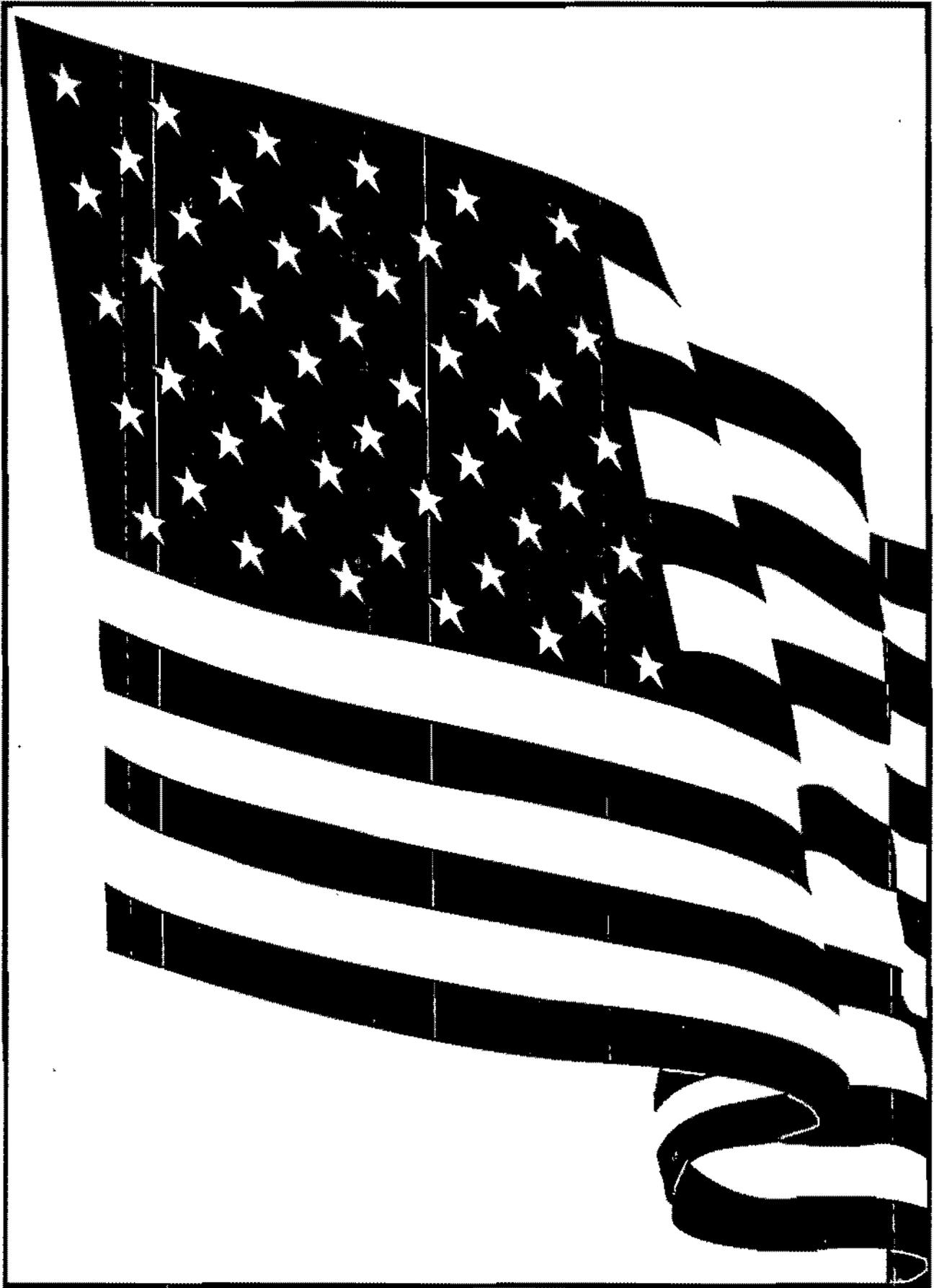


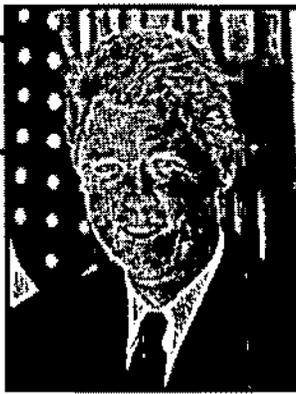


SBA

Small Business Week 1994







Message from the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 10, 1994

Greetings to everyone gathered in Washington, D.C., to celebrate Small Business Week 1994.

Small business owners create two-thirds of all new jobs in the United States, generating more than fifty-seven percent of all sales and half of the domestic private sector output. The hard work and innovation of these dedicated professionals are instrumental in helping countless Americans to realize their dreams. The drive, determination, and deep community involvement they possess are essential to ensuring the continued strength of our free enterprise system.

It has become abundantly clear that entrepreneurs must flourish if the American economy is to continue to grow. Building on the strength of a new partnership between government and business, we must encourage entrepreneurs to expand and prosper. We must reward those who take risks, while we attack the enormous costs of health care that stifle the growth of so many American commercial enterprises.

I am committed to working with you to keep our small business community vibrant and healthy. As we recognize the many wonderful contributions small business people make to our national life, I extend heartfelt congratulations to each of you and best wishes for every future success.

Bill Clinton





Message from the Administrator

Congratulations and welcome to Washington, D.C.!

Each year during National Small Business Week, we come together here, in our nation's capital, to celebrate the achievements of outstanding small business men and women from across the nation. We also celebrate the unequalled success of the American free enterprise system.

Our theme, "Building America's Future," acknowledges that just as our predecessors paved the way for us, we too are building for the generations to come. Today we face issues that are vital to the future not only of our nation, but also the world, issues like protecting the environment and improving the quality of life for all people. Many of you are leaders in your own communities in dealing with those issues.

Thomas Alva Edison once said, "Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration." I am sure each and every one of you can attest to that. Not only have you worked long, hard hours, you have faced the unknown, overcome great odds, and taken great risks. In doing so, you have created new businesses and saved those that were floundering. You have created new products and services, and found better ways to do it. You have created new jobs and preserved jobs that might have been lost. Your individual successes benefit us all and we are proud of you.

As Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, I am proud of our role as advocates for, investors in and counselors to the small business community. We are also proud to have helped so many of you reach your goals, and we look forward to helping you meet the challenges of the future.

I hope that you and your families and guests will enjoy the activities here in our nation's capital this week. I salute your achievements and thank you for your many contributions. Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Erskine Bowles". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Erskine Bowles

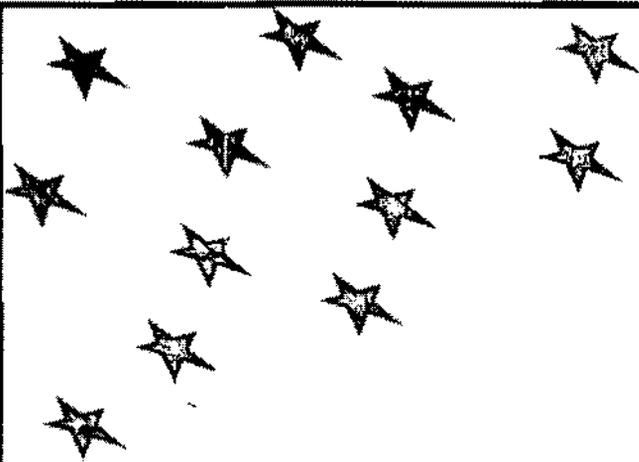


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SBA

Small Business Week 1994

**The State Small Business
Persons of the Year,
Small Business Advocates,
The Entrepreneurial
Success Award,
and
Special Award Winners**



Small Business Week 1994



Donald R. Jordan
President
Jordan Pile Driving, Inc.
301 N. Water Street
Mobile, Alabama 36602
(205) 433-6969

Forty-eight hours after the Amtrak "Sunset Limited" plunged off a damaged bridge into Bayou Canot, killing 47, Jordan Pile Driving was on the scene: in eight days—before the headlines had died down—Jordan had salvaged the wreckage and rebuilt the bridge, a major CSX Railway link.

That kind of response is typical of Jordan and tells more about the company and its employees than any balance sheet. Jordan also has an extraordinary safety record, one of the best in the industry. It maintains that record during a period of strong growth—between 31 and 69 percent over the last several years.

The company specializes in driving support pilings for bridges, power plants, ship docks, barge fleet facilities, power transmission lines—virtually any kind of

Donald R. Jordan
Alabama Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

heavy construction. It provides tug boat, barge and crane services to major oil companies working in Mobile Bay, and leads its industry in innovative work and service. Jordan is the only company to have driven bridge piling in every one of Alabama's 67 counties, including the Mobile Bay Bridge, the I-65 Mobile River Delta Crossing and the Tennessee River Bridge.

One of the oldest heavy construction firms in the nation, it was founded by H. C. "Hack" Jordan in 1946, now chairman of the board. Today, his son D.R. is president, and his grandson Don also works for the company. Started with three workers, Jordan Pile Driving now averages 51 employees. They enjoy a number of benefits, including stock-ownership and retirement plans. In an equipment-intensive trade, Jordan's equipment is appraised at more than \$10 million. Yet its most valuable asset is its employees, several of whom have been with the company nearly 40 years.

D.R. and his firm share a long history of community involvement, supporting a variety of organizations, including Boy Scouts, schools, Junior Achievement, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the arts, and conservation and civic groups. D.R., a University of Alabama graduate, is also involved in numerous professional, civic and religious organizations and the National Guard. In 1982, he was the youngest president ever of the Deep Foundations Institute.

Jack J. Foster
Partner

Steven C. Foster
Partner

Foster Construction
265 Wilson Avenue
Soldotna, Alaska 99669
(907) 262-9139

There's an old saying that "one man's trash is another man's treasure." So it was when Foster Construction removed the old floor of a sports center in Alaska. They cut the six-inch concrete into 10'- by 22-foot slabs weighing 16,000 pounds each, then used them to build a retaining wall along a new highway. In addition to recycling a large amount of concrete, the wall was much more attractive than the planned corrugated steel, especially after 100 art students painted a mural across part of it.

Jack and Steve Foster learned the excavation trade from their father, founder of C. Foster & Sons. Jack went to work for his father in 1966, then worked for another firm from 1972 until 1975, when he started Foster Construction. At the time, he had one bulldozer with a backhoe and one truck; today, the company owns enough heavy equipment to work on several jobs at a time.

In 1976, Steve began working for his brother, then other firms, starting his own company in 1980. The brothers formed a partnership in 1982 and began bidding on larger jobs. A third brother and Jack's two sons also work for the firm.

Foster Construction specializes in excavation for both residential and commercial clients. Jack and Steve have built a solid

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



*Steven C. Foster and Jack J. Foster
Alaska Small Business Persons of the Year,
1994*

reputation for good work, stability and fairness. They have weathered some very lean years, but in 1992, their business more than doubled, to more than \$3 million. The number of employees grew to more than 40.

The Fosters have also built a reputation for community service. They donate snow-



*Joseph Wojcich
Arizona Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

plowing services to area schools and churches (no small feat in Alaska), sponsor sporting events and teams, support Little League, Senior Citizens Day, and day-care and school activities. They donate top-soil and gravel to charities and advertising for various causes. They even moved a building for the local historical society.

There's a fun, creative side to these brothers as well: they enter floats in local parades and even won a Christmas-tree decorating contest. Their entry was hung with miniature hard hats, tiny toy construction equipment and mini-barricades.

Joseph Wojcich

President

Tempe Camera Repair, Inc.
606 W. University Drive
Tempe, Arizona 85281
(602) 966-6954

There are few things as inspirational as the American Dream realized, and Joe Wojcich is living proof. He came to this country in 1951 when he was just four years old. He spoke only German and Polish, and his family was poor. But Joe learned, applied what he learned, and worked hard. Today the

camera repair, sales and rental company he started in 1975 on savings of just \$1,500 is worth \$3 million.

Yet Joe has no office; he sits at a workbench, repairing cameras along with several other technicians. His work is so good that he enjoys an international reputation as someone who will take on tough jobs nobody else wants, yet his only advertisement is word-of-mouth. He specializes in retrofitting and customizing cameras, and has designed lenses for the Associated Press and National Geographic.

Joe employs 31 people at his busy shop and offers repair, sales and rental as well as film processing. His employees all possess a high degree of product knowledge and are dedicated to customer service—and their employer. Joe treats them well: he pays higher wages than his competition, has a unique profit-sharing plan, and the company pays for all medical and dental benefits.

The dedication Joe inspires in his employees has helped provide the firm with a 21-year unbroken record of growth and profitability spanning both boom and bust economies in the area. In 1978, Joe moved his 10 employees into his own building. In 1987, an SBA-backed loan helped build the current 10,000 square-foot building and sales topped \$1 million. Joe has loved every minute of it; in 20 years, he says, he hasn't had a job.

Joe is generous to his community, loaning equipment and donating services, certificates for rentals, and funds to a wide variety of causes, including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Special Olympics, the arts, the zoo, the Y and others.

Small Business Week 1994

Catherine M. Cunningham

Managing Partner
Edwardian Inn
317 Biscox Street
Helena, Arkansas 72342
(501) 338-9155

The house sat back off the street. It was a shambles, a relic of days gone by, now fallen to ruin. Its semicircular porch had been ripped off years before, and with it went the last of the majestic beauty of this once gracious house. "Cathy, said her husband, Ernest, "that's the ugliest building I've ever seen and I don't think there's much you can do to improve it." But Cathy had a dream, inspired by this sad old house, and she knew she could make it come true.

The delta town of Helena sits on the west bank of the Mississippi. It was here in 1983 that Cathy had a new vision for the house, constructed by a wealthy cotton broker in 1904 and used since as an apartment building, funeral home, boarding house and a rehabilitation center. Now vacant, it was scheduled to be torn down for salvage.

Cathy told her husband she wanted to buy the house and turn it into a small inn, even though the concept of a bed-and-breakfast was new for the area. She signed 10 partners to help finance the extensive

restoration, arranged a loan for \$360,000, and set to work. Cathy drew plans and, acting as general contractor, supervised the electrical, plumbing, interior design, landscaping and clean-up. Each of the 12 first-class guest rooms was given a telephone, TV, private bath, and separate heating and cooling. The magnificent porch was restored. After seven months of hard work, Cathy called on businesses, newspapers, and TV and radio stations to spread the word about the inn. She hired a full-time innkeeper and a part-time housekeeper, while she became landscaper, bookkeeper and payroll clerk, and continued to be involved in all day-to-day decisions.

Since the inn opened in December 1983, the staff has added four full-time employees. The business has been a resounding success, growing from revenues of \$80,000 its first year to over \$175,000 through the first ten months of 1993, and a second restored building has been added.

Following Cathy's example of revitalization, Helena has come alive. The Main Street Program Cathy helped start has produced the highly acclaimed King Biscuit Blues Festival, attracting over 60,000 people each year. Riverboats like the Delta Queen stop frequently. With her husband and a state representative, Cathy convinced the state to build Helena's Delta Cultural Center: it was opened by then-Governor Bill Clinton, who named her chairman of the board. Cathy continues to work to find money for a new park and marketplace.



