

Panelist: John Volken, Founder, *United Furniture Warehouse*

John Volken was born in Germany during World War II. At 18, he immigrated to Canada with no money, but with plenty of enthusiasm. John started out as a farm laborer, dishwasher, and construction worker. When he became comfortable with the English language, he turned to sales. In 1981, he started **United Furniture Warehouse** and built it from one small store into one of the largest furniture retail chains in North America, with over 150 locations and more than \$200 million in annual sales. In 2004, John sold his business and transferred all the proceeds into a foundation with the sole intent to meet social needs. He established the John Volken Academy, designed to help young men and women to overcome drug and alcohol addictions, learn healthy life skills, build character, and advance their education. The Academy currently has campuses in British Columbia, Arizona, and Washington.



John's foundation also established Lift the Children. This charity sponsors over 80 orphanages in Africa, most of them in Kenya and Uganda.

For his accomplishments, John has received many awards, including **Entrepreneur of the Year** for Canada's Pacific Region in 1995 and the **Dalai Lama Humanitarian Award** for effectively changing lives in 2015.



Wednesday, May 17, 2017
7:30 – 11:30AM
Hard Rock Casino Vancouver
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