George B. Hightower



Mr. Hightower was a native of Atlanta, GA, born March 28, 1911. He was a 1933 graduate of Virginia Military Institute with a degree in Electrical Engineering and as a Second Lieutenant in the Cavalry Reserve. He entered the Air Force on January 21, 1942 and on September 8, 1943, he left Norfolk, VA by convoy through the German bombing attacks in the Mediterranean to Bombay, India. He later served as a Major in the Air Force Flying Tigers and was stationed in China during the Japanese invasion. As the Japanese approached, he was responsible for destroying several air bases after the American and Chinese forces had evacuated, often behind Japanese lines.

His dedication and abilities were described by one of his fellow officers in a letter to their commanding officer stating " His evacuation of Sincheng, Namyung, and Kanchow could not have been improved upon Hightower has a keen faculty of grasping a complicated over-all picture in one squint, and of retaining it for prompt, balanced and constructive decisions later." He was the recipient of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Clusters, the American Theater Ribbon, and the Asia Pacific Campaign Ribbon.

Mr. Hightower spent 55 years in the engineering and contracting professions. 35 years of those years as one of the owners of Conditioned Air Engineers, a commercial air conditioning contracting firm in Atlanta, GA. During that time he actively served in numerous capacities including on the Board of Directors of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), Georgia Society of Professional Engineers (GSPE), Georgia Engineering Foundation (GEF), Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), National Environmental Balancing Bureau (NEBB), and the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, & Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). He was a Fellow of the SAME and ASHRAE and awarded Life Member status from Associated Mechanical Contractors of Atlanta (AMCA) and ASHRAE. He was recognized as Eminent Engineer by Tau Beta Pi.

Mr. Hightower died on November 8, 2008 at the age of 91.

Established in 2006, the George B. Hightower Technical Achievement Award recognizes an individual for excellence in volunteer service in the area of Technical Committee/Technical Group/Technical Research Group leadership and contribution. The form of the award is a plaque.