

## ASG SEWING HALL OF FAME

### MEET JANET PRAY: 2017 Sewing Hall of Fame Honoree

Janet Pray is the newest inductee into the ASG Sewing Hall of Fame. Janet is the owner of Islander Sewing Systems, which offers patterns and instruction for industrial sewing techniques. She is also the founder and president of the American Sewing Expo (ASE) which, during its 23-year run in Novi, Mich., grew to be the largest independent sewing expo in the U.S. After the 2016 ASE, Janet decided to devote herself to teaching and online classes, as well as more products and patterns for Islander Sewing Systems. ASE has morphed into Sewcial, a multi-day, more intimate sewing educational experience and retreat. Janet's career in the sewing industry also includes three years as the executive director of the National Sewing Council.

During her acceptance speech at ASG Conference 2017 in Orlando, Janet shared her favorite quote: *"The meaning of life is to find your gift; the purpose of life is to give it away."*

Janet found her gift at an early age. When she was 5, she watched her grandmother create a doll dress without a pattern and thought it was nearly magic. At age 10, she made it her mission to learn to sew on visits to her grandmother, even though that lady lived nearly 200 miles away. And then there was Aunt Margaret, better known to the sewing world as Margaret Islander, founder of Islander Sewing Systems. When Janet grew up and began a home-based sewing business, Margaret shared her techniques, providing information that made it possible for Janet to hire private contractors to sew her products. Her contractors were really home



Janet (left) was presented with the 2017 ASG Hall of Fame award by Jodell Larkin, ASG National Board of Directors Chair 2016-2017.

expo in the U.S., the American Sewing Expo held annually in Novi, Michigan. When her mentor and aunt, Margaret Islander, retired from Islander Sewing Systems Janet stepped in to continue the mission of teaching home sewers the techniques used by machine operators in garment factories. As the owner, Janet publishes fashion sewing patterns with industrial sewing techniques included in the pattern guides and wrote the book, "Islander Sewing Systems" and co-authored the popular DVD, "Easy Zippers." In 2012, she was presented with the Lifetime Achievement

Award by the Association of Sewing and Design Professionals.



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sewers until Janet taught them industry techniques that allowed them to make a better hourly wage. After many years of sewing her garments production style and teaching those who worked for her to do the same, Janet realized her next level of sewing passion was to teach industry techniques to home sewers.

Janet's next venture was developing the largest independent sewing