Catherine M. Cunningham
Arkansas Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

year company and built it from a 22-person operation to one that employs 475 people. Annual sales are up more than 140 percent and profits are up by more than 1,300 percent in just the past five years.

Raised on a potato farm, Kathy worked her way up to general manager for a food producer, but she longed to have her own company. When Marriott put its Bob's Big Boy salad dressing business up for sale for \$6 million, Kathy persuaded the hotel and food giant to take back \$5 million in paper to be paid off in 20 years. Then she sold her condo, her car, her jewelry, her insurance policy—everything she owned—to raise the \$1 million cash. Still \$150,000 shy, she agreed to sell a piece of machinery from the factory to make up the difference.

Kathy soon realized that she had a mature product with little growth potential, a dwindling market, and a factory too large for its production. So she bought Poni's Food Products, a pizza-crust manufacturer, for \$225,000 and moved production into her factory. Soon she was producing pizza for companies nationwide, including the Wolfgang Puck line, and K.T.'s Kitchens was up to \$30 million in sales. Then Kathy found an engineer/inventor who built vending machines for her that could dispense pizzas and cook them in built-in



Kathleen D. Taggares

President
K.T.'s Kitchen
830 Sonora Avenue
Glendale, California 91201
(818) 500-1136

moxie (mɒk' sɛ) n. 1. The ability to face problems with spirit; PLUCK. 2. Energy or pep. Meet Kathy Taggares, a young woman who, in 1987, bought a \$9 million dollar-a-

Kathleen D. Taggares
California Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

microwaves. A new division was born that has become the focal point of Kathy's business, with plans to expand into a variety of hot, healthy foods, condiments and drinks. A "21st century automat," serving more than 70 foods, is planned in LA in the spring of '94.

In her "spare time," Kathy speaks to college students and business groups, is active with a cancer clinic and local theater. She has won numerous awards, including the National Association of Women Business Owners 1992 Business Woman of the Year, the Boy Scouts of Los Angeles 1993 Distinguished Woman of the Year, and *Inc.* magazine's 1993 Entrepreneur of the Year for Manufacturing.

Charles E. Cottrell

President

Cottrell, Ltd.

7399 South Tucson Way
Englewood, Colorado 80112
(303) 799-9401

Chuck Cottrell has built an extremely successful business by taking care of others. In the process, he has made the world a better and safer place, saved lives and improved the quality of life for many.

Chuck, his wife, Peggy, and their two sons started the business at home in 1979 with a single product aimed at infection prevention and control for dental offices. The family pickup moved inventory from the "shipping facility" (the garage) to the "repackaging facility" (the basement) and back. In 1981, Chuck also went to work for another firm and became their top sales representative while continuing to build his own company. He has faced setbacks—some catastrophic—by "continuing to remain focused on our goals, being conservative in our borrowing and spending ... and by maintaining, as corny as it sounds, a positive attitude."

Today, Cottrell, Ltd., employs more than 110 in a 50,000 square-foot facility,



Charles E. Cottrell

Colorado Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

and had in excess of \$20 million in sales in 1993. The firm manufactures four of its product lines and has strategic marketing alliances for others, offering more than 300 products to the dental and medical fields. Cottrell, Ltd., is known for its remarkable esprit de corps, achieved through innovative team-building and Chuck's infectious vision and integrity.

Long before AIDS became an issue, Chuck recognized that the dental office was a dangerous place. This prompted him to found the Office Sterilization and Asepsis Procedures Research Foundation (OSAP), the leader in educating the dental industry about infection control. His company has also funded a program at the University of Texas involving an HIV-positive dentist who teaches safe care for AIDS patients.

In addition to chairing or being on the boards of numerous professional organizations, Chuck and his firm are significant contributors in time and money to the American Fund for Dental Health, Kids in Need of Dentistry (a local charity) and the National Foundation for Dentistry for the Handicapped.

Mark F. Matheny

Chairman, President and Treasurer
TEK Electronics Manufacturing Corp.
6 Progress Drive
Manchester, Connecticut 06040
(203) 647-8738

Mark Matheny started TEK Manufacturing Corporation in 1984 with six employees, limited funds, an empty warehouse and ideas. By 1992, TEK had over 30 employees, more than \$4.1 million in revenue and a sister company, TEK Communication Services, Inc.

TEK Electronics was originally set up to assemble printed circuit boards. It has expanded to a full line of services including research and design, electrical and mechanical CAD layout, wiring and electro-mechanical assembly.

In 1985, Mark designed a hearing-impaired amplification control for pay phones for Southern New England Telephone. TEK Communications was set up in 1988 to market the amplifier and the next year, TEK won a long-term contract to provide 20,000 units per year to Bell Atlantic. Along the way, Mark turned to SCORE for help in growing on a very tight budget.

TEK Electronics has developed many new electronic products. Mark has received patents for a PIN fraud prevention unit and an infra-red travel phone that provides telephone network access via an infrared light beam. The latest addition to TEK's product line is the "Touch Pen and Cradle," a portable data-collection system that reads data from dime-sized electronic labels, then records them to download to a computer. Other products are a generator load sequencer, a coin station monitor for pay phones,

Small Business Week 1994



Mark F. Matheny
Connecticut Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

a speech synthesizer, and a wireless pay phone that communicates via microwaves.

Mark gives financial support to the local high school track team and other local projects. He also encourages his employees to earn additional college certificates and degrees and pays for the courses. In recognition of his accomplishments, Mark won the Ernst and Young 1991 Southern New England Entrepreneur Award.

James A. Flood Sr.

President
The Dover Post Co.
609 East Division Street
Dover, Delaware 19901
(302) 678-3616

"I don't see how you sleep at night," said Jim Flood's accountant sympathetically; the figures were that bad. It was 1975 and they had been discussing Jim's newspaper, *The Dover Post*. The recently launched weekly's financial status was so bleak, a prospective investor had told Jim, "Except for the filing, you're bankrupt."

But a good reporter never gives up, and Jim was a newspaper man from way back. Members of the Flood family pitched in and helped, and a key businessman in the

community decided he would back the enterprise a little longer... Slowly the picture brightened.

To broaden circulation, Jim offered free home delivery, not knowing that free distribution of community newspapers would soon become a national trend. The family did much of the delivery, and it worked. Advertising sales picked up and the company won a contract to produce a weekly for Dover Air Force Base. Then, when a local mall was looking for an ad agency to handle its account, Jim and his daughter and son-in-law formed an in-house advertising agency and won the account. This became a major factor in maintaining cash-flow.

Gradually, the local investors who had helped get the paper started sold their stock back to the Flood family, many of whom work for the company. All seven Flood children have worked at Dover at one point or another and Jim's wife, Mary, kept the books. Business expanded to six community newspapers as well as a wide variety of printing and binding jobs. "The diversity of the company's operations is a major source of our strength and stability," says Jim. He has been recognized by both his community and his industry for his contributions, which include activity with the Chamber of Commerce, the Modern Maturity Center, the Central Delaware Committee on Drugs and Alcohol, the Rotary Club and others.

B. Alan Melton

Chairman

C. Gregory Franks

President

East Coast Transportation
1112 Third Street
Neptune Beach, Florida 32266
(904) 246-3741

Alan Melton and Greg Franks don't rent cars any more. They started East Coast Transportation in 1983 as a car rental, but now specialize in luxury transportation for exclusive, high-profile groups, focusing on America's top five percent.



James A. Flood Sr.
Delaware Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

East Coast is a major provider of ground transportation services for resorts, corporations and individuals in the Jacksonville, Fla., area. Services include airport transfers, sight-seeing tours, vehicle charters, deep-sea fishing and sailing charters, and conventions. Vehicles used are deluxe vans and coaches, luxury sedans and limousines.

A year after starting the car rental, East Coast diversified to meet the needs of beachfront resorts. Guests coming into Jacksonville International Airport faced a 35-mile taxi ride or had to rent a car. East Coast met them at the gate, handled their luggage, provided a driver, newspapers, refreshments, local information and a rental car at the hotel. The service was impressive and business doubled yearly. In 1991, the rental business was phased out.

East Coast ensures quality service by rigid safety inspections, careful personnel selection, soliciting client feedback and providing unusual services. They have provided 40 white stretch limos at a time, hot air balloon rides, interpreters and other extraordinary requests. Using two employees ten years ago, East Coast today employs 65 people. Gross revenue in that first year was \$47,000; in 1993, they grossed over \$2 million.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



B. Alan Melton
Florida Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

Greg and Alan credit the University of North Florida's Small Business Development Center for much of their success. East Coast was named by *Inc.* magazine as one of 1989's fastest-growing privately held companies. Honors have also come from the local Chamber of Commerce and the National Limousine Association.

Greg and Alan's civic and charitable involvement is impressive: from science fairs to soup kitchens, Sunday school to mission work, juvenile delinquency counseling to saving a local ferry. They participate in the Chamber of Commerce, instruct seminars at the Small Business Development Center and assist in a tourism committee. Their firm also gives financial support to a long list of causes.

Anthony J. Parnigoni

President

Marketplace Promotions, Inc.

2812 New Spring Road, Suite 180

Atlanta, Georgia 30339

(404) 333-9063

You are in a grocery store and someone gives you a sample of a cookie you haven't tried yet—along with a coupon. Sure enough, when you hit the snacks-and-



C. Gregory Franks
Florida Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

cookie aisle, into your basket goes a box of the cookies. It's one of the most effective sales techniques, and it has spelled major success for Tony Parnigoni.

Marketplace Promotions, founded in 1987, does one-on-one marketing contract work for companies like Nabisco, Lever Brothers, and Proctor and Gamble. The company, a standard-setter in its field, implements promotions, in-store couponing and sampling, hiring and training and supervising thousands of part-time demonstrators. It also provides a retail support force of trained and experienced retail merchandisers who do in-store stocking as well as building and resetting displays.

Tony started his business with \$7,000 and family loans over the first year totaling \$20,000. It was money well-invested; first year sales were just \$138,000, but 1988 sales were \$530,000 and 1993 sales exceeded \$7 million.

Starting with just 10 employees, Tony now employs 45 full-time and 3,500 part-time workers. They are carefully screened; only 20 out of every 100 applicants are hired, and only eight of those become

long-term employees. They enjoy substantial bonuses based on profits, and turnover is low. The company provides extensive training and sets high professional standards for its work force. It now operates offices in four states and is testing satellite, home-based computer-connected offices.

Marketplace Promotions is deeply involved in community work. In its home-base community in Cobb County, the company has funded (in excess of \$10,000) the local Smart Kids Program for disadvantaged youth and supports a homeless shelter, donating food, clothing and money. Among his many civic involvements, Tony has worked with local youth sports and the Cobb Chamber of Commerce (which named him Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 1991). He has also been a speaker for numerous marketing and business workshops.



Anthony J. Parnigoni
Georgia Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

Small Business Week 1994

Richard P. Kautz

President

Claire A. Kautz

Vice President

Kautz and Sons Glass Company, Inc.

284 Taitano Road

Tamuning, Guam 96911

(671) 632-0311

Twenty-one years ago, when Richard and Claire Kautz started selling glass windows and doors on Guam, they were the island's only glazing contractor. Since then they have weathered typhoons, fire, mounting competition and economic downturns to build a multimillion-dollar company.

Richard and Claire came from Michigan. Richard has worked in the glass business since 1955, and Claire's family has owned a glass company since 1949. Richard worked in the glass business four years in Hawaii. In 1971 they moved to Guam and two years later, Kautz and Sons was begun with a \$5,000 investment.

They started out making and installing storefront plate glass windows, entry doors and aluminum flush-skin doors. Then, in 1976, Typhoon Pamela destroyed Guam. The Kautzes responded by being the first to introduce typhoon shutters to the island. In 1982, a fire destroyed their office and inventory room; an SBA loan put them back in business and enabled them to retain their command of the market.

A building boom on Guam in the 1980s and early 1990s saw their sales reach nearly \$2.5 million in 1991, and while competition increased and the construction industry slowed, sales stayed near \$2 million the next year.

Today, the Kautzes export to the Northern Marianas and to Micronesia, have 27 employees and a product line of window screens, and sliding and swinging glass doors. They are looking to expand into auto glass and aluminum railings.



Believing that proper training and guidance are important in maintaining the company's reputation for consistent high quality, they personally train their employees. Several have moved into supervisory positions. Richard and Claire also sponsor athletic teams and the Special Olympics, to help teach children the importance of hard work and determination.

Earl Y. Kashiwagi

Owner/General Manager

T. Esaki Farm, Inc.

dba Esaki's Produce

4780 Kahau Road

Kapaa, Hawaii 96746

(808) 822-7722

Earl Kashiwagi went to work at the age of 14, first as a paperboy, then at the Kaiser estate. He so impressed the Kaisers that he was soon living on the estate, working with their fleet of boats and, at their insistence, attending private school at their expense. While still there, he entered the University of Hawaii, but his grades were so poor, he was asked to leave. At a local community college, he met Chris, his wife-to-be, who refused to marry him until he had a degree. That meant convincing the university to take him back then making a 4.0 for the rest of his studies! He earned his degree in

Claire A. and Richard P. Kautz

Guam Small Business Persons of the Year, 1994

tourist industry management and they wed in 1973.

Chris and Earl cut short their honeymoon to help his uncles, owners of a large produce farm on Kauai. When one uncle had a heart attack in 1980, Earl became manager and gradually began building the wholesale side of the business. When the first supermarkets opened on Kauai in 1973, Earl went after their business, while convincing the local farmers to diversify their crops to fill the needs of the stores. He pioneered air-shipping papaya to the mainland and using nearly empty airplanes to bring in produce at night, saving everyone money. So when a chef needed a box of fresh raspberries within hours, the airline came through for Earl.

Meanwhile, Earl set up a network of affiliates to help each other during crises. When Hurricane Iwa hit Kauai in 1982, they were able to divert incoming shipments to Honolulu. After a major flood hit the new warehouse in 1991, the network filled Esaki's orders for two days, got produce to him and helped him clean up. Nine months later, when Hurricane Iniki devastated Kauai, Earl opened his facility to the

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



*Earl Y. Kashiwagi
Hawaii Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

National Guard for an emergency relief center. For two months, he lived at the warehouse. Chris dealt with damage to their home, took care of the three children and even took the guardsmen's laundry home and did it by hand.

In 1990, Earl bought the firm. Today it is the largest produce wholesaler on Kauai, with sales of more than \$4.7 million.

Dale R. Alldredge

President

Technic Tool Corporation
725 29th Street North
Lewiston, Idaho 83501
(208) 746-9011

Before Technic Tool Corporation sold its first Power Pruner, Dale Alldredge knew it was going to be a solid success. Dale, then the financial vice president for Lewis-Clark State College, first saw the prototype of the pruner—essentially a mini-chainsaw-on-a-stick—in 1987. He recognized its value to landscapers, tree services, orchardists, utility companies, cemeteries, municipalities, colleges and universities and quickly put together a group of investors. The first year was spent in development, the second, they

made \$5 million but lost money; ever since, profits have grown, and sales—including exports to 40 countries—were nearly \$3.4 million last year. The firm employs 23 people, plus subcontracting for numerous services and parts.

