

Carl Herndon Honored Posthumously with 2025 Marine Industry Lifetime Achievement Award

The Late Carl Herndon of Blackfin Yachts and Jupiter Marine to be recognized with the 2025 Marine Industry Lifetime Achievement Award in Memory of Charles Chapman at the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference, Oct. 7

9/30/2025 12:00:00 AM | *General NMMA News*

The [National Marine Manufacturers Association](#) (NMMA) today announced Carl Herndon, the late founder of Blackfin Yachts and a visionary marine industry leader whose career spanned nearly seven decades, has been posthumously named the recipient of the 2025 Marine Industry Lifetime Achievement Award in Memory of Charles Chapman. The award will be presented during the [International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference \(IBEX\)](#) annual Industry Breakfast taking place Tuesday, Oct. 7, from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. at the JW Marriott Tampa Water Street.

Herndon, who passed away in Dec. 2023, was best known as the founder of Blackfin Yachts and for his leadership roles at Bertram Yachts and Jupiter Marine International. His contributions left a lasting imprint on recreational marine manufacturing, from pioneering rugged offshore fishing boats to revitalizing iconic brands.

He began his career in the 1950s as a boatbuilder at Challenger Marine before advancing through senior roles at Glastron and Chrysler Boat Corp. In 1968, he joined Bertram Yachts as production superintendent, where his engineering expertise helped the company become a premier offshore name. Decades later, he returned as president of Bertram, leading one of the industry's most remarkable turnarounds by restoring the company's profitability and reputation within a year

In the early 1970s, Herndon founded Blackfin Yachts, carving out a new market for high-performance offshore sportfishing boats. Later, as president and CEO of Jupiter Marine International, he guided the design and production of premium center console boats.

"My father dedicated his life to building boats, companies, and people," said Carisa Albrecht, Herndon's daughter and chief executive officer of Jupiter Marine International. "He believed that integrity, craftsmanship and mentorship were just as important as innovation, and he never wavered in his commitment to those values. Seeing him honored with this award is a meaningful reminder of the legacy he leaves behind, not just in the boats he built, but in the many lives he touched throughout the marine industry."

Beyond building iconic brands, Herndon gave back through leadership and service. As president of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida, he helped repeal diesel fuel taxes, secure sales tax exemptions, and supported economic impact studies that spurred the growth of the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. He was appointed to the Florida Boating Advisory Council by Governor Lawton Chiles, advising on safety, access, and regulatory matters. And through advisory roles with the Pompano Beach Fishing Rodeo and South Florida Fishing Classic, he championed tournament growth, conservation, and artificial reef initiatives.

“Carl left a remarkable legacy of craftsmanship, leadership, and service, one that has elevated the entire marine industry,” said Frank Hugelmeyer, NMMA president and CEO. “He exemplified the vision, integrity and dedication that this award represents, and we are proud to honor his lifetime of achievement.”

To learn more about past Marine Industry Lifetime Achievement Award in Memory of Charles Chapman inductees, visit the [NMMA Industry Awards page](#).

For more information on IBEX 2025, exhibiting companies, interactive exhibit hall floor plans, and more, please visit www.ibexshow.com