

Klein® Tools Announces 2017 Electrician of the Year Regional Winners

Six regional winners named for their dedication to the electrical industry; grand prize winner to be announced September 27 via Facebook Live

Aug. 30, 2017 (Lincolnshire, Ill.) – [Klein Tools](#), for professionals since 1857, has selected six regional winners for its annual [Electrician of the Year](#) award. In recognition of the finalists' outstanding professional achievement, commitment to safety excellence and dedication to their local communities, each regional winner receives the Ultimate Garage Package, which includes a [41-piece Journeyman Tool Set](#) and other Klein Tools products. The regional winners also traveled to Klein Tools' manufacturing headquarters in Mansfield, Texas, to experience how the premium-quality tools are made. The finalists represent the Northwest, Southwest, Central North, Central South, Southeast and Northeast regions.

"We are thrilled to honor these six electricians and their contributions the industry. They are exceptionally skilled professionals who not only provide critical services to their customers and communities, but also serve as role models for future generations of electricians," says Klein Tools' Vice President of Marketing Greg Palese. "Selecting an overall winner to be the official Klein Tools 2017 Electrician of the Year will be as challenging as ever, since all of our finalists exemplify the values and characteristics that the best electricians offer on jobsites every day."

Klein Tools invites the public to vote online for their favorite regional finalist, from Sept. 11-15, 2017. Fan voting results will be combined with those from Klein family members to determine the 2017 Electrician of the Year. The grand prize winner will be announced via Facebook Live on September 27, and receive his choice of trip to one of four iconic American destinations: Charlotte, North Carolina; New York, New York; Las Vegas, Nevada; or Sturgis, South Dakota, to experience the best each city has to offer. The grand prize winner will also receive a one-time order of \$1,500 in premium-quality, professional-grade Klein Tools products.

Congratulations to the Klein Tools 2017 Electrician of the Year Regional Finalists!



Klein Tools' 2017 Electrician of the Year Regional Winners met in Texas to celebrate being finalists in the national competition and tour Klein's manufacturing facilities. From left: Harold Melia (Region 6), Kevin Wick (Region 3), Jimmy Ferris (Region 2), Brent Heesacker (Region 1) and Nathan Guerrero (Region 4) [Not pictured: Luis Gonzalez (Region 5)]

Brent Heesacker
Region 1 "Northwest"

Brent Heesacker is a general foreman for On Electric Group in Portland, Oregon, specializing in instrumentation and control. As a problem-solver, mentor and leader at work, he demonstrates ingenuity when approaching problems to find a unique solution for his customers. In fact, he developed a device to save a customer thousands of dollars while also creating better efficiencies for the customer's controller and entire system. Heesacker's quality of work and service doesn't end there, however, he also manages and mentors multiple foremen at the company to grow their skills and ensure success for the next wave of electricians.

As a foreman, Heesacker understands that working on live systems is always dangerous. He has trained his crew to be on alert so that they can stop the job whenever they encounter a situation beyond the plan of action and then find a safe and reliable way to resolve the situation.

Heesacker is a foreman by day and a farmer by night. Heesacker Farms raises beef cows to provide meat to the local community. He also volunteers at various blood drives and at the Oregon Food Bank to help sort and deliver food to the homeless.

Jimmy Ferris
Region 2 "Southwest"

Jimmy Ferris, a high-voltage substation electrician with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District in California – as well as a journeyman electrician and foreman – has been recognized by many for instilling the value of safety with his crews. He has also led numerous executive-level safety presentations and served on a joint labor/management committee to decrease preventable vehicle accidents from 27 to seven accidents in one year. Even during his off-duty volunteer work, Ferris shares work safety techniques to ensure every crew he works with remains safe while on the job.

Known throughout the community as a selfless and generous person, Ferris has been recognized company-wide for his commitment to others. He was recognized in a company newsletter for taking time out of his day to help an elderly woman change her tire on the freeway – resolving her car trouble and protecting her from a long wait for help on the dangerous roadside. The elderly woman's son was so grateful that he shared Ferris' actions with the company to highlight his dedication to keeping everyone around him safe and well.

Kevin Wick
Region 3 "Central North"

For over 30 years, Kevin Wick, a lineman and master electrician for the city of North Saint Paul Electric Utilities in Minnesota, has had a true passion for his career. In fact, Wick had the ability to retire five years ago, but has continued to work because he enjoys his fast-paced career and the life-long friendships he has made. His commitment to his career has also inspired his son to follow in his footsteps.