The Power Pruner is a telescoping, gasoline-powered tree-pruning tool that weighs just 16 pounds. It allows its user to reach branches up to 17 feet off the ground, previously accessible only by ladder. It has won several awards, and was named a "Best Buy" by Consumer Digest. Last year, Technic Tool introduced the Rail-N-Rack. What looks like decorative railing around the bed of a pickup truck pops up in 60 seconds to an elevated rack that allows oversized cargo to be carried safely. It comes in sizes to accommodate any pick-up. Technic Tool also makes accessories for its products: a hedge tool and circular blade for the Power Pruner and a bike rack and protective pads for the Rail-N-Rack.

Technic Tool stresses Dale's "four Ps": portability, performance, production and price. One of the biggest selling points, however, is "S": safety. The company operates under three principles: Low overhead, the KISS theory (keep it simple, stupid), and a recognition of "people power."

Dale, former manager and current commissioner of the Port of Lewiston, Idaho's only seaport, is committed to community service. He is a frequent speaker at service clubs and educational classes. Technic Tool Corporation is an active supporter of the Chamber of Commerce, Port City Action Corporation, American Legion baseball and the Lewiston Roundup. Employees are encouraged to become involved in the community and participate in a community event each year on company time.

Rachel Hubka

President

Rachel's Bus Company
3014 West Fillmore Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612
(312) 533-1008

Rachel Hubka was the youngest girl in an Arkansas family with 13 children. She learned early the reality of poverty and the value of hard work, to know what was important, and how to judge people on their merit. Those lessons helped her not only to build a multimillion-dollar business, but to improve the lives of hundreds of impoverished people as well.

After attending Arkansas State Teachers College on scholarship, she moved to Chicago. Following a divorce, she earned a living as a telemarketer and raised three children. In 1978, she joined a school-bus company and within 18 months, rose to general manager.



*Dale R. Alldredge
Idaho Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

Small Business Week 1994



Rachel Hubka
Illinois Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

In 1987, with a belief in a child's right to clean, safe transportation and a determination to provide jobs, training and incentives for unskilled individuals, she started Rachel's Bus Company. She spent 18 months getting financing, insurance, and bid qualification. In 1989, she was awarded 90 bus routes by the Chicago Board of Education; the company now serves 125 routes and has expanded into charter service. Revenues for the first half of 1993 were already nearly \$3 million.

To maintain a supply of qualified drivers and a support staff, Rachel encourages employees to reach higher, offers opportunities for continuing education, promoting from within and publicly rewarding good work. A team safety program and raffle each week result in safer driving and high morale. Perfect attendance and driving records, as well as charters booked by drivers, result in bonuses. Whenever possible, skills unrelated to a person's normal job are also used. And extra security measures further protect the safety of the children. Rachel's incentives have earned the company a solid reputation for service, safety and professionalism.

Rachel regularly offers her company's resources to schools and community groups and activities. She supports the Special Olympics, the Shriners' Circus, after-school and gifted-child programs, and a school bus safety poster contest. She is also very active in the National Association of Women Business Owners.

Michael Madrid

President

Mike Madrid Company, Inc.
4801 US 52 West
West Lafayette, Indiana 47906
(317) 447-2000

During the '60s, when the interstate highway system was being built, road construction was mostly away from traffic, cutting its way through farmland across the nation. As the system aged, however, repairs and expansions had to be done "under traffic," exposing workers to a great deal of danger. In 1984, Mike Madrid, who worked for the Indiana Department of Transportation, recognized a need for traffic safety control around worksites. He resigned his job and, with equity in two homes, his retirement account, and an SBA-backed loan, started his firm in his garage. He also helped create a new industry. By 1990, Mike Madrid Co., Inc., had made the Inc 500, and today is a \$3 million business employing 45 people.

Mike markets his company as a single source for all work-zone traffic control. The company provides traffic and construction signs, barricades, arrow boards, pavement marking and line removal, concrete surface preparation, material sales and fencing. There is a satellite warehouse in southern Indiana and a pavement-marking business Mike and a partner recently bought in Evansville. They plan to extend their services to Illinois and Kentucky.

Mike's company philosophy is: Hire the best people you can. Give them the best tools available to do the job. Organize them. Let them do the work. Mike invests



Michael Madrid
Indiana Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

in state-of-the-art equipment, like solar-powered signs and steel-shot blasters that remove pavement marking and leave no debris behind. He has built a strong team—and avoided unionization—by offering excellent wages, paid vacations, paid holidays, Christmas bonuses, group health care, and other incentives, many of which are unheard of in the construction industry.

Mike has contributed to numerous community projects. He is active in his church and the Chamber of Commerce as well as several professional and educational organizations. He and his company actively support the United Way and other non-profit community endeavors.

Tom Hovland

President

Tom Hovland Enterprises
626 South Federal Avenue
Mason City, Iowa 50401
(515) 423-6634

Tom Hovland's lawyer will never forget the day his client walked into the office wearing a coat and tie. The kid who had grown up around hot rods and dragsters, and had once ridden a motorcycle down the halls of his high school, had joined the

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



Tom Hovland
*Iowa Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

white-collar ranks of management. It was on the recommendation of the consultant Tom had hired to help him improve his business, and while it meant suffering a lot of teasing, he was willing to listen and learn. That willingness has helped Tom build a multimillion-dollar business.

Twenty years ago Tom began selling high performance auto parts out of a small garage in Mason City, Iowa. Over the years, he has made the changes needed to survive, grow and prosper. He learned better management skills, changed his management style, learned to delegate, computerized his stores and aggressively managed his accounts until 90 percent were current. To survive the struggling economy during the recession in the '80s, Tom looked for other markets. He convinced manufacturing companies that his local business could provide them tools, lubricants and shop supplies with a much faster response and better pricing. Then Tom saw another untapped market: farmers needed many of the products his company carried. So, he stocked a van with agricultural parts and supplies and hired a salesman with an agricultural background. Recognizing a trend toward more urban areas, Tom hired a marketing specialist and opened a superstore to

serve urban population centers. Today, with the assistance of an SBA guaranteed loan, he has 85 employees at 12 NAPA franchise stores in 9 cities across northern and eastern Iowa. Sales exceed \$6 million.

Tom is involved in his community as well. He participates in a popular exhibit at the North Iowa Fair each year and serves as financial coordinator for a Chamber of Commerce air show. He helped a large manufacturer secure a community-backed expansion loan, saving 700 jobs. As a leader in his field, his expertise is sought by NAPA, educational institutions, and other business organizations.

Regina K. Hanna

President

Tom Hanna

Vice President

Rose America Corporation
1300 Hiram Street
Wichita, Kansas 67213-3346
(316) 264-9611

Kay and Tom Hanna's business is going to the dogs—and they couldn't be happier. Actually, the business is going to the dogs, cats and horses; Kay and Tom own Rose America Corp., a leading producer of products for animals.

In January 1984, the Hannas purchased B.J. Industries, a once-successful manufacturer of animal control products: horse halters, bridles and blankets, and dog and cat collars and leashes. But B.J. Industries was on the brink of foreclosure; when employees left for Christmas break, they didn't know if they would return.

The Hannas performed a near miracle: starting with the same brand name, product line and employees, they turned the company around. They rallied their employees

and nurtured a "family" culture that remains today. To remedy slow or non-existent deliveries, they built up stock and began shipping within 24 hours on 80 percent of orders. To win back customer loyalty, they had to exceed expectations. They communicated their new goals for quality and service to dealers, but still had to operate on a COD basis for some time. They improved communications, started a newsletter and explored new and better materials and improved technology, listening to their dealers and customers and responding. They also stayed on top of new products to be ready when requests came in.

Rose America now manufactures more than 1,000 different products, many customized. It has a wonderfully diverse work force that encompasses Korean, Vietnamese, Laotian, Mexican, Native and



Tom and Regina K. Hanna
*Kansas Small Business Persons of the Year,
1994*

Small Business Week 1994

African Americans as well as whites. In 1984, 11 employees worked one shift to supply 300 dealers; today, 195 employees work three shifts to meet the demands of 2,500 dealers worldwide. Sales are roughly \$12.5 million. Over 94 percent of the annual sales comes from outside of Kansas, with Wal-Mart accounting for approximately half of total sales.

Rose America sponsors and participates in numerous industry activities, including the Colorado Quarter Horse Show Association, and has won a trade show "best display" award. Rose America has maintained a long and involved relationship with Tom's alma mater, West High School in Wichita, providing computer equipment, lectures, and summer jobs as well as internships for at-risk students.

George Riggs
President

Tom Wells
Vice President
Embroidery Services, Inc.
1437 Cox Avenue
Erlanger, Kentucky 41018
(606) 283-6700

Buy an embroidered shirt—in fact, any of an entire line of apparel—at Disney World or Disney Land, and the odds are good it was designed and made by Embroidery Services, Inc. of Erlanger, Kentucky. Started just 12 years ago, the company has become a leader in its field.

In 1982, after reading an article on the growing market for monogrammed goods, George Riggs bought a single-head sewing machine for \$18,000. He rented 100 square feet of floor space in a warehouse behind a tailor shop in Madeira, Ohio, and went to work embroidering uniform shirts, napkins and hats for the restaurant and bar industry. Within two weeks, he had hired his first employee; today he employs 90 workers. The company supplies resorts around the world with apparel bearing the resort logo.



George Riggs
Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

It also holds licenses for 50 colleges and universities.

In 1985, George bought a 12-head sewing machine and the next year, a second; by 1992, the company's 65 employees were operating a dozen 12-head machines and other state-of-the-art equipment. That year, sales more than tripled, exceeding \$7 million.

In 1989, the company was incorporated and Tom Wells became a partner. Tom's marketing ability pushed sales to double in 1991. Since he joined the firm, sales have increased by \$6 million, and made the company a national leader. Tom also developed an innovative program to combat flagging attendance. In an industry where repetition and boredom result in a lot of absenteeism—especially on Monday mornings—Tom instituted a bonus program for perfect attendance. In 1993, the company paid well over \$200,000 in bonuses and Monday-morning no-shows became a thing of the past.

The next project is an on-site child care center for employees who must pay large parts of their salaries for day care. George and Tom are also working on providing their employees a hot meal on each shift.



Tom Wells
Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

Tom is a regular speaker for the Chamber of Commerce, and is involved in ecology work, youth sports and church activities. George is especially involved in the Special Olympics. Both support the Johnny Bench scholarship fund.

Charles N. Guilbeau
President

Lafayette Woodworks, Inc.
3004 Cameron Street
Lafayette, Louisiana 70502
(318) 233-5250

On Friday, Ned Gilbeau tanked up the company car for a trip to Opelousas...to the bankruptcy court. He had seen his company through some bad years, but it looked like this was it. If Lafayette Woodworks didn't come up with \$70,000 by Monday morning, April Fool's Day, 1991, the company would be unable to meet its obligations. Already, management had covered the payroll with personal checks, even pocket change, when the bank refused to. Things were bleak.

Ned never made that trip. The company, which provides wood and both stock and custom millwork products, collected \$75,000 in receivables and survived. It was

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Charles N. Gullbeau
Louisiana Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

nearly the end of a struggle that had lasted throughout the mid to late '80s, when the bottom had fallen out of the oil and gas markets and crippled the petroleum-dependent economy of Lafayette, La. Between 1987 and 1990, the company, founded in 1946, had lost nearly a half million dollars, in spite of increasing sales. Part of that was due to a badly faltering building industry, part to diversification to other geographical areas that was vital for long-term survival, and part was due to a heavy debt load. But Ned, then general manager, persuaded the shareholders to convert their loans to stock, eliminating interest payments. He liquidated \$600,000 in inventory, cut stock turnover time in half, shut down unprofitable departments, negotiated a 15 percent across-the-board pay cut with employees, and cut the debt by \$1 million in two years, restoring profitability. After the bank refused to cover the payroll in 1989, Ned took his business elsewhere, and secured the first of two SBA-backed loans which gave the company the operating capital it needed to return to a healthy status.

The company started with just four workers, and by 1962, there were 11 employees. Ned took over as general manager in 1977 and began to build the company. In

spite of the hard times, the company has grown to 114 employees, with showrooms in Lafayette, Lake Charles and Baton Rouge, sales of nearly \$11.6 million and 1993 earnings that were triple the previous year's. Ned was named president of the company in 1992.

He is extremely active in civic, community and church activities, and retired as a Lt. Colonel from the National Guard.

Elizabeth N. Birchfield

President

Accessories Unlimited of Maine

27 Maple Street

Cornish, Maine 04020

(207) 625-8421

Chris Birchfield, divorced and with a young child, was looking for a way to supplement her salary in 1968 and started making canvas tote bags part-time. Today she owns a multimillion dollar company, Accessories Unlimited of Maine, and counts among her customers Bloomingdale's, Lord and Taylor, L.L. Bean, Laura Ashley, Sak's Fifth Avenue, Talbots, and Harrods.

In the mid '70s, Chris moved with her new husband to an old farm in Limington, Maine. When her husband was laid off from his job, Chris took the only job she could find, driving a school bus, but hated it. So, she took the \$200 she had saved to buy a cow, bought a sewing machine, and set up shop in the barn. She sold bags through a local craft co-op, and when the first big paycheck came in, Chris rented space in town. She scrimped \$17 from the food money to buy some canvas, and began working full-time at the business. Meanwhile, she made wedding dresses to pay the rent.

Eventually she and her husband moved to a house in town with a barn where the sewing was done. In 1977, Chris hired her first employee, obtained one very large account and several smaller ones. In 1980, she took on a partner, got an SBA-assisted loan and her first paycheck, \$100 a week. By 1982, sales were roughly \$1.5 million. Then the bottom dropped out: a major account switched to foreign manufacturers, sales dropped to \$600,000, and Chris had to lay off 35 workers. It was 1988 before the company was profitable again. Today, it has two manufacturing facilities and employs 65 people on two shifts with sales around \$3 million annually. Chris still maintains extremely high quality standards and a commitment to her employees. To give them pride in their product and combat boredom, the stitchers learn all phases of production and switch jobs several times daily. Employees have input to decision-making and suggestions are encouraged.

Chris is generous with her time and support for her community, helping build busi-



Elizabeth N. Birchfield
Maine Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

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ness in Maine and contributing merchandise to organizations like the Children's Museum, public TV and church groups.

Dorothy J. White
President/CEO

Miracle Services, Inc.
2605 Cabover Drive, Suite 3
Hanover, Maryland 21076
(410) 553-0600

In a business where achieving even basic customer satisfaction is difficult, Dorothy White became known as "The Miracle Lady." Dorothy started a house cleaning service in 1982 to help support her family when her husband was disabled. The company grew to serve 150 homes in the Columbia, Md., area. Her completeness and attention to detail earned her the moniker that she later applied to her company, Miracle Services, Inc.

