm near Pilger in northeast Nebraska. They raised dairy cows amid the acres of corn and hayfields. My career took me in a different direction, but I had been imprinted.

Fast forward to the late 1980s. I had graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, worked in the U.S. Senate, and was now into commercial real estate. That got me involved in county politics and introduced me to a state representative named [Pat Grant](#). You may have heard of him.

I mentioned to Pat that I'd love to get involved in the National Western Stock Show. Pat suggested I volunteer.

Let me pause for a moment to note how important National Western volunteers are to the Stock Show. They number about 900 strong now. We could not – truly could not – pull off the Stock Show without their dedication and hard work. Some of them have been at it for two, three, even four decades. The work is not generally glorious. Case in point: in those early years, I minded doorways with restricted access, I assisted cattle judges, I greeted people as they arrived at the main entrance. As so many National Western volunteers do year after year, I stepped in wherever staff said they needed help. I loved being able to contribute to this quintessential western event in any way I could. I think that's what motivates most of our volunteers.

With time, Pat asked me if I might get involved with the Junior Livestock Auction committee. Pat is hard to say to "no" to – plus I was eager to get more involved. Some years later, with the creation of the [Coors Western Art Exhibit & Sale](#) to benefit the National Western Scholarship Trust, Pat asked if I would join the committee helping guide this new annual event. It has become hugely successful, esthetically as well as philanthropically.

In 1995, when I was on the Board of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, Pat asked how we might further cement the Chamber's relationship with the National Western. The Chamber had, after all, been a cofounder of the first Stock Show in 1906 and an important supporter ever since.

John Scully, John Lay and I worked with Pat and his team to launch the Boots 'n Business luncheon. The idea was to bring in Chamber members and civic leaders on the Friday before the Stock Show for a prime cut of steak and a live preview of top rodeo and horse-show events. I had just launched the Jones Realty Group and, when it became clear that the luncheon could use a sponsor, I said what the heck, I'll do it.

We had maybe 250 people at that first luncheon in 1995; the 2020 stock show will mark Boots 'n Business's 25th year, and we're expecting a sold-out crowd of 1,000 people, including the governor and our Denver mayor. The Chamber, I should add, also hosts the National Western's annual Goat Roping event, and proceeds go toward the purchase of a Junior Livestock Auction animal (in 2019, the Chamber became the proud owner of the Reserve Grand Champion Goat for \$25,000).

Soon I was asked to be on the [Citizen of the West](#) steering committee, and in 2014 the Western Stock Show Association board of directors came calling. When Pat Grant stepped down from the chairman role this past May, I became his successor – big shoes to fill at a critical and very exciting time in the National Western's history.

So, there it is: from greeter to WSSA board chairman in a few short paragraphs. If the job description has changed, my motivation hasn't. This is about preserving and promoting the excellence of the West. With the creation of the new National Western Center, we're building more than a new home worthy of the National Western Stock Show for the century to come. We're building a living monument to the west – one celebrating its spirit, its culture, its values, and its ideals – that will serve as a launching pad for agricultural, hydrological, equine, and animal-husbandry awareness, research, and education for decades to come (our partners at Colorado State University, on whose board of governors I have been proud to serve, will play big roles in all that).

I tell people this all the time, and I'll repeat it here: this redevelopment is far more ambitious than most people realize. In 10 years, when the question is asked, "Tell me about the American West," the answer will be "Go to the National Western Center in Denver, Colorado to see its past, present and future for yourself."

I'm honored to have the opportunity to do my small part in making it happen, and I urge everyone to do what he or she can for the Honoring the Legacy campaign so we can preserve and promote the best of the west for today and future generations.



For news, updates and more on the Honoring the Legacy campaign for the National Western, visit

honoringthelegacycampaign.com

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