

# Longtime Colorado Springs real estate developer Steve Schuck set for hall of fame induction

By Rich Laden rich.laden@gazette.com  
Feb 2, 2024



Veteran Colorado Springs real estate developer and school choice advocate Steve Schuck, pictured in 2017, will be inducted into the Colorado Business Hall of Fame on Feb. 15.  
The Gazette file

Longtime Colorado Springs real estate developer Steve Schuck will be inducted into the Colorado Business Hall of Fame next week — though his more than half-century career has never been about just real estate.

The 87-year-old Schuck, who came to the Springs in the early 1960s from the East Coast after never having been farther west than Philadelphia, has developed residential neighborhoods, shopping centers, business parks and mixed-use projects in the Springs, Denver, Phoenix and Portland, according to the Colorado Business Hall of Fame.

All told, Schuck has been involved with more than 50 joint ventures and partnerships, developed thousands of home sites and participated in residential and commercial projects valued in the billions of dollars, the Business Hall of Fame said.

But while he's well known for his real estate and development background, Schuck's legacy includes decades of public service, philanthropy and advocacy for school choice.



👉 **The Colorado Springs area is on track to reach 1 million people. Will bigger be better?**  
By Rich Laden rich.laden@gazette.com

In the early 1970s, Schuck was part of a trio of local businessmen who recognized the Springs' need to diversify its economy beyond defense and tourism. His efforts — along with those of the late David Sunderland and Bruce Shepard — led to the launch of a strategic jobs-creation initiative, the attraction of tens of thousands of jobs and the formation of what is today the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce & EDC.

Schuck ran unsuccessfully for the Republican nomination for governor in 1986 and regularly voices his views on public policy matters at the local, state and federal levels. He's also served on the governing boards of dozens of nonprofits, including the Denver-based Daniels Fund that was founded by the late cable magnate Bill Daniels, whom Schuck has called a friend and mentor.

Perhaps most notable outside the business community, Schuck and his wife, Joyce, who died in 2020, founded the nonprofit Parents Challenge in 2000.

The organization has assisted low-income parents of more than 3,200 disadvantaged elementary and secondary children in Colorado Springs with privately funded scholarships and grants totaling more than \$2 million to allow them to attend the public and private schools of their choice, according to the Colorado Business Hall of Fame and Schuck Chapman Companies, Schuck's current business that he chairs and runs with president and CEO Brock Chapman.

Also in 2000, the Schucks launched their namesake Schuck Foundation that seeks to promote freedom and personal responsibility.

The foundation's goal, according to the Schuck Chapman Companies, is "to empower individuals to make and control decisions that affect their own lives, with particular focus on those who are disadvantaged, those not currently experiencing the sense of inner fulfillment that can only come from personal accomplishment and achievement, however that is defined by each individual."

Schuck's philosophy, he said, always has been not just to give away money, but to do so in a way that leads to quantifiable and measurable results.

"You want to create the dynamics that put incentives and penalties in the right places," Schuck said in an interview. "If you just simply give money to something that isn't performing well and you don't pressure it to improve that performance, then you're enabling failure. You're rewarding failure instead of rewarding success."



**How will Colorado Springs' economy fare in 2024? The experts weigh in.**  
By WAYNE HEILMAN Special to The Gazette

He added: "What I hope would be my legacy is that those who, like me, have been financially successful, would apply the very principles and practices that generated the business success to their efforts to support those who have been less fortunate. By that, I mean accountability and results. Just giving money away as many philanthropists do is easy. Giving away money strategically so that it generates a maximum benefit for those you're trying to help is the hardest work I have ever done in my life."

Schuck will be inducted into the Colorado Business Hall of Fame during a Feb. 15 dinner and ceremony at the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center in downtown Denver.