It was when the executives whose homes she cleaned wanted her to bring the same degree of professionalism to their offices that the business really began to grow. In 1986, with five employees, she gained entry into the commercial world through the sponsorship of her residential clients. That year, Miracle Services, Inc., had nearly \$1 million in revenues and was accepted into the SBA's 8(a) Program. With access and contracting support to the federal sector, the business took off.

By 1992, Miracle Services, Inc. employed over 350 full- and 400 part-time workers. Revenues were \$10.3 million.

Miracle Services, Inc., uses only the highest quality cleaning supplies and equipment. Employees are highly trained and motivated to achieve excellence within the structure of each task. They are taught that the perception of cleanliness is what customers see, touch and smell every day. Task and frequency schedules become simply a way to effectively manage their work.

Dorothy White has been a volunteer at the Howard County General Hospital,



Dorothy J. White
Maryland Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

where she is also on the hospital foundation board, and the local senior center and children's home. She is active in her church and is a speaker at high schools, colleges and universities. Every summer, Dorothy employs students to allow them to gain "real world" experience about performance, responsibility and accountability. She is also generous to many charities.

David M. Dunn
President & CEO

Dunn & Company, Inc.
75 Green Street
Clinton, Massachusetts 01510-0968
(508) 368-8505

You're a publisher who has just found crucial mistakes on two pages of a newly printed book that must be out on a certain date. Who ya gonna call? "The Book Doctor!" He is David Dunn of Clinton, Mass., and he saves his customers \$21 million a year. In just this one case, he saved the publisher more than \$2 million.

David was manager of product development for Colonial Press in 1976, when he noted the many contracts the press didn't bid on because they required unique finishing operations. David saw the potential and

resigned to start his own company. The business grew until the recession in the mid '80s. To provide work for his employees, David persuaded publishers that he could increase their profits by converting their overstock and returned hardcover editions, which they could sell for about 50 cents, into \$4-\$5 paperbacks. Soon the company was also fixing any number of mistakes and out-of-date books. Innovation is the key. "Rescuing" over 15 million books a year for companies around the world, Dunn & Co. has replaced a page in 450,000 telephone books, unstuck an over-glued *Beast* in 70,000 "Beauty and the Beast" books, and even microwaved a children's book to get the cover to lie flat.

Today, Dunn & Co. employs more than 80 workers in a nearly \$3 million-a-year business. Through David's tenacity, they also own the 250,000 square-foot building that also serves as a small business incubator. In 1987, David bought the building, then the bank failed and the FDIC took over the mortgage. It took a four-year struggle and help from the SBA and SCORE to buy back the mortgage.

Converting hardbacks to paperbacks has always produced an enormous amount of waste: 200 tons of book backs a year.



David M. Dunn
Massachusetts Small Business Person
of the Year, 1994

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David came up with a solution, called it YESTERBOARD and it has spawned a new division for Dunn & Co. and created dozens of new jobs. Illustrations are laminated to one side of the waste board and cork to the back. Then the items are cut to make items like notebooks, coasters, puzzles, children's blocks and hot mats. Scrap from a nearby sawmill is used to make boxes. The items were launched at the country store David's wife owns; they sold out in two days and are now sold by more than 1,000 retailers worldwide.

David is also active in his community. He helped keep a local hospital open, then helped it emerge from bankruptcy. He organized a group to study a self-insured group-health program, serves on the boards of the United Way and the local historical society, and is involved with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, the solid waste committee, downtown revitalization, church and others. He helped six businesses get started, established a resource materials center in his building for local schools, and provides help to a foundation that distributes books to Eastern Europe and Africa. He is also a frequent speaker.

Wallace K. Tsuha

President

Saturn Electronics & Engineering, Inc.

2119 Austin

Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309

(313) 852-2120

Wally Tsuha always had the entrepreneurial spirit; at age 9 he was already hawking newspapers. But it was when he joined the Army in 1961 that he discovered his ingenious gift for electronics. His Army training and work led to jobs with GM, Rockwell International and TRW, but in the back of his mind was always the idea of owning his own company. He got his chance in 1985, when TRW decided to discontinue a project he had overseen. Wally bought the rights to the project and went to work on his dining room table.

Within months, he had moved Saturn Electronics & Engineering to rented space and hired 10 employees. Sales went from \$700,000 in 1986 to \$8 million in 1990. In 1991, the firm bought Beta Manufacturing, with plants in Mississippi and Mexico. That same year, the auto industry recession hit Saturn hard. Rather than lay off assembly workers for three weeks, everyone, including Wally, took a week of unpaid leave. It was a typical response in the team climate he nurtures. In 1992, Saturn bounced back with sales of \$25.7 million.

At first, Saturn only did engineering, but today the firm is divided into four distinct groups, each with its own business plan and budget. The electronics group assembles circuit boards that control a variety of functions in automobiles. The "high reliability" group does defense work; some 20 Saturn circuit boards are in the new M1A2 tank. The SBA's 8(a) Program helped the company qualify for DoD contracts, and in spite of military cutbacks, defense work has been an area of growth. Beta, the electro-mechanical group, makes devices like lights and switches for use in vehicles. The fourth division focuses on research and development. The company has won numerous awards, including a Dunn & Bradstreet "Best of America." It has appeared on the Inc 500 twice.

Saturn is minority owned—Wally is a Hawaii-born Japanese American—and nearly half of its employees are minority. The firm is dedicated to improving education for minorities and the disadvantaged, providing summer internships to youth and committing \$100,000 to the Convergence Education Foundation to promote early minority education in math and science. Saturn offers in-house training as well as reimbursing tuition costs to employees. In the Mississippi plant, where 25 percent of the workers have only a fifth-grade education, Saturn, with the help of local businesses, has arranged classes to raise the



Wallace K. Tsuha

Michigan Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

educational level to at least a GED. The company is also widely involved with professional groups and charities in its community. It supports hospice, and employees raise money for Christmas gifts to needy families and nursing home residents.

Barbara Anne King

President

Landscape Structures, Inc.

601 7th Street South

Delario, Minnesota 55388

(612) 972-3391

In 1970, Barbara King was working as a freelance food stylist. Her husband, Steve, was a frustrated landscape architect whose custom playground equipment kept getting cut from over-budget projects. In 1971, they finally took the plunge: they borrowed \$1,000 to pay for incorporating fees and to buy a saw, and Steve went to work in the basement. He designed, built and installed the playground equipment that they sold to

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local developers. In need of working capital, the Kings went to a finance company. The loan officer agreed to the loan, but only if they developed a better accounting system. The next thing he knew, he was conducting evening bookkeeping classes at the Kings' kitchen table.

Landscape Structures, Inc. grew so fast that by 1975, the Kings were tapped out at the finance companies, banks, even SBA. The house had a second mortgage, they were working 16-18 hour days, and still, says Barbara, "paydays were for our other three employees." They faced a tough decision and finally gave up half ownership to a venture capital group. From there, the business took off. Today, products manufactured from aluminum, steel, and plastic are sold to parks, schools, day care centers, restaurants, housing developments and hospitals around the world. Landscape Structures has sales representatives in all 50 states plus 20 representatives worldwide. In the last 10 years, they have gone from 35 employees and \$5 million in gross sales to 174 employees and sales of nearly \$30 million in 1992.

Barbara and Steve have led the playground equipment field in innovations. They were the first to construct a continuous connected play structure, now the industry standard. Barbara and Steve introduced specially coated chains with high weather resistant qualities and use recycled plastic. Equipment is designed to be handicap-accessible. They instituted process improvement teams from all levels of management and production to monitor operations continuously. The company pays tuition for employees who take courses to improve their technical skills and maintains feedback mechanisms with its sales force, its customers and its suppliers. The result is that Landscape Structures has a healthy 10 percent share of the \$300 million world market in play equipment.

Barbara and Steve and their company are deeply involved in the community. They have donated their time and their



Barbara Anne King
Minnesota Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

playgrounds in Minneapolis as part of the United Way. The company is a Partner for Quality Education with the Delano public school. Barbara has been active personally in the Volunteers of America, the Minneapolis Community College Foundation and other community projects.

Paul T. Wall

Managing Partner

Arlene H. Wall

Partner

Classy Chassis Full Service

Car Wash

1899 Pass Road

Biloxi, Mississippi 39531

(601) 388-6600

In 1978, Tom Wall retired from the military after 22 years. Following a stint as owner of a Biloxi, Miss., restaurant, Tom and Arlene started the Classy Chassis Car Wash in July of 1986. For the first two years, Classy Chassis lost money, but ever since, revenues have continued to climb. In 1993 sales were nearly \$830,000.

The Walls opened their second car wash in Ocean Springs, Miss., in January 1991. In 1992, a nearby four-bay, self-service car wash was bought, renovated and opened under the name Classy Chassis Junior. And in 1993 they bought a 15-minute oil change and lubrication facility in Pascagoula. A full-service car wash is projected on the adjoining property for 1994. In 1993, they also opened, under lease, a full-service car wash, convenience store, quick-lube and gasoline outlet in Gulfport.

Tom and Arlene Wall have built a profitable business and a reputation for honesty and giving the customer a fair shake. Classy Chassis now has a firm four-city base of operations and a growing revenue base. Starting with 15 employees in 1986, it now employs 100. Tom credits the SBA's with helping them get their family business under way.

Tom and Arlene believe in giving young people opportunities in their business in management and leadership roles. Their son is now the general manager of the firm

Paul T. and Arlene H. Wall

Mississippi Small Business Persons of the Year, 1994



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and charged with the day-to-day operation of the business.

The Walls are heavily involved in the community, and spend both themselves and their money in helping others. They have donated hundreds of free car washes to Red Cross blood donors and volunteers. Both are active in the Boys and Girls Club—Tom was cited as "Father of the Year" in 1991—and numerous civic, service and professional organizations. He was elected a city councilman of Biloxi in 1993. Arlene, who also runs a successful real estate company, was Realtor of the Year in 1993 as well as president of the Biloxi and Ocean Springs Board of Realtors.

David R. Zapatka

President

Z-Tech Companies, Inc.
1339 N. Cedarbrook
Springfield, Missouri 65802
(417) 869-1800

Dave Zapatka doesn't take his customers to the cleaners—he brings the cleaners to them. Dave founded Z-Tech Companies, Inc., a cleaning services company, in 1972. He built it from a one-man operation to one that employs more than 400 people in four states and has sales in excess of \$4.5 million.

The company started with traditional cleaning services such as contract janitorial, carpet and upholstery cleaning, window cleaning, tile and concrete floor cleaning and refinishing, and residential maid services. It has expanded to include more specialized and advanced services such as bio-hazard medical waste removal, industrial equipment cleaning, and FDA-inspected food area cleaning.

Finding and training good employees is especially challenging in the professional cleaning business. The work tends to draw employees with a relatively low level of education and work skills, and turnover is quite high. Dave has concentrated a great

deal of effort to overcome this problem, and has achieved an employee retention rate better than twice the industry's national average. A safety program cut injuries and absenteeism by half in one year, and the company has an excellent safety record. Z-Tech also established an innovative literacy program that provides tutoring in reading, writing, math and spelling skills. A two-year supervisor-training program covers skills in human relations, safety and supervision, and a management training course deals with total quality management and customer relations. Employees are paid to attend these classes weekly. As a result of Z-Tech's training, its employees receive numerous commendations from customers for "going the extra mile." Customer letters are reprinted in Z-Tech's newsletter. Dave also writes a personal thank you card to every employee on the anniversary of their employment.

Community involvement is a high priority for Dave. He sponsors literacy, voter registration and blood drive programs. He regularly donates cleaning services to community events such as the Springfield Downtown Association's holiday parades and other fund-raising events. He partici-



David R. Zapatka
Missouri Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

pates in Southwest Missouri State University's "Mentoring for Success" program, donating one hour each week with an "at risk" sixth grader at school on reading and homework.

Eric H. Pierce

Owner

Marc A. Pierce

Owner

Big Sky Carvers

308 S. Railroad

Manhattan, Montana 59741

(406) 284-3193

As in days of yore, they went west, leaving Chicago for the wide-open spaces of Montana, a father and son looking for a better way of life. Not only did they find it; they helped improve the lives of dozens of others and built a \$4 million company in the process.

Deeply devoted family men committed to a strong sense of ethics, Eric and his son Marc created a business that supports both the pristine nature of Montana and some local 65 artisans. Starting with their dream, skill in woodworking, and a love of the outdoors, Eric and Marc began making hand-carved and painted decorative duck decoys. As business grew, they combined their work with other professional artists while contracting for certain other services, gradually bringing more and more of the process "in-house." To broaden the customer base, they added carvings of non-game birds, fish and wildlife, as well as decorative signs. Today's inventory of 250 items accounts for over 60,000 sales a year.

The company has managed to carve itself a niche between one-of-a-kind cre-

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ations by highly skilled artists and mass-produced goods from the Orient. By using carving machines and a screening process in concert with hand-painting and inspection, they produce relatively high volume while maintaining a high level of quality. Winning Ducks Unlimited as a major customer gave the company a tremendous boost, and spurred the Pierces to expand their customer base—today they ship to every state in the U.S. as well as foreign countries. In 1992, they won Ducks Unlimited's highest award to business.

The Pierces' commitment to their community and environment is evident in the appearance of their facilities, their careful waste-disposal, and in their continuing support for various wildlife groups and charities, Big Brothers and Sisters, Little League, a food bank, and Montana State University.

Norris B. Marshall

President

Marshall Engines, Inc.

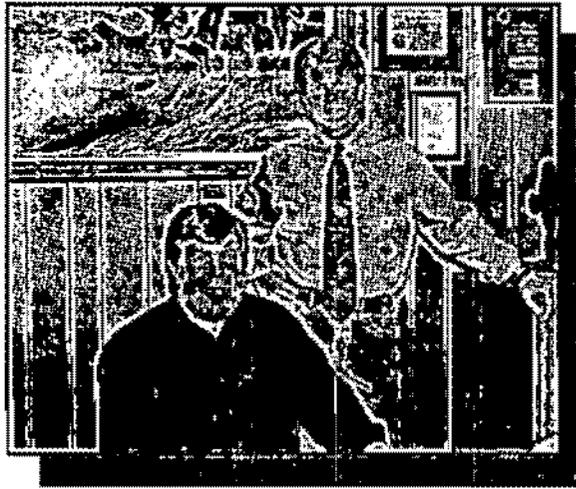
404 West 8th Street

Kearney, Nebraska 68847

(308) 234-6788

Like that of so many other small business people, Norris Marshall's story starts in his garage. In 1982, working alone, Norris started a custom machine shop. Soon he was doing custom engine rebuilding. Today he is president of Marshall Engines, Inc., a \$6.5 million company.

Marshall Engines remanufactures automotive engines and parts, a process pioneered by the Ford Motor Co. during World War II. Engines are sold on an exchange basis, returning the raw materials—the engine core—for remanufacturing.



*Eric H. Pierce and Marc A. Pierce
Montana Small Business Persons of the Year,
1994*

Norris hired his first employee in 1983, then added more in 1986 when he moved to a new and larger location. The following year, Norris shut down the custom machine work to focus the company on engine remanufacturing. By February 1990, his staff numbered 31 production and office employees. That fall, with the help of an SBA loan, the facilities were expanded to accommodate the company's rapid growth. That year, Marshall Engines also suffered a



*Norris B. Marshall
Nebraska Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

serious blow: warranty problems due to one employee cost the company \$100,000; by standing behind his product, and getting extensions from suppliers and an infusion of private capital, Norris was able to continue expanding and gained market share.