In his dangerous line of work, Wick always puts safety first. He always wears approved safety gear and is very cautious about taking care of his body by using proper lifting methods and attending safety programs and electrical safety education classes regularly. Wick also has shared his commitment to safety by training six new apprentices over the last five years to ensure that they are properly trained and ready for the different weather conditions and hazardous situations on the job.

Wick's commitment to his career doesn't stop at the end of the work day – he works until the job is done the power has been restored. Throughout his long career, Wick has worked countless overtime hours and goes out of his way not only to help those in the community but also his friends and family. He also has assisted with various electrical jobs for his community, including rewiring an entire firehouse free of charge. Wick goes above and beyond to get the job done right.

Nathan Guerrero
Region 4 "Central South"

Nathan Guerrero is the lead electrician for the Oklahoma State Fair. This unique position demands extreme versatility from Guerrero every day. While traveling through the complex infrastructure, he can be seen pulling cutouts, changing ballasts, troubleshooting circuits among many other responsibilities. On top of his day-to-day activities, Guerrero also strives to maintain electrical excellence and has converted many lights over to LED to keep up with current codes and standards.

Guerrero knows that safety is the most important part of any electrician's day. Through his International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) training and experience in the United States Army as a qualified combat lifesaver, he learned that education and tools work hand-in-hand to ensure electrical workers make it home every night. When an accident occurred on the fairgrounds earlier this year, Guerrero was able to manage the downed power lines and ensure every electrician was safe during the precarious situation.

Guerrero is a disabled veteran and understands the struggles others encounter when returning home from duty. Because of this, he counsels other veterans and is able to refer them to resources that help ease the stresses of life. He also mentors parents of children suffering from epilepsy as Guerrero's son suffers from this same affliction. Guerrero constantly helps his community, especially the elderly and those in need by making sure costly electrical repairs are taken care of by a professional at no cost. He has a commitment to helping others in all aspects of his life.

Luis Gonzalez
Region 5 "Southeast"

As a fourth-generation electrician in Miami, Florida, Luis Gonzalez loves his career. Starting in a helper position, Luis climbed the ladder to journeyman electrician to master electrician and then to a licensed Florida electrical contractor. Always sharing his passion for the industry with others, he taught an apprentice program at a local technical college as the program director and instilled pride in his students, respect for the trades and has now even hired some of his own graduates.

Gonzalez understands that learning never ends in the electrical industry. He holds regular weekly safety meetings for his employees to provide them with all the knowledge and equipment they need to be safe on the job. Prioritizing safety has ensured zero accidents since the inception of Gonzalez's company almost five years ago.

Gonzalez's commitment to learning doesn't end with apprentices and his employees. Both Gonzalez and his wife teach a basic electricity and robotics class to middle school aged children using a book Gonzalez wrote on the topic. The course teaches children about electricity and electrical safety. He hopes to pass on his enthusiasm for the electrical industry onto future electricians.

**Harold Melia
Region 6 "Northeast"**

Harold Melia, owner of Halleigh Electric and Construction, devotes himself to the trade and to his customers. His career started 17 years ago as an apprentice under his father, where he learned a lot about the electrical industry in new home construction. Eventually, he joined IBEW local #90 and gained experience in the commercial electrical field. With his experience in these industries, Melia was able to start his own business where he serves farms, residential and commercial properties. His diverse experience in electrical industry allows Melia to serve his clients with the utmost quality and service.

As a small business owner, workplace safety is extremely important. Melia always ensures the job site is safe for the customer and they are well informed about the upgrades needed as well as the safety reason for the upgrade. He makes sure his tools are in proper working order and the machinery is well-maintained and up to OSHA workplace standards. Melia also spends a great deal of time educating customers about the importance of proper safety in the workplace.

Living in a small agriculture town in Connecticut, Melia is dedicated to helping the farmers in his community. He is one of the only electricians in his area who is willing to work in the barns with the animals and remains on call 24 hours a day to ensure the farms can continue to run. For example, a farmer recently called in the middle of the night because his milking parlor wasn't running and Melia did his best to fix the issue immediately. Melia has also volunteered his electrical services to the local agricultural fair by upgrading their electrical systems. With agriculture an important part of his community, Melia ensures the community's needs are met.

For more information on the Electrician of the Year award and the fan voting period, please visit <http://www.kleintools.com/eoy>.

About Klein Tools

Since 1857, Klein Tools, a family-owned and operated company, has been designing, developing and manufacturing premium-quality, professional-grade hand tools. The majority of Klein tools are manufactured in plants throughout the United States and are the number one choice among professional electricians and other tradespeople. For more information, visit www.kleintools.com.

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