

## *2016 Ammunition Hall of Fame Inductee*

### **CHRISTOPH KIMKER, JR.**



During the mid-1970s Mr. Christoph Kimker was assigned to the Tank Ammunition Engineering branch of what is now the Armament Research Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC). As a production engineer on various tank rounds, including the 105mm, M456A2 tank and 152mm M409A2 Sheridan high explosive rounds and the M735 and M774 105mm tank kinetic energy rounds. He distinguished himself as a superior engineer and tester, traceable to his prior Army service at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

In 1976, Mr. Kimker was selected to be a member of a special team, standard Tank Munitions, established to investigate 105mm tank ammunition malfunctions. In 1981 he was selected as the 105mm tank M833 ammunition item manager in the Office of the Project Manager, tank main Armament Systems (TMAS). In 1987, he became the Chief of the 105mm Division. He then guided the type classification and fielding of the M833 kinetic energy depleted uranium round for the 105mm Abrams tank. In the mid-1980s the 120mm Abrams tank was fielded with the M829 kinetic energy round. When the Army realized that to defeat confirmed emerging Soviet tank threat the 120 mm Abrams tank needed an improved round, he led an effort that resulted in the fielding of the M829A1, Operation Desert Storm's "Silver Bullet."

By 1992, Mr. Kimker had been selected as the Deputy Project Manager (TMAS), later renamed Tank and Medium Caliber Armament Systems (TMAS), due to its expanded mission. He eventually served as Acting Project manager, until a new Colonel took office; he then assumed the position as Deputy. During this interval he guided the qualification and fielding of the first 120mm ammunition to emerge from the Armament Enhancement Initiative (AEI) program, i.e. the M829A2 kinetic energy round and the M830A1 high explosive multipurpose round that also embodied the first tank-fired helicopter defense capability. He had oversight of the 120mm M829E3 tank cartridge development, an ACAT II program, which became the M829A3, the Army's most advanced tank kinetic energy round.

When the Army eliminated the 165mm Combat Engineering vehicle there was an immediate need to develop the 120mm obstacle reduction round for the Abrams Tank. The M908 was developed and delivered in less than a year from the Vice Chief's request until shipment to the U.S. 8<sup>th</sup> Army Korea at no cost to the Army, since the supplier agreed to install stainless steel "noses" in exchange for obtaining an added supply of the sophisticated fuses from the M830A1 "bodies" that formed the M908.

Mr. Kimker also formulated a strategy to close the depleted uranium penetrator manufacturing gap, preserving that important U.S. industrial base capability, while also providing needed 25mm m919 ammunition in the inventory. His foresight guided the efforts in building consensus for new tank rounds, including a canister round for anti-personnel use which in subsequent years led to the 120mm M1028 for the Abrams tank and 105mm M1040 canister

round fielded to support the Stryker Mobile Gun System. He supported the tank industrial base preservation efforts through FMS sales by oversight of the development of an exportable 120mm kinetic energy round.

In 1998, Mr. Kimker received the NDIA Firepower Award for Management. While presenting Mr. Kimker a Sustained Superior Performance Award, MG John F. Michitsch noted his exceptionally superior service from May 1995 to September 1999 for leadership, management, and technical professionalism Mr. Kimker demonstrated during his tenure as Deputy and Acting Project Manager for Tank and Medium Caliber Armament Systems.”

During Mr. Kimker’s years of dedicated service, he was instrumental in the Army fielding ten new or improved rounds of ammunition. Prior to retirement, his last assignment was Deputy Project Manager for the Crusader Project Management Office. Although the Army discontinued the ACAT I Program, advances made during his time there led to improvements in cannon and ammunition auto-loading design that have been utilized to upgrade artillery systems.