By late 1993, Norris had 90 employees and annual sales of \$6.5 million dollars. Since 1987, engine production has increased from 40 per month to 1,100 per month. Employment is expected to double in the next three years.

Marshall Engines' growth has provided the Kearney area with much-needed new jobs. Rockwell International closed a plant in Kearney in 1985 and a nearby Sperry New Holland plant closed in 1986. Norris has an aggressive recruitment program in place and has begun recruiting Spanish-speaking minorities.

Norris Marshall's outstanding success is based on four principles: a reputation for building a quality product; standing behind the product with excellent warranties along with a willingness to work out special customer service problems; good service and responding to customer needs as though they were special orders; and by offering an alternative to the other brands in the market.

A pilot and published writer, Norris is active in his church and civic and professional organizations. He is vice president of the Production Engine Remanufacturers Association and a United Way Pacesetter.

Timothy I. Madden

President

Pacific States Communications
of Nevada, Inc.

4750 Longley Lane, Suite 102

Reno, Nevada 89502

(702) 828-2020

Know your business, know your customer, offer the best product and service, do whatever it takes to keep your customers happy, maybe get a lucky break.

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*Timothy I. Madden
Nevada Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

and you have a formula for success. Just ask Tim Madden, whose communications company has been profitable since its fourth month. Started with only \$12,000 in December 1986, it had first-year sales of more than \$182,000 and hit the \$2 million range in 1993.

Tim invests in his employees, sending his sales and technical staff to factory training schools so they know the products they market and work on, something many of his competitors don't do. He also provides health insurance, including dental benefits. His employees, in turn, are very loyal, and turnover is low.

Most of the company's profits have gone back into buying tools, training, inventory, vehicles and office furnishings. A demonstration room incorporates all the equipment the company sells, so customers can see the equipment and features before buying. Pacific States Communications also has a disaster program that can provide up to 200 telephones in two hours in the event a customer's system becomes inoperable. Service is offered around the clock, seven days a week, and, after the initial installation fee, training is free to customers.

Tim's investments have paid off. The original staff of three has grown to nearly 20, and there is a new branch office in Carson City. The company has shown steady growth since the beginning. In 1989, Pacific States Communications doubled its customer base and bought the inventory and assets of a competitor. In 1992, nearly half of new business was from customer referrals, and sales awards from vendors continue to stack up.

Tim invests in his community as well. His firm donated a telephone system and services for the life of the system to the Ronald McDonald House, and more than \$10,000 in equipment and services to the Reno Rodeo. Pacific States Communications provides installation of telephones for the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon, as well as raising thousands more in donations, and recently joined the Care Chest, which provides health services and equipment to the needy.

Karen C. Collman
Co-Owner

Robert C. Collman
Co-Owner

Gale River Designs, Limited
P.O. Box 847, Main Street
Franconia, New Hampshire 03580
(603) 823-7457

Gale River Designs got started almost by accident. Karen Collman, a former teacher, weaver and costume designer, was working at home sewing expedition-quality tents. A friend, who owned Garnet Hill, a natural-fiber catalog company, asked Karen to sew some English flannel sheets to U.S. standard sizes. Later, a Garnet Hill seamstress got sick and Karen filled in. In 1979, when the friend asked her to sew nightgowns, Karen and her husband, Chris, a business manager and consultant, hired an employee, got a tax number and started cutting gowns out of flannel sheets.

The company operated out of the attic until the next year, when the Collmans



*Karen C. and Robert C. Collman
New Hampshire Small Business Persons of the
Year, 1994*

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bought a larger home and hired four more employees. Business was seasonal with spring and fall sales. In 1984, a major account went bankrupt, and in 1991 they suffered a devastating fire, yet made all their deliveries on time. With the help of SBA and the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center, they have dealt with hardships and carefully managed growth averaging 123 percent over the past five years. The company employs 24 people as well as managing 11 subcontracts. Production is year-round in 7,500 square feet of space, and Karen and Chris also run a retail outlet. Sales are \$1.2 million.

The Collmans specialize in 100 percent cotton sleepwear, maternity and nursing clothes. Primary customers are catalog companies like Garnet Hill and Motherwear, and despite cheaper competition, their classic designs and high-quality workmanship have won tremendous loyalty.

Except for Chris, Gale River is woman-owned and managed. In a business known for exploitation, schedules are flexible, salaries are excellent, and promotion is from within. About 20 percent of the workers are minority; some are Cambodian refugees whom the Collmans helped to resettle (Karen and Chris are very active in the New Hampshire Refugee Resettlement Program and have helped several start their own businesses). More than a third of their subcontracts are with minority-owned firms and one is a sheltered workshop.

Dr. James W. Yoh

President and CEO

Galaxy Scientific Corporation

2500 English Creek Avenue

Building 2

Pleasantville, New Jersey 08232

(609) 645-0900

Jim Yoh was born in China in 1947. He escaped to the U.S. by way of Taiwan, arriving here with \$200 in his pocket and a full scholarship to Notre Dame. There he

earned a doctorate in nuclear physics and went on to build one of the fastest-growing companies in the country.

Jim started the company in 1978 with two employees and sales of \$19,000. In 1988, the company received 8(a) certification and by 1993, grew to corporation with 260 employees, offices across the nation and sales of over of \$18 million. Projected revenues for 1994 are \$24 million.

Galaxy Scientific provides high-tech engineering support to the Department of Transportation, Department of Defense, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as well as commercial industries. Starting as strictly a Department of Defense contractor, Galaxy Scientific has reduced its military base to 50 percent in response to defense cutbacks. It is a leader in the research, development, testing and evaluation of advanced avionics and aeronautical systems. More than half the employees have advanced degrees. Since its inception, Galaxy has been awarded more than \$137 million in both competitive and sole-source contracts. The company has offices in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Georgia, Texas and California.

Jim and his company have won many prestigious awards. In 1991, he was selected the SBA's Regional Minority Small



Dr. James W. Yoh

New Jersey Small Business Person of the Year,
1994

Business Person of the Year for Region II. In 1993, Galaxy Scientific ranked fifth on the Inc 500.

Jim is a strong community supporter. He is a board member of the Atlantic City Medical Center, and is actively involved in fund raising for modernization of the hospital's pediatric units and creation of the trauma center. He is the lead sponsor of the Technical Youth Program which provides technical summer jobs for high school students from disadvantaged families.

Stewart R. Little

CEO

Diversified Business Technologies, Inc.

505 Marquette, NW, Suite One

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

(505) 246-9223

It was in 1987 that Diversified Business Technologies opened its doors with little capital and two employees—Stewart Little and his father, Vince. Today, DBT employs 100 people, has \$20 million in contracts in hand and \$5 million in sales—an increase of 450 percent in the last three years alone.

Originally providing systems maintenance and training services to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, DBT joined the SBA's 8(a) Program in 1990. Starting by subcontracting for larger firms, DBT has gained national recognition, expanding into systems integration and manufacturing while developing its own line of products and telecommunications services. Today, the company enjoys a customer base that includes not only government agencies but also Indian tribes, nonprofit organizations, independent contractors, and many others.

Recognizing that success in the information age comes from forging strategic alliances, Stewart, a member of the Mojave-Hopi tribe, used retained earnings to finance development of the Integrated Tribal Network. ITN gives Indian tribes, organizations and businesses instant electronic communication to disseminate infor-

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

mation and market opportunities from one part of the country to another.

Stewart provided state-of-the-art telecommunications capabilities—and donated training and maintenance—to the member tribes of the National Indian Gaming Association, which oversee the \$6 billion gambling industry on Indian lands. The industry provides full-time employment to more than 10,000 people in previously impoverished Indian communities. His company also donated systems design, installation and training for the National Tribal Environmental Council, and provided equipment at cost. The NTEC represents more than three dozen tribes and deals with environmental issues, laws and regulations.

Stewart is a founder and cochairman of the National Indian Business Association, a nonprofit organization of more than 25,000 Indian-owned businesses throughout the country. He has assisted other Indian-owned businesses by exposing their products and services to larger markets. Through Stewart's leadership, the NIBA also holds an annual fund-raising golf tournament to raise scholarships for young Indian men and women in business studies.



Stewart R. Little
New Mexico Small Business Person of the Year, 1994



Richard and Victoria MacKenzie-Childs
New York Small Business Persons of the Year, 1994

Victoria MacKenzie-Childs
President

Richard MacKenzie-Childs
CEO

MacKenzie-Childs, Ltd.
3260 State Route 90
Aurora, New York 13026
(315) 364-7123

"We never think of things as they are," says Richard MacKenzie-Childs. "We think of things as they could be." Color, texture and surprise characterize the wide array of hand-crafted dinnerware and unique home furnishings made by MacKenzie-Childs, Ltd. Victoria and Richard design and manufacture their products at what was once a dilapidated dairy farm—now their studio, pottery and furniture factory—outside Aurora, New York. Selling primarily to upscale stores like Neiman-Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman, they recently opened a three-floor retail store on Madison Avenue.

Richard and Victoria both earned masters degrees in fine arts from Alfred

University in New York. They then worked for two years at Stoke Gabriel Pottery in Devon, England, and taught art at a local college. After they returned home, they realized the value of their experience. They began producing a wide range of majolica ware and porcelain. Victoria says it all began with a desire "to make one beautiful plate just for us." The first plate was followed by another, then a table to put them on, then chairs... That was 1983 and since then the company has grown and expanded, also producing floor and wall tiles, creative stationery, linens, furniture, and trimmings such as cords, tassels and fringes.

Even their sales brochure is special. It is a collection of greeting cards, each decorated with renditions of their pottery, furniture, trimmings, linens and stationery, all presented in a ribboned box.

When the company began in 1983, Richard and Victoria had only one assistant; last year, MacKenzie-Childs, Ltd. employed 203 people. There has been a

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phenomenal growth in sales from \$12 million in 1989 to about \$8 million in 1993.

Victoria and Richard are involved in various church- and school-related activities. "Aurora in Bloom", a program to improve the village's parkland, was started by Richard while a professor at Wells College in Aurora. MacKenzie-Childs is the financial sponsor of this program.

James R. Fore

President & CEO

Communication Cable, Inc.

1335 North Second Avenue

P.O. Box 729

Siler City, North Carolina 27344

(919) 663-2629

Jim Fore and Charles Wellerd worked 15 years building a company for somebody else. In 1984, they saw an opportunity too good to pass up, and went into business for themselves. A bankrupt New England electronic cable company had its equipment for sale. With a personal check for \$450,000, it was theirs. Then began a year-long process: buying a plant in Siler City, N.C., moving 60 tractor-trailer loads of equipment, refurbishing the equipment and training workers. That was the beginning of what *Inc* magazine would rate in 1990 as the 18th fastest-growing publicly held U.S. company, Communication Cable, Inc. (CCI). "We knew what we had done before," said Jim, "and we set out to do it again."

CCI engineers, designs and manufactures electronic wire and cable used in computers, TVs, and medical and military electronic equipment. CCI also produces modified standard cable which is specialized beyond the industry standards.

Between 1985 and 1986, CCI's sales jumped from less than \$300,000 to nearly \$1.6 million. To raise capital, the company made a successful public stock offering. About the same time, Jim suffered a heart attack. As soon as he recovered, he was back, guiding CCI to new growth.



James R. Fore
North Carolina Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

In 1987, sales leaped to over \$5.5 million, and Jim and Charles bought a division of their former employer, more than doubling their production capacity. Since then, the company has continued adding acquisitions bought at discount from ailing and bankrupt companies. In doing so, it has also continued to diversify its product line and broaden its customer base. In 1988, the company signed a deal to build a plant in Shenzhen, China to make commodity-grade cable. A second stock offering was made in 1989 to finance the rapid growth; sales that year were more than \$22 million. Today sales are roughly \$60 million.

Jim is convinced that the prime asset of CCI is his staff of managers and employees. The company promotes from within where possible and encourages its people to upgrade their skills and education. Perhaps the most revealing view of Jim Fore and the company he runs is that since working out the joint venture, he has helped three other American companies work similar arrangements in China.

Jim always goes the extra step. From church groups, the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, civic organizations, industry associations, board membership on hospitals and schools or working with children in sports, his community involvement is deep.

Donald L. Hedger

President

Killdeer Mountain Manufacturing, Inc.

300 Rodeo Drive

Killdeer, North Dakota 58640

(701) 764-5651

By 1987, Killdeer, N.D., population 800, had real problems: a sagging economy and high unemployment. Today, the town has another "problem," thanks to Don Hedger: a labor shortage.

Don is a one-man economic development package. After working for 19 years for Sperry Flight Systems in Phoenix, he and his wife, Pat, returned home to Killdeer in 1978, and Don went to work as executive vice president of a bank. Later, he bought an insurance company. In the mid '80s, however, oil exploration had fallen prey to the oil "bust." farm prices were bottoming out and the young people were leaving. So were the elderly; with no nearby nursing care, they were forced to leave their lifelong homes to seek care far away.

Enter Don. He galvanized the entire county and came up with financial guarantees and benefactors. Then he put together a presentation of local testimony that persuaded the state health council—all of whom expected to vote no—to give Dunn



Donald L. Hedger
North Dakota Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

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County the go-ahead—in spite of a statewide moratorium on building nursing facilities. Today, Hilltop Home of Comfort is an award-winning facility that enjoys nearly a 95 percent occupancy and employs a hundred people.

Meanwhile, Don saw the potential for a small town to support a defense subcontractor. He hired an instructor to train about 60 locals on assembling electronic parts, and visited numerous large defense contractors until he found one willing to gamble on him. He talked the town into getting a community development grant and an SBA-backed loan to start the company (with the town owning equity in the firm) and started Killdeer Mountain Manufacturing, a highly respected and award-winning company that is growing by leaps and bounds. Now Don is planning satellite companies in other rural towns.

Vernon L. Gibson President

Dove Building Services, Inc.
1691 Cleveland Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211
(614) 299-4700

It was 1977 and Vern Gibson sat at his desk—a telephone cable spool—in a tiny office above the Linden Medical Center. He had just landed his first client, an office-cleaning contract worth \$2,100...a year. It wasn't much, but it was the start of a nearly \$3 million-a-year company.

By day, Vern sold his services, then worked into the night cleaning. Gradually, he added several more small offices, then a large grocery store, and he began hiring inner-city employees. Soon the company was able to move to a better location—not much bigger, but Vern had a real desk.

