

GCC Q&A

Warner Key
General Manager
Hobbs Iron & Metal Inc.
(Hobbs, N.M.)



**(Second in a monthly series of profile interviews
with Gulf Coast Chapter members.)**

Born: I was born April 29, 1955, in Lubbock, Texas.

Education: I graduated from Monterrey High School in Lubbock in 1973.

Family: I'm engaged to Ida Strickland. We've been together three years. I have two adult children—Cody Shane Key and Lauren Taylor Key—and Ida has three adult children—Rita, Juan, and Benjamin. All our children are grown and have families of their own.

When and how did you enter the recycling industry? I began working full time in the recycling industry in 1973. My first job was in Lubbock, Texas, working for Bobby Jarvis at

Lubbock American Iron & Metal. My grandfather, Charlie Allen, was the operations manager for the company. He'd previously worked for Gachman Metals in Lubbock for more than 20 years.

What was it about the industry that prompted you to build a career in it? I followed my grandfather's footsteps into the industry. He was the hardest-working person I've ever known. Before I was old enough to work full time, he would take me to his workplace on Saturdays and let me hang out with him. I was allowed to ride on the forklifts and cranes that he was operating, and I was fascinated by all the equipment and what he could accomplish with it. I guess I just wanted to be like him.

What have been your most rewarding professional achievements? Personal achievements? My most rewarding professional achievements include being a member of both the ISRI national and Gulf Coast Chapter boards of directors, serving in all the Gulf Coast Chapter officer positions—including President from 2009 to 2011—and receiving the chapter's Israel Proler Award in 2018 for my lifetime achievements in the industry. My personal achievements are my family and my children.

What are you passionate about? I'm passionate about God, country, and family. It's very troubling to see all the chaos, destruction, and hatred taking place in America right now.

Tell us something about you that would surprise people. I'm one of the founders of the Tall City Blues Festival that takes place in Midland, Texas, every year.

If you could improve anything about yourself, what would it be? I need to work more on my listening skills and become faster at recognizing people's talents.

What do you like to do in your free time? I enjoy saltwater fishing, hunting, and spending time with family and friends.

When and why did your company decide to join ISRI and the Gulf Coast Chapter? I don't recall the exact year the company joined ISRI, but it has been a member for as long as I

can remember. Being in the GCC is a logistical blessing.

Have you held any volunteer leadership positions within GCC? In GCC, I've served as a member on the Legislative Committee, Finance Committee, and Nomination Committee, and I was chair of the Convention Committee for two years. I got involved because I wanted to help make our chapter and industry the best they could be. Our membership deserves our best efforts, and nothing gets accomplished if you sit on the sidelines.

What benefits have you received from your GCC involvement? The biggest benefit of being involved in the GCC is the people you meet and work with.

What leadership positions, if any, have you held on the ISRI national level? Being President of the GCC made me a member of the ISRI national board of directors during my term as well as a member of the Council of Chapter Presidents. I also was co-chair of the ISRI PAC Leadership Council from 2012 to 2014.

Why did you decide to get involved with ISRI national? I thought being involved at the national level would give me a better understanding of our industry on the national and global levels.

You've been involved with ISRI's activities related to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Why do you think that work is important? The NCSL is the most important legislative advocacy tool ISRI can be involved with. All legislative action begins at the grassroots level—in cities, counties, and states. The NCSL is the only venue where ISRI can promote the positive contributions our industry makes to the national and global economies and environment to legislators and staff from all 50 states in one place at the same time.

What are the major challenges facing your company and the overall recycling industry today? The major challenges we face are dealing with the pandemic lockdowns and restrictions, lower inbound material flow, lower pricing, and

restricted mill purchases.

The **Gulf Coast Chapter** is committed to being a conduit for more communication with its members. Going forward you will receive communications via email in the areas of:

- Regional and National Industry News/Information
- Member Q&A Interviews
- Safety
- New Member Introductions
- Community Involvement/Advocacy ... and more!

For more information on the Gulf Coast Chapter, visit gulfisri.com or contact a chapter officer:

President: Haley Glick Rountree, Tri-State Iron & Metal Co.

First Vice President: Nidhi Turakhia, Allied Alloys

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