He's one of six honorees in the 2024 class. The others, all of whom have records of philanthropy and community service, are Rose Andom, a retired Denver-area McDonald's restaurant franchisee; Pat Hamill, the founder of Oakwood Homes, one of the largest builders in the Denver and Colorado Springs areas; retired FirstBank executive John Ikard; Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz; and posthumously Elizabeth Hickok Robbins Stone, a pioneering businesswoman in the 1800s who was instrumental in the development of Fort Collins.

Schuck was named to the Business Hall of Fame in 2022 and was due to be inducted in 2023, but said he couldn't participate in last year's ceremony because of a hospitalization. As a result, he's part of this year's class of inductees.

A suburban New York native, Schuck received a bachelor's degree in economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and then worked as a math teacher, football coach and in manufacturing after college. In 1961, the Schucks moved to Colorado Springs where Steve took a job at a department store, but later ventured into real estate.



**Colorado officials look to expand state's semiconductor industry**  
By WAYNE HEILMAN Special to The Gazette

Some of his more recognizable projects — which were launched or acquired over the years by his real estate company — include the Mountain Shadows and Cedar Heights residential developments on Colorado Springs' west and northwest sides, the north-side InterQuest commercial project, the Printers Park business park in the central part of town and the Nexus industrial park near Denver International Airport.

Over the years, Schuck has had his share of financial highs and lows — making big money in some deals and projects, but also losing everything on more than one occasion and coming close to the brink of bankruptcy, according to Gazette archives.

Despite those tough times, many of his projects have been very satisfying, Schuck said.

"But I get an equal amount of satisfaction from solving problems and doing something that meets a need and doing it in a way that enriches the lives of those who live in our communities or work in our communities or shop in our development," Schuck said. "There is a level of pride, satisfaction at the financial level, the monetary level, which isn't always the same as the pride and satisfaction at a human level. And we try and do both."



**10 years later, City for Champions projects have been 'transformative' for Colorado Springs**  
BREEANNA JENT, HUGH JOHNSON The Gazette And Wayne Heilman Special to The Gazette

Among numerous awards, Schuck has been named Citizen of the Year by the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce and received similar honors and recognition from the Colorado Association of Homebuilders, the Urban League, the Pikes Peak Association of Realtors and the El Paso County Republican Party, according to the Parents Challenge website.

He's received a medal of merit from the University of Colorado Board of Regents; the first award of leadership from Step 13, the Denver-based transitional housing program for men now known as Step Denver; the David S. D'Evelyn Award for Inspired Leadership from the Golden-based Independence Institute; the YMCA's Woodgate Award; and the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise's Achievement Against the Odds "Pharoh" Award.



**Who opened? Who closed? Dozens of Colorado Springs retailers and restaurants came and went in 2023**  
By Rich Laden rich.laden@gazette.com

Schuck also was honored by the American Red Cross of Southeastern Colorado with its Humanitarian Award. In October, Schuck, Sunderland and Shepard were recognized with the Chamber & EDC's first Trailblazers of Economic Development award.

Jim Johnson, president of Colorado Springs-based general contractor GE Johnson and a 2018 Business Hall of Fame inductee with his late father and company founder, Gil Johnson, said Schuck's full body of work and career — which includes his role as a developer, his school choice advocacy and commitments to free enterprise — made his induction "a no brainer."

"Whether it was politics or the Schuck Foundation or how he's kind of bounced back from the developer ups and downs, he's just been such a constant in our community, our statewide community that you sometimes forget about all of all the hard work and commitment and tireless energy that he's applied to efforts that don't directly benefit him," said Johnson, who served on the Business Hall of Fame committee that selected Schuck for his induction.

Even as Schuck, like other developers, struggled financially during real estate downturns brought on by recessions or the savings and loan crisis of the late 1980s, he didn't abandon his support for school choice or other public policy goals, Johnson said.

"He's stayed so committed to his school of choice and the Schuck Foundation," Johnson said. "His values didn't waver. He didn't change his values or his integrity with the ups and downs of the Schuck company...He didn't change his commitment and hard work that he gave to all those other causes."

Rich Laden