The company had grown to 150 by 1982, when Vern landed his biggest client, an electric company contract with a worth of \$1.5 million annually (AT&T now uses the building, but Dove still cleans it) and



Vernon L. Gibson
*Ohio Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

added another 60 employees. By 1987, he was able to build his own modern office building—with several desks! By 1991, sales had surpassed \$2.5 million. Dove now services 60 local firms and earns a gross of \$2.75 million. The company has 260 employees, about a third of whom are full-time. Vern interviews each one, matching worker to client. Because 90 percent of them live in the inner city and have no transportation, he supplies transport for those who work in outlying areas. While highly unusual, this is typical of Vern Gibson's dedication to improve life in inner-city Columbus. He provides jobs and hope—and much more. Vern also provides health care and continuing education to his workers, as well as a profit sharing plan. His employees respond by pitching in when an emergency arises or a client needs extra staff on short notice—even when it means adding on to a long workday. Even the sales staff will help out with cleaning when they are needed.

Vern supports a number of community activities. He is a board member of the Hannah Neil Center for Children, is a former Big Brother, a lifetime member of the

NAACP, and a strong supporter of the United Negro College Fund. Dove also sponsors a city softball team.

Regina M. Carter President & CEO

Aerial Data Service, Inc.
10822 E. Newton Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74116
(918) 437-8453

"The only thing they didn't want was my cat," says Jean Carter, "because it would cost money to feed her." Other than that, Jean pledged everything she owned to restructure the debts of Aerial Data Service. Jean was divorced—which meant no man to cosign the note—and her bank had turned her down. But she found another bank that saw potential for the company and its new owner and made the loan—a decision that has paid off for everyone.

Aerial Data Service provides aerial photogrammetry service to private developers, contractors and government agencies, as well as to foreign businesses and governments. Jean joined the firm in 1974 as office manager. Several years later, she negotiated a buy-sell agreement with the owner to be executed upon his retirement or death. When the owner died suddenly in 1984, Jean found herself buying a company in decline. She made a small cash down payment and persuaded the executor to carry the balance, then headed for the bank.

The first year, making payroll was difficult and cash-flow projections were not good. Jean restructured the debt. She took a 20 percent pay cut and negotiated a temporary 10 percent employee pay cut. She changed the company logo, invested heavily in printed material and a national adver-

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...ing campaign, and hired an outside salesperson. She even learned to fly.

In 1984, Aerial Data Service had sales of \$668,000; sales have now surpassed \$2.2 million. The company owns two twin-engine Cessnas, and equipment is state-of-the-art. In fact, Jean's is one of three out of 250 photogrammetry services in the country linked to the satellite Global Positioning System. Employment and office space have more than doubled and payroll has more than tripled. Nearly all the original 11 employees are still with her, and she offers them profit-sharing and retirement plans. The company also pays tuition and book costs for continuing education.

Jean is one of only eight female certified photogrammetrists recognized by the American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and serves on the board of the Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors. Jean was the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce's 1991 Business Woman of the Year. In 1992, she was one of five small business owners showcased in the Governor's Conference on Small Business. She serves on the boards of the state chapter of the American Public Works Association and the Tulsa YWCA, as well as both city and state Chambers of Commerce.



Regina M. Carter
Oklahoma Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

Arnet R. Ecklund
President
Ecklund Industries, Inc.
19830 S.W. Teton Avenue
Tualatin, Oregon 97062
(503) 692-8008

In 1975, Arnet Ecklund began making components for wood stoves, incorporating in 1979. Today, Ecklund Industries specializes in manufacturing and fabricating metal products for a diversified customer base.

Arnet worked in metal fabrication, boiler repair and sawmill construction before venturing out and starting his own business. From a sole proprietorship with Arnet as the only employee, the company grew to 10 employees during peak season in 1979. By the time the company moved into its Eugene plant in 1989, there were 20 employees. Since then, employment has increased to approximately 85 at Ecklund Industries' Eugene and Tualatin locations. Both plants were financed with help from the SBA's 504 Program.

Innovation and diversification are key to the company's success. Two years after incorporating, the timber industry went into an economic depression, but Arnet was able to diversify his company's customer base, and ultimately its manufacturing locations, to prosper through the changing economic environment. Ecklund Industries produces a wide variety of products including components for both new and refabricated gypsum dryers for sale throughout the world and precision tools for the electronics industry. It also offers complete manufacture of high-quality gun cabinet safes, wood stove components, drop boxes for waste disposal and industrial recycling materials collection, dryers for the wood products-manufacturing industry, cabinets and chair parts for the medical services industry, and components for agri-business equipment. The company is constantly broadening its base of products to meet the ever-growing needs of its customers.



Arnet R. Ecklund
Oregon Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

In addition to its strong community contribution in providing basic manufacturing jobs, Ecklund Industries has made many other contributions to the communities in which it has manufacturing plants. The company has provided signage at cost to rural fire departments and has donated steel to both community colleges and high schools. The company also "adopted" five needy families in Lane county and five in Washington county to ensure that they had a joyful Christmas season. Arnet and his company are also active in a number of professional organizations.

Joseph P. Gearing
President and CEO
Perma-Cote Plastics, Inc.
42 Feathers Avenue
Uniontown, Pennsylvania 15401
(412) 439-9300

In 1967, Joe Gearing heard of a new way of applying plastic coatings to electrical conduit for use in corrosive environments. He began experimenting in his garage, developing his own equipment. Soon he was teaching employees his methods and today he heads a \$12 million operation, Perma-Cote Plastics, Inc.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



*Joseph P. Graring
Pennsylvania Small Business Person of the
Year, 1994*

Initially Joe's business supplied coating services for Republic Steel Corporation, but in 1979 he decided to increase the growth of his company. He started to use independent sales representatives throughout the country. The fortunes of Perma-Cote steadily improved and the number of employees increased to 90 by mid-1992.

Since then, the company has restructured and has achieved financial stability and steadily increasing sales. Perma-Cote employees now number 116 and 1993 sales were projected at \$12 million. The company is also expanding into the international marketplace; agreements have been signed with representatives in the Far East, and with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Mexico. Perma-Cote is also considering expansion into Central and South America.

In a one-product market, Perma-Cote offers two levels of protected conduit. Like its competitors, the company offers conduit that is bonded with PVC inside and out. But Perma-Cote also saves customers money by offering conduit only protected on the exterior for applications where interior protection is not needed. The company also offers a customizing service and can coat almost anything metal with epoxy, polyester, nylon, acrylic and PVC.

Joe is involved in numerous professional, civic and church organizations. He also contributes to the Easter Seals Pro-Am Benefit Golf Tournament held annually in Uniontown, is a sponsor of the Fayette County Junior Golf Program and participates in Ducks Unlimited as a contribution to all wildlife.

Roque A. Rivera

President and CEO

Roger Electric Company

P.O. Box 3166

Bayamón, Puerto Rico 00960

(809) 786-3361

In 1971, Roque Rivera of Bayamón, Puerto Rico, took his life savings, a total of \$2,000, and went into business with his nephew, Carlos Rivera, an electrician. Roger Electric Company was confined to a 1,000 square-foot area on the first floor of Roque's personal residence, and sold wiring and electric material and equipment to contractors and the general public. The first year, they had \$21,000 in sales.

The following year, with a \$20,000 loan from the SBA, Roger Electric increased its inventory and added new lines of materials and wiring. The company's growing reputation for good prices and service spurred continued growth, assisted by a second SBA loan of \$35,000 in 1974. By 1975, sales volume had risen to \$586,000, and Rivera's staff increased to 7. He obtained a \$90,000 SBA loan to finance the rapid expansion. In 1980, yet another SBA guaranteed loan, this time for \$200,000 was obtained by Roger Electric, again to keep up with tremendous growth. Sales had hit \$2.5 million, and the staff was up to 22.

In 1990, with sales of nearly \$13 million, Roger Electric expanded to three locations with 110 employees. Today, sales are roughly \$20.3 million, and there are five Roger Electric branch stores in Bayamón,

Manati, San Juan, Caguas and Mayaguez. The company has over 130 employees. 1994 sales volume is projected at \$25 million and another branch is planned, plus a personnel increase to 150 employees.

As long as the company has been in business, Roque has retained personal charge of marketing and advertising. He knew the value of a strong identity, and is the voice of Roger Electric for all its radio and TV advertising. He designed all of his store facades to look alike. Roque has surrounded himself with engineers, financial administrators and business specialists who manage the administrative areas of the company. Several years ago, he recognized the value of computers, and today the business is entirely computerized. A unique sales tool, a drive thru service, allows contractors to call in orders and drive thru a special area, where their order is loaded.

Roque is active in his community. Several of his suggestions have found their way into Puerto Rican law, and he is a member of the SBA's SCORE/ACE pro-



*Roque A. Rivera
Puerto Rico Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

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gram, the Bayamon Chamber of Commerce, and several civic organizations. He is the recipient of numerous honors.

Joel Scanlon
President

Eastern Butcher Block
25 Eagle Street

Providence, Rhode Island 02908
(401) 273-6330

Some people just never know when to give up—and go on to make it big. Take Joel Scanlon. In ninth grade, he was sure he'd win the school knowledge fair with a table and chair he built himself. He came in fourth but it made him all the hungrier for success. Later, he earned extra money building and selling furniture to teachers. When he didn't have the money to buy wood, he took the scraps he had, glued them together in a jigsaw pattern, and built a table. His brother bought the table for \$200 and the drive which culminated in Eastern Butcher Block was born.

In 1976, while in college, Joel and a partner began building and selling butcher block furniture. Unable to get retailers to sell their higher-end work, they opened a store in 1979. It was starting to do well



Joel Scanlon
Rhode Island Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

when Joel's partner bailed out. The assets were seized and auctioned off, and Joel faced bankruptcy. But he didn't know when to give up. With just \$2,000 to his name, Joel persuaded his father to loan him \$30,000 and went right back into business.

Today, Joel is president of Eastern Butcher Block. The company manufactures quality furniture—from fine natural hardwoods—that follow the trends in contemporary and country fashion. New techniques in painting, antiquing and staining are on the cutting edge of the furniture market. There are six Eastern Butcher Block outlets, the Yield House Country Furnishing Store, two manufacturing facilities, a hardwood lumber division, a network of wholesale dealers across the country, 70 employees and sales in excess of \$5 million.

The company and its owner have won numerous awards and accolades, and Joel credits much of his success to a dedicated and committed staff. He is very active in his community, working to advance the economic position of minorities, speaking to entrepreneur classes, and working with Junior Achievement. In 1989, his project business class was filmed and is used nationally for Junior Achievement training. Joel sponsors a scholarship for the winner of a high school entrepreneur contest.

Julie A. Wetherell

Co-Owner/Manager

Advertising and Promotion Corp.
dba Sign It Quick One Day Signs
1624 Broad River Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29210
(803) 731-2001

It was January 1987 when a Charleston businessman first talked to Julie and Stan Wetherell about starting and franchising a quick-turn-around sign business. In February, Sign It Quick, Inc., was incorporated as the parent company and the first store opened. It was very successful and

Julie and Stan decided to open a franchise in Columbia; it had a good mix of business, industry and government—and it was their hometown. In April 1988, Julie moved to open the new store while Stan kept the Charleston shop going.

Julie's background was in radiologic technology, so she learned on the job and "shot from the hip," as she says. All she knew about business was: keep your promises, promote your business, be visible, and value reliable employees. She was a salesperson by day and she and graphic artist Art Trotter made signs at night—often all night. But sales that first year were over \$123,000. After a year of week-end commuting, Stan moved to Columbia.

The Wetherells thrive on challenge. To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Constitution, they undertook to make the world's longest sign in under 24 hours. Local dignitaries, students, scouts and others helped apply lettering as a community project. The 1,544 foot banner was completed in 21 hours, with network coverage by ABC and CBS. It has since been displayed numerous times in several states. As a fund-raiser for a local theater, Sign It Quick sand-blasted names of donors and honorees into bricks in the theater court-



Julie A. Wetherell
South Carolina Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

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yard. The company also offers neon, awnings, whatever meets the need.

Julie attributes a large part of the success of Sign It Quick to her employees. She treats them as partners and gives them great individual responsibility. The company provides incentives and cross-training, and sponsors activities like volleyball, cookouts and dinners. Three of the managers are women, and one recently received a distinguished sales award from a professional association. Sign It Quick's customer base includes South Carolina Electric and Gas, Southern Bell, United Parcel Service, the University of South Carolina, many advertising agencies and others. By 1993, Sign It Quick had 10 full-time and two part-time employees and sales of roughly \$750,000.

Julie gives financial support and personal commitment to her community. She is active in her church, numerous professional organizations and boards, the United Way, Children's Hospital, Special Olympics, Boy Scouts and many others.

Patrick G. Wingen
President

William K. Busker
Executive Vice President
AaLadin Industries
RR1 Box 2B
Elk Point, South Dakota 57025
(605) 356-3325

Everybody thought they were crazy. It was 1981 and the cost of loans had gone through the roof; the best they could do was 22 percent. But Pat Wingen and Bill Busker had a dream, and the dream wouldn't wait. They had to make it work...and they did.

Pat and Bill met at Alkota Manufacturing in Alcester, S.D. Pat, a physical therapy major with an MBA, had been hired as a controller. It wasn't exactly what he'd planned, but it did expose him to all aspects of small business management. He learned as much as he could.



Patrick G. Wingen
South Dakota Small Business Person of the Year, 1994



William K. Busker
South Dakota Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

Bill, who always tinkered with gadgets as a boy, went on to earn a degree in industrial technology and eventually became chief engineer at Alkota, where he and Pat became friends. It was at Alkota that they both learned about pressure washers.

An idea scribbled on a napkin gave rise to AaLadin. "When it comes to cleaning," said their logo, "it's the magic that makes the difference!" It meant quitting their jobs, bringing on another Alkota coworker, Eldean Kjose, and going without pay for the first year. In an empty building on Bill's father's farm they built a quality, dependable machine at a reasonable price. Along with four other workers daring enough to risk working for them, they produced a machine a day. It was 18 months before they saw their first profit, and five years before they developed a good working relationship with a lender. Meanwhile, word of their quality spread. Soon they needed a new facility; to save, they built it themselves. Today, AaLadin is an award-winning, \$10 million company employing more than 70 workers and producing more than 100 models. A new corporation, Steel Eagle, will manufacture pressure washer

accessories and hose assemblies. Pat and Bill eventually bought out Eklean's shares, but he continues to work for them; AaLadin enjoys very low turnover. Pat says, "It's how you treat your employees, suppliers and customers that provides the loyalty ..." He and Bill enjoy wide involvement in their community as well as holding seminars across the country on marketing, technology, sales and products.

Charles E. Foust Jr.
President

Clarksville Foundry, Inc.
Red River & Frosty Morn Streets
Clarksville, Tennessee 37041
(615) 647-1538

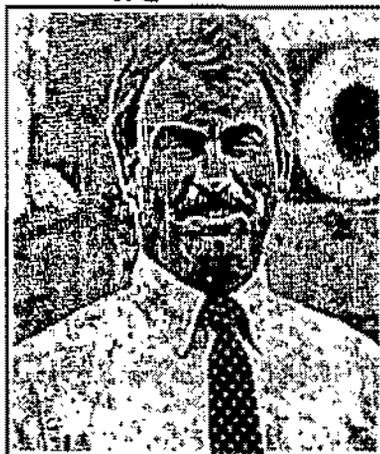
Charlie Foust made a decision in 1978 that didn't seem to make much sense. After graduating with a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Tennessee, where he tied for the top of his class, he had offers from several major cor-

operations, including IBM. Instead, he went to work for the out-of-date foundry his family had owned since 1921. Faced with stringent new environmental regulations that had closed it for five months in 1974, a severe recession, double-digit interest rates, cheap foreign competition and technological advances, it was on the brink of bankruptcy. Already, 70 percent of existing U.S. foundries had closed.

