In life, when you hear the term “Top 1%,” it usually refers to people in a particular income bracket. In the jewelry industry, however, it refers to industry professionals who are known for their stellar careers, their investment in the industry, and their drive to make an impact on the businesses and people they come in contact with every day. JHJ Mag recently had a chance to chat with Terry Chandler, President and CEO of the Diamond Council of America, and we’re thrilled to share what this “Top 1%-er” had to say!

**JHJ Mag:** Many people in our industry don’t understand exactly what it is the Diamond Council of America (DCA) offers, and how it can help them. Can you explain the DCA’s mission and programs for our readers?

**Terry Chandler:** DCA’s mission is to provide the highest quality education at the lowest possible cost to our members. DCA is a fully accredited school offering courses in Diamonds, Colored Gemstones, and Advanced Jewelry Sales.

DCA is accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission in Washington, DC. (DEAC)

DCA Courses are designed not only to teach the fundamentals of diamonds and gemstones, but to help the associate use their newly gained knowledge to sell more jewelry.

In an empirical study conducted by DCA comparing sales per hour of associates who had completed the Diamond Course with associates who had not yet taken the Diamond Course, the DCA graduates doubled the sales per hour of the other group.

**JHJ Mag:** How did you get your start with the DCA?

In an empirical study conducted by DCA comparing sales per hour of associates who had completed the Diamond Course with associates who had not yet taken the Diamond Course, the DCA graduates doubled the sales per hour of the other group.
Terry Chandler: Back when I had three partners and we had twelve stores, I was in charge of training and education. I used the DCA courses because they were comprehensive and affordable. Eventually I was asked to sit on the DCA Board. Several years later the Board asked me to become the President/CEO. I have served in that role for twenty years.

JHJ Mag: Over the years, the DCA has grown and changed under your leadership. What changes are you most proud of, and how have they affected DCA and its membership?

Terry Chandler: I am most proud of the fact that DCA has maintained accreditation through DEAC. Many people don’t realize that the process of being reaccredited is complex and intense. The DEAC standards are rigorous and demanding. Meeting the standards of DEAC assures we are operating with the highest standards and best practices.

JHJ Mag: The DCA has some pretty impressive Success Indicators, with 99% of your students saying that they achieved their learning goals, 99% of students saying that they would recommend DCA to a friend, and 99.8% saying that they were satisfied with their DCA studies. What do you attribute such high success indicators?

Terry Chandler: DCA has extremely talented writers and education consultants. Our writers are Graduate Gemologists, and deeply knowledgeable about all things jewelry. We also work closely with Performance Concepts and industry veteran Kate Peterson. Our student satisfaction rates are directly tied to the effort we make to teach students how to use their newly learned information to increase their personal sales.

JHJ Mag: In 2018, Jewelers of America began offering DCA courses to their members. How has that educational partnership worked out for DCA?

JHJ Mag: The DCA has more than 4000 member stores, coast to coast. What does it take for a retail store to become a DCA member, and are there membership opportunities for vendors as well?

Terry Chandler: DCA membership is easy. Go to Diamondcouncil.org and download the membership application. Once filled out, send to DCA and our team will reach out to you to complete the process.

JHJ Mag: What do you see for the DCA in 2020 and beyond?

Terry Chandler: Other than continuing to grow the organization, DCA is testing “DCA Live” in which we teach students in a classroom setting rather than just the online study.

JHJ Mag: Any final thoughts you’d like to share with our readers?

Terry Chandler: We work in an ever changing industry. The demands of our customers are higher than ever. The Millennials, the largest buying group ever, research extensively before they come to your store. They will not purchase from associates they sense know less than they do about the jewelry. Education and training are essential to the jewelers success and prosperity now more than ever. DCA’s mission is to help them achieve that goal and succeed in a very competitive market.
(ATLANTA) - The 24 Karat Club Southeastern United States hosted its 45th annual Banquet at the Atlanta County Club on August 10th. Each year the 24 Karat Club honors an outstanding jeweler with its Jeweler of the Year Award, announces scholarship recipients and inducts new members at the black tie event.

Jim Woodard of Woodard’s Diamonds & Designs in Tullahoma, TN was presented with the 24K Club’s prestigious Jeweler of the Year Award for 2019. “Wow - what a tremendous honor it was to be chosen as the 2019 Jeweler of the Year by the Southeastern 24 Karat Club,” said Woodard. “It was very special and ironic to me that this was the 45th annual Banquet and this was also my 45th year in the diamond and jewelry business.

“I’ve had the pleasure of being invited to a few of the 24K Banquets over the years but...
I never thought I would be nominated or selected as a winner! I felt so humbled to receive this award because I have known many past winners and have such high respect for those that were chosen long before me. I also know many of the 24K members (past and present) and their passion for this business of celebrating life and love with gifts of precious gems and jewelry has always been inspiring.

The 24 Karat Club’s 2019 scholarship recipients were announced during the event. Scholarships included:
- Robert Foreman Memorial, $2,000 to Anna Doll – Jewelry by Gail, Nags Head, NC
- Sterling Reputation, $1,250 award funded by Steve Berkowitz of Sterling Reputation to Dana Jenny – B & N Jewelry, Marietta, GA
- Diamond in the Rough, $1,250 award funded by Judy Upton of Judy Carter & Associates to Jonathan Ratliff – Legacy Diamond Jewelers – Carrollton, GA

“Our Club is honored to present scholarships to an outstanding group of rising stars within our industry,” said Kathy Beall, scholarship committee chair. “One of the most important objectives of our organization is awarding the gift of learning.”

The 24 Karat Club Southeastern United States is a prestigious organization of industry professionals representing leading members from the jewelry supplier sector. Members are considered and recognized because of their industry accomplishments, personal and civic contributions and their commitment to the betterment of the jewelry industry. For more information please visit www.The24KaratClub.org.