

CTA Lifetime Achievement Award 2026

Builder

John Murphy (1954-2025)

John David Murphy was a distinguished leader and a cornerstone of the Canadian toy industry, leaving an indelible legacy of professional excellence and compassionate service. Born on June 3, 1954, John was a lifelong resident of the Greater Toronto Area, remaining deeply connected to his large family and community. He passed away peacefully on March 4, 2025, after a courageous battle with cancer.

John's professional journey was marked by significant contributions to global brands, including Nestlé and Rowntree, before he discovered his true calling at the LEGO Group. He dedicated more than twenty-three years to LEGO Canada, where he was a key architect in developing the brand's footprint across the country. His work went far beyond market growth; he was a vital force within the Canadian Toy Association, championing industry standards, ethical conduct, and collaborative growth. Known as a master storyteller, John had a unique ability to connect generations of industry professionals, bridging the history of traditional Canadian Toy Fairs with the modern era of the trade.

A mentor to many, John was widely respected for his unwavering integrity and humble leadership. His personal philosophy aligned perfectly with the LEGO Group's mission to inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow. This commitment was most evident in his charitable leadership at the Million Dollar Smiles organization. John was the primary champion of LEGO Canada's annual initiative to build Playgrounds for children facing serious health challenges, a project that brought him immense pride and joy.

While his professional achievements were vast, John's greatest source of pride was his family. He was a devoted spouse to Anne and a loving father to Jonathan and Laura. His colleagues and friends remember him not only for his professional resilience but also for his warmth, wisdom, and the genuine connections he fostered throughout his life. John David Murphy's impact on children's lives and the Canadian toy community continues to inspire all who follow in his footsteps.