Within three years, Charlie was president of Clarksville Foundry and began to turn the company around. He redefined its market, totally changed its customer base, replaced virtually all of its equipment—including adding a non-polluting electronic furnace—and introduced computerization. In 1989, with the help of an SBA-backed loan and the proceeds from selling the company-owned real estate, he consolidated operations to one location, building new offices at the site of the foundry. He also installed a sand-reclamation system, reducing hazardous waste from 200 tons of sand every month down to 30 tons. A spectrometer—a computerized analysis system that monitors the precise composition of a melt—permitted expansion into the steel-casting market. Charlie also developed a fully integrated product-costing system that has increased profitability.

Founded in 1854, the company today is a state-of-the-art facility producing high-quality, low-volume custom castings on short lead times. Clients include Ingersoll-Rand, Siemens, Delta and Whirlpool. It has grown from 14 employees in 1978 to 40 and sales have increased from under \$500,000 in 1983 to \$1.7 million in 1993.

Charlie is widely involved in his community, but perhaps his most rewarding work was his leadership in the \$1.3 million renovation and restoration of the First Presbyterian Church, where he is a deacon; built in 1876, it is on the National Register of Historical Places.



*Charles E. Foust, Jr.
Tennessee Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

Jerry Ford Taylor

President
C.C. Creations
112 Holleman Drive
College Station, Texas 77840
(409) 693-9664

Success suits Ford Taylor to a "T". In 1982, Ford was managing a small sporting goods store that sold team uniforms custom-printed by a company called C. & C. Creations. Ford learned that C. & C. was nearly bankrupt. Eager to own his own business, he bought into C. & C., borrowing 75 percent of the money from his family and depleting his own savings account to make up the rest. That was the easy part; rebuilding C. & C.'s reputation was harder.

Once he was an owner, Ford found C. & C. had a reputation for poor quality and service, and owed large debts to its suppliers. He also found \$40,000 in bad checks that no one had told him about. Ford began slowly paying off debts and re-establishing relationships with suppliers, often going weeks and even months without pay. Meanwhile, he and his wife and dance partner, Sandra, lived off her income plus what he made teaching dance at night.

By 1985, things were looking up. Ford bought out the remaining original partner,

changed the name to C.C. Creations, added employees and moved the company to a new location. He bought one of his own suppliers, again with his savings and a family loan, and in 1988, bought the equipment of a local embroidery company. But three locations proved inefficient, so Ford consolidated them with SBA-backed funding (and his family breathed a sigh of relief). In 1990, Ford incorporated C.C. Creations and sold 80 percent of the company to investors, who merged it with other businesses. The C.C. division continued to grow and by the end of 1992 employed 80.

Eventually, the Houston warehouse distribution center of the holding company, Red Oak Sportswear, was moved to College Station, requiring construction of a 57,000 square foot facility adjoining C.C. Creations. Approximately 40 more employees were added and a factory outlet opened. In August of 1993, the corporate headquarters of the holding company also moved to College Station and there are approximately 150 employees between the two divisions.

Ford is very committed to his community, and the list of his contributions is long. He is involved with numerous educational and leadership programs, is on the board of



*Jerry Ford Taylor
Texas Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

the local Chamber of Commerce as well as a council that works on issues of local concern and civic and professional groups. He has sponsored and participated in local softball, is involved with sports organizations, and he and Sandy still teach dance.

Lorraine A. Miller

President

Cactus & Tropicals, Inc.

2735 S. 2000 East

Salt Lake City, Utah 84109

(801) 485-2542

One morning in 1975, Lorraine Miller decided to open a plant store. Then, before she could talk herself out of it, she got in her car and within two hours had found a boarded-up building. She spent half of her \$2,000 savings and the next six weeks fixing up the place and dubbed it The Grass Menagerie. Finally, she crammed her Volkswagen van with \$600 worth of plants—which only filled a corner of the store—and figured that if she could sell \$20 a day, she'd make it. She worked seven days a week and lived above the store.

Today Lorraine has four greenhouses, a garden and gift shop, an office building, two trucks, 15 employees and well over \$1 million in sales. The company is growing steadily at about 20 percent a year.

Lorraine learned a lot and overcame a lot. She learned the ins and outs of running a business. Three years after opening, her property was taken by eminent domain. She had to relocate. With a friend's help, she built her own greenhouse in minus-ten-degree weather, thawing the frozen ground with charcoal briquettes to dig holes for the supports. She ran up against bankers who refused to return calls, much less give her a loan, so she borrowed from family. She finally found a loan officer who helped her get an SBA-backed loan. When he relocated to another bank, she took her business there—and got better rates—because his replacement wasn't interested in her busi-



*Lorraine A. Miller
Utah Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

ness. When she bought her first delivery truck, the dealer was reluctant to let her take a test-drive until she convinced him she was the "decision-maker."

A former VISTA volunteer, Lorraine finds time to serve her community as well. A former president of the Utah Association of Women Business Owners and the Salt Lake Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners, she has also served on health care and entrepreneurship task forces, and as a member of an arbitration association. She employs the handicapped and is a speaker and mentor.

Francis G. W. Voigt
Chief Executive Officer

John T. Dranow
Chief Operating Officer
New England Culinary Institute

250 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 223-6324

The spirit of revolution and Vermont are nearly synonymous, but a culinary revolution? Boiled beef and apple pie with cheddar cheese were about as adventurous as

the cooking got. Yet today, Vermont claims one of the nation's premier culinary institutes with a rapidly growing international reputation. At the center of this revolution are Fran Voigt and John Dranow. Victims of cutbacks at Goddard College, Voigt, an administrator, and Dranow, a teacher, looked for a business to run. They considered a brewery, deer farming, even an auto body shop, before hitting on the idea of a cooking school. While the food business is the largest retail employer in the U.S., there are more jobs than skilled chefs; a few phone calls netted "unbelievable response," and the New England Culinary Institute (NECI) was born.

With encouragement from their wives, noted poets Ellen Bryant Voigt and Louise Gluck, they took out second mortgages and tapped their life savings. They developed a program based on two educational models: the European apprenticeship and the university hospital. The student-to-teacher ratio, seven-to-one, is the lowest in the country. Classes supplement hands-on training and cover subjects like cooking theory, baking, pastry, and the history of food and wine. They also include basic math, an English course that teaches writing, word processing and résumé writing, and, because alcoholism and obesity are common in the industry, a fitness regimen. NECI also requires community service.

On June 15, 1980, the first class started in the kitchen of a Montpelier hotel where students lived with their instructor, a French-trained chef. Ellen and Louise took teaching jobs around the country so John and Fran could work without salary; later, they became directors for the school.

SBA loan programs helped the school grow and expand. Today, NECI has two



*Francis G. W. Voigt and John T. Dranow
Vermont Small Business Persons of the Year,
1994*

campuses, 400 students (still at a seven-to-one student-teacher ratio), and revenues of nearly \$10 million. It offers life-long support, financial aid and a 100 percent placement record. Its food outlets include several restaurants, a cafeteria, a bakery, and a catering operation. It grants an associate degree in occupational studies, and has recently been approved for a BA degree in service and management. NECI enrolls students from all 50 states and 15 countries, and has an intern program with hundreds of the best restaurants in the U.S. and abroad. Graduates are reputed to be better prepared and more willing to tackle hard work and long hours than many alumni of other schools. The community service record of the school and its directors is staggering, and its impact on Vermont—from broadening the variety of farm produce to educating the public on good nutrition to improving tourism—is immeasurable.

In the works are cookbooks, seminars for food writers, more classes for the community and continuing education courses. "We can't be the biggest, or the richest, or the oldest," says John, "but we can be the best."

Deborah J. Johnston, R.N.

President

Care Advantage, Inc.

1900 Byrd Avenue

Richmond, Virginia 23230

(804) 285-1212

"The more we give away, the more will come our way," said the nun, and gave Debbie Johnston her blessing. With that, Debbie ended her first sales call for Care Advantage. She left Little Sisters of the Poor having given a substantial discount to the nuns who cared for the indigent, but it was to be a propitious beginning: sales soared to \$225,000 in the first three months. Start-up money was depleted to meet the weekly payroll, and for a while, staff (armed with donuts) called on clients to pick up checks to meet the next payroll.

Care Advantage opened a second office in the Colonial Heights area in January 1991. The first day the office caught fire and was without heat for two weeks. Then in 1993, the office was hit by a tornado. Finding the roads closed and fearing for her employees' safety, Debbie rented a helicopter to land her in front of the building. Yet despite fire and devastation by tornado, business was soon booming. In May of 1992, Care Advantage opened a third office in the Newport News area (this time without incident), and plans to open two more offices in 1994.

Care Advantage offers a broad spectrum of care, from licensed nursing and hospice care to support for caregivers, from companions to relief staff for local hospitals. It also offers newborn care, even support for working parents: child care, plant and pet sitting, even running errands; whatever is needed, whenever, wherever. Employees go through a rigorous screening process; a high level of caring has given the company its competitive edge. Care Advantage now employs over 1,620 and provides care to nearly 350 clients and 100 facilities. It offers discounts to many and often provides free care to the indigent. When there was no family nearby, the company has provided transportation to doctors' offices, hair appointments or grocery shopping. It has even held estate sales.

Debbie nurtures a team spirit in her company, and offers numerous incentives and benefits, including scholarships. Caregivers can advance as far as a registered nursing degree. Care Advantage is active in the communities it serves and supports numerous programs and charities. Each year, the company adopts a family for Christmas and collects canned foods, clothes and toys.

In 1993, Care Advantage placed 14th in Richmond's Rising 25 contest and Debbie



*Deborah J. Johnston, R.N.
Virginia Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

and her team were named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce. Debbie also started a networking club for women business owners.

Satyendra P. Shrivastava

President and CEO

ANSTEC, Inc.

10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 600

Fairfax, Virginia 22030

(703) 591-4000

"Shri" Shrivastava came to the United States from India in 1970 to attend graduate school at the University of North Carolina. He earned a masters degree in computer science, taught for a year, then moved on to jobs with a power company and GTE Telenet. He earned an MBA in 1982 and shortly thereafter, founded Advanced Computer Systems (now ANSTEC) in his basement. In a dozen years, it has become one of the fastest-growing companies in the nation, winning numerous awards along the way. ANSTEC currently employs 450 in 11 states and the District of Columbia, and has sales in excess of \$30 million. The company offers a vast array of information systems, systems integration, communications, networking and professional services to both the public and private sectors.

The early days were difficult. Shri got his start by successfully tackling a project that another company had given up on. Every penny of his savings went to the company, and when that was gone, he assumed personal debt to keep the company afloat—including a second mortgage on his home. It was 1987—the same year ANSTEC joined the SBA's 8(a) Program—before a bank would extend a \$25,000 personal line of credit; today, ANSTEC's line of credit is \$4 million.

ANSTEC has achieved a compound annual sales growth of nearly 4,000 percent during the last five years. Shri attributes

this to outstanding employees and a business philosophy of "customer satisfaction through quality, innovative and responsive service and products." Employees enjoy excellent benefits, including major medical, life insurance, bonuses and incentives, and retirement and profit-sharing plans. ANSTEC also spent over \$150,000 in 1993 on training and tuition reimbursements.

Among many honors, Shri was SBA's Minority Entrepreneur of the Year last year. ANSTEC ranked as the seventh fastest-growing high technology company in the D.C. area on *Washington Technology Magazine's* Fast 50 list and jumped from 136 in 1992 to 36 in 1993 on the Inc. 500.

Shri is extensively involved with improving the image of small and minority business. His commitment to the community includes serving on the Committee on Economic Development of the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), serving on the board of directors for the Minority Business Association of Northern Virginia, as chairman of the board of trustees of Rajdhani Mandir (a religious organization), and organizing a food charity through the Salvation Army.

Guy H. Auld

President

Pamela A. Auld

Vice President

Chukar Cherry Company

P.O. Box 510

Prosser, Washington 99350-0510

(509) 786-2055

"...a classic case of urban flight," says Pamela Auld. "Guy...missed being on a farm, and we wanted to...have our kids grow up in the country." In 1984 the Aulds swapped Seattle for Prosser where Pam worked in real estate and Guy became the local YMCA program director. In 1986,



Satyendra P. Shrivastava

Washington, D.C. Small Business Person of the Year, 1994

"too stupid to know better," they bought a 100-acre cherry orchard.

Knowing absolutely nothing about growing cherries, a high-risk crop, didn't daunt the Aulds. They got some help from an agricultural specialist and an SBA-backed loan, and used their own business savvy to create the Chukar Cherry Company. Chukar? They figured the red-billed bird known for its swiftness personified the fleeting cherry season and offered an appropriate and distinctive name.

Dried cherries were a local, homemade treat, but Pam saw in them a way to stretch the 30-day season to year-round. It took a lot of experimentation, but soon the Aulds branched out into dried cherries, then gradually added other products. Today, Chukar Cherry sells cherry preserves, chocolate-dipped dried cherries and berries, cherry baking mixes, poultry sauce, herbal tea, a variety of trail mixes and more. According to Pam, "It's like operating four businesses

...ance. We have retail, mail order, manu-
facturing and we have the farm."

It hasn't all been "a bowl of cherries." In 1989, a delay moving into their current building caused a late harvest and spoilage of cherries. The company lost \$50,000 and financing. Also, there was no market for dried cherries, yet in less than six years, Chukar Cherry has extended its wholesale markets throughout the United States, into Canada and overseas to Australia, Hong



*Pamela A. Auld
Washington Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*



*Guy H. Auld
Washington Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

Kong and Japan. Chukar Cherry now employs 20 full-time and 250 seasonal workers, and offers an outlet for overproduction from other orchards. Last year's sales were \$1.7 million.

The contributions to the community are varied and often anonymous. The Aulds donate to community event requests throughout the Yakima Valley, sponsor a hot air balloon rally, cosponsor an elementary school kite fly, and make substantial contributions to the Senior Citizens Center, Seattle Art Museum and Children's Hospital. Guy and Pam are very involved with local schools and financed an emergent-reader pilot program.

V. Larry Berg
President
Janie M. Berg
Vice President
Grant County Mulch, Inc.
H.C. 30, Box 35
Arthur, West Virginia 26816
(304) 749-7451

Larry and Janie Berg didn't exactly spin gold out of straw, but they sure came close: they took scrap bark from sawmills and turned it into a \$3.4 million company.

*Janie M. and V. Larry Berg
West Virginia Small Business Persons of the
Year, 1994*

With sawmills experiencing increasing pressure from regulatory agencies to decrease bark stockpiles and constructively dispose of waste, Larry, an independent coal truck driver, saw a golden opportunity. He learned how to process mulch and then, with two employees, he and Janie started Grant County Mulch, converting sawmill waste into high-quality hardwood mulch.

It was a relatively new industry when Larry and Janie started, but competition soon increased. Quality and service have kept the Bergs highly successful. Today they employ 20 full-time employees and an additional 30 peak-season employees. They also provide work for 40 to 60 independent truckers, plus six of their own. Using recycled plastic bags, they offer a unique custom bag-design service for private labels. To overcome the seasonal nature of the business, they also began marketing bundled firewood. In 1993, the company received a contract from Price Club to supply mulch to 40 stores. Annual sales have risen from over \$390,000 for 40,000 yards of mulch in 1988 to almost \$3.4 million and 250,000 yards in 1993.

The Bergs work hard to be good neighbors. In a noisy, messy business, they keep

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

their facilities and grounds extremely neat, and paved their road to reduce dust. They located away from residential areas so noise would not be disruptive. And they invite the community to visit and buy mulch, firewood or potting soil. The Bergs personally conduct tours of their business, and in conjunction with the Boy Scouts and PTOs, sponsor hugely successful fund raisers. They also sponsored NASCAR racer Davey Allison, who spoke to local schools on hunter safety.

Paul A. Stitt
President

Barbara R. Stitt
Executive Vice President
Natural Ovens of Manitowoc
4300 County Highway CR
Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54221-0730
(414) 758-2500

He was the "mad baker of Manitowoc," a bio-chemist who, in 1976, bought a bakery, took the Danish off the shelf and put out whole-grain, preservative-free bread containing flax seed. She was a probation officer who made good nutrition a requirement for her probationers and saw a dramatic change: 89 percent of them stayed out of trouble. Paul and Barbara Stitt married in 1982, and together spread a gospel of good nutrition as the answer to many of society's ills. They have also built a \$9 million bakery business, yet will give away their recipes to those who want to join their cause. They will even teach them how to do it.

When Paul bought a typical bakery with a \$5,000 down payment and converted to health foods, he had to build a whole new customer base. Eventually, with the help of two SBA-backed loans, the market expanded to include Green Bay, Milwaukee and Chicago. Today Natural Ovens produces 16,000 loaves of bread a day and the work force of 8 has now grown to more than 160. The Stitts have also started a mail-

order business and the Essential Nutrient Research Company (ENRECO), which is grossing an additional \$600,000.

The Stitts encourage workers to take home bakery products for their families, and provide bread, fresh fruit and a nutritious meal every day. They have also contributed to a 401-k profit-sharing plan to which 80 percent of their employees belong. Fifty percent of their supervisors and managers are women.

Barbara and Paul have written five books on health and nutrition and are regulars on TV and radio talk shows. They have helped nearly 25 commercial and 4 nonprofit groups start nutritional bakeries, both to create jobs and to improve the health of the society. They donate food to classes for the learning disabled, teach probation officers and prisoners how lives can change through proper diet, and educate teachers on how to teach good nutrition. Natural Ovens distributes 40,000 loaves of bread annually to area food banks. Another project is a Farm and Food Museum to show people how farm production and food processing have changed over the last century. And next to their Natural Ovens plant, is a working farm where children can see and pet farm animals.



*Paul A. and Barbara R. Stitt
Wisconsin Small Business Persons of the Year,
1994*

Richard A. Bonander
President
Inter-Mountain Pipe Co.
Inter-Mountain Threading, Inc.
1964 East First
Casper, Wyoming 82601
(307) 234-2058

Don't tell Rick Bonander that timing is everything; he learned the hard way—and went on to beat the odds, building a leader in his industry that generates more than \$2 million in sales per year.

Small Business Week 1994

With just \$860 in start-up capital, Rick started Inter-Mountain Pipe Co. in 1982, primarily to serve the oil and gas industry. Unfortunately, that was at the beginning of the oil "bust" and oil-related business were going out of business right and left. Bankruptcies and bad debt cost him \$80,000 in the first two years alone.

It took some tough decisions to survive tough times. Rick instituted strict fiscal policies, requiring careful credit checks and payment up front when credit was weak. Debts that were past due resulted in liens followed by immediate legal action. Sales were brokered with back-to-back credit and low inventories bought at distress prices from companies going out of business.

Over the next four years, the oil-related market declined 75 percent. Careful management, highly-qualified and aggressive employees and a team approach enabled the company to continue to grow.

Problems with subcontractors led to the founding, in 1988, of Inter-Mountain Threading, Inc. Buying second-hand

machinery, Rick and his partner, Greg Breed, set up the business in an abandoned building at nearby Natrona County Airport. This time, the timing was right. The threading company became the only licensed manufacturer in the duty-free foreign trade zone at the airport that Rick was instrumental in establishing. The ability to thread their own pipe and manufacture other steel products soon led to diversification and development of new and improved products. Today, the Inter-Mountain companies also market to the mining, manufacturing, water-well, environmental-well and construction industries and trade with several countries, including Canada and Japan. Inter-Mountain Pipe was a Blue Chip Enterprise Award winner in 1991.

In addition to his business, Rick is deeply involved in his community, serving in a variety of capacities on a large number of professional, civic, charitable and church organizations. He and his wife, Jolene, have two teen-aged children.



*Richard A. Bonander
Wyoming Small Business Person of the Year,
1994*

Small Business Advocates of the Year The Entrepreneurial Success Award and Special Award Winners

Accountant Advocate of the Year
Frank C. Evans

Partner

Evans & Evans,

Certified Public Accountants

142 North Oakland Avenue

Sharon, Pennsylvania 16146

(412) 342-0160

Frank C. Evans is extremely involved in his community and is deeply committed to helping the area's small businesses succeed.

A University of Pittsburgh graduate, Frank began his accounting career in 1973 with Touche Ross & Company of Chicago. Frank then returned to his hometown to teach business administration at Clarion University. In 1977, he accepted a position with Penn State, where he is now assistant professor of business administration.

Because of his position at the university and his extensive personal contacts in the community, Frank frequently assists graduating students, particularly older, non-traditional students, matching them with employers who need their services.

Starting in 1980, Frank has taught more than 100 accounting and financial management seminars outside the university to thousands of business owners. He has also been a guest lecturer at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Business.

Frank's professional writing supports his goal of assisting small business owners and managers. He has also developed three seminar manuals, including the notebook for "Fundamentals of Finance and Accounting for the Non-Financial Executive." The October 1993 issue of *Management Review* contained his highly acclaimed article, "A Road Map to your Financial Report." Thousands of copies have been distributed to small business owners throughout the country.



Frank C. Evans
Accountant Advocate of the Year, 1994

Frank is also a small business owner. In 1978, he founded Evans & Evans, Certified Public Accountants. As the managing partner, he is responsible for all management consulting, business valuation and litigation support services. Frank's services to his business clients are not limited to the traditional accounting tasks for which he is paid; he often volunteers his expertise. For example, he helped a client company secure an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) by helping prepare the business plan required for the funding.

Throughout his career, Frank has worked with local business leaders and government officials to move his community forward. He has promoted state and federal legislation to strengthen the financial viability of local business. As the current president of the Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce, Frank leads the efforts of five local communities as they consolidate their municipal services. Frank has

also initiated a "Young Executives" program, to identify and develop the area's next generation of leaders.

Frank has seen small business benefit from funding resources such as SBA loans, UDAGs, and Industrial Development Authority financing. To promote small business's position on these funding issues, as well as on tax and regulatory reform matters, Frank encouraged the Chamber to participate with the League of Women Voters in sponsoring debates for congressional candidates and moderated the debates. When state reform issues were debated statewide, Frank was asked by the local newspaper to analyze the proposals.

Frank asserts that government serves small business best if it provides high quality basic services at the lowest possible cost. He practiced that philosophy during four years as an elected representative on the Sharon City Council, as he actively promoted adapting business practices to local government. He continued this work during his presidency of the Mercer County Regional Council of Governments, which is considered by many to be the state's best cooperative municipal government agency.

A supporter of tax reform, Frank fought against a proposed mercantile tax and for keeping wage and property taxes reasonable. He also worked with the Shenango Valley Industrial Development Corporation to obtain financing for small businesses.

Frank Evans is a steadfast business leader and an individual dedicated to

improving the economic environment for small businesses. He is a small business advocate in the truest sense of the word.

Financial Services Advocate of the Year

Ernest S. Hohmeyer

President

Adirondack Economic

Development Corporation

P.O. Box 747, Trudeau Road

Saranac Lake, New York 12983

(518) 891-5523

Ernest Hohmeyer is the founder and president of the Adirondack Economic Development Corporation (AEDC), a not-for-profit economic development corporation operating within the 14-county area in upstate New York known as Adirondack Park. Since 1984, he has guided AEDC in an endeavor to better the economic environment for small companies in the area.

The Adirondack Park is a large, rural region dominated by the largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi. A unique combination of public and private lands, and home to some 130,000 people, it has been plagued by high unemployment and low per-capita income. The area's economy was traditionally based on mining, wood products, and tourism. Today, while resource-based industries continue to characterize the region, new small and micro-businesses, based primarily on the lifestyle goals of entrepreneurs, are becoming more important to the regional economy.

AEDC's activities stimulate economic and community development by helping to encourage job creation, retain existing employment opportunities, expand the tax base, and develop and maintain a necessary community infrastructure. AEDC delivers economic development programs that focus on technical assistance, financial packaging, education, and public awareness.

Aware that business people often require guidance to succeed, Ernest and



Ernest S. Hohmeyer

Financial Services Advocate of the Year, 1994

AEDC established the Adirondack Park Entrepreneurial Center (APEC), the first effort to create a formal, small business education and training consortium. APEC supplies area entrepreneurs with a vast selection of services by networking with organizations encompassing federal, state and local development organizations, regulatory agencies, and educational institutions, and vocational institutions.

It also offers entrepreneurs its highly innovative Business Institute. APEC calls the institute "an entrepreneur's laboratory where people in business can try new ideas or methods and take a fresh look at their operations." Twenty-eight entrepreneurs completed the institute's inaugural session. Ernest, a small business college adjunct faculty member, taught during the session.

Successful graduates of the Business Institute sponsored by AEDC's Entrepreneurial Assistance Center are recognized as priority loan applicants by many area banking institutions. Graduates are often provided with reduced interest loans, waivers of application fees, and free checking.

Under Ernest's direction, AEDC has become an SBA-certified 504 lender and was one of 35 organizations selected to participate in the SBA Microloan Demon-

stration Program. In the first year of the program, 37 businesses were assisted and AEDC was recently granted its second funding. Its total loan resources, including its portfolio of committed loans, is more than \$1.25 million, of which \$1 million is in the SBA microloan fund.

AEDC has created a 501(c)(3) corporation called the New Enterprise Development Program, Inc. (NEDP). The purpose of NEDP is to assist financially disadvantaged people who have the potential to become successful entrepreneurs. It has sponsored individuals to attend entrepreneurial training courses; several have gone on to receive financing through the AEDC and private lenders, and are now operating businesses.

AEDC also received a grant from the New York State Department of Economic Development to operate a Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Development Center.

With Ernest in charge, AEDC has gone from a volunteer community technical assistance program, processing a few loans annually, to a 14-county program that, in 1993, approved more than \$72,000 in loans and leveraged \$2.8 million in other financing and investments. Ernest and AEDC have encouraged and increased entrepreneurship by providing technical advice, financial packaging assistance and education, and by heightening public awareness throughout the Adirondack Park.

Media Services Advocate of the Year

Jane Applegate

President

The Applegate Group

9035 Wildwood Avenue

Sun Valley, California 91352

(818) 768-7018

Jane Applegate is a special friend to the nation's small companies, a small business champion highly respected for her dedication to promoting small business growth. Jane uses the gamut of media outlets to dis-

The Small Business Advocates and Special Award Winners

cuss small business issues as diverse as finding capital and succession planning. She also updates her audience on laws and legislation affecting entrepreneurs. She provides low-cost, practical management advice for millions of small-business owners across the country.

Jane joined the *Los Angeles Times* in 1983 as a business reporter. Since 1988, she has written "Succeeding in Small Business," an award-winning, nationally syndicated column reaching 16 million readers of major newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, and *Atlanta Constitution*. Her reports often focus on small companies coping with problems or challenges and offer tips on ways to be successful.

Jane also writes and produces a small business radio report that airs daily in 90 cities across the country. She has been a guest on television programs such as "Working Woman" and "First Business," as well as on many radio shows. Jane is also one of the nation's most in-demand business speakers.

An industrious writer, Jane authored the highly informative best-seller, *Succeeding in Small Business: The 101 Toughest Problems and How to Solve Them*, which offers realistic solutions for the everyday difficulties that confront a small business owner or manager. She is a contributing editor of *Working Woman* magazine and has also published a series of "how-to booklets" to help to small business owners.

Despite her busy schedule, Jane willingly donates her time to the entrepreneurial cause, often waiving her speaking fee. In July 1993, SBA Administrator Erskine Bowles asked her to moderate a series of "Town Hall Meetings" for business owners in cities across the U.S. Much of the open forum material will appear in her columns.

Working with US West, Jane recently toured 16 cities, listening to small business owners and gathering information for upcoming articles.

Some of Jane's advice is the result of her experiences as a small business owner. The Applegate Group is her multi-media communications company and in 1992, she co-founded Osborne Applegate, a consulting firm dedicated to helping large corporations better serve the small business market. Both companies are home-based, allowing her more time with her family.

Jane has won many awards for service to the small business community. She was named a "Small Business Champion of the Year" by former U.S. Representative Andy Ireland when he served on the House Small Business Committee. She has been recognized by numerous groups for her community service, including the National Association of Women Business Owners, and the California Senate.

Always imaginative in her methods to assist the entrepreneur, Jane has distributed more than 15,000 free copies of her inspirational mini-poster called, "Ten Commandments of Small Business Success." The tenth commandment is, "Take a few minutes at the end of the day to praise yourself for all you have accomplished." Jane Applegate's achievements merit her following that advice ten times over.

Minority Advocate of the Year

Frank Trujillo Ballesteros

Executive Director
PPEP Microbusiness and
Housing Development Corporation
802 East 46th Street
Tucson, Arizona 85713
(602) 622-3553

One Christmas season past, several Douglas, Ariz., arts and crafts dealers could not afford a store in which to sell their wares. Learning of their plight, the man sometimes called "Frank Santa" rented a storefront to provide a cooperative



Jane Applegate
Media Services Advocate of the Year, 1994

selling space. Within two days, it was transformed into "Santa's Wonderland," with more than \$25,000 in inventory from grateful local artisans.

"Frank Santa" is an appropriate nickname for Frank Ballesteros. Born into a working class Hispanic family in the copper-mining town of Douglas, Frank was often employed by minority-owned small businesses. Today, he operates as if he were an everyday Santa Claus, bringing minority entrepreneurs a precious gift: a best chance at business survival and success.

Frank serves as executive director of the Micro Industry Credit Rural Organization (MICRO) Program of Project PEP Microbusiness and Housing Development Corporation (PMHDC). Working through MICRO, Frank creates business opportunities for minorities and women. He is an impassioned advocate for microenterprise development as a strategy for alleviating poverty and providing economic self-sufficiency for low-income families.

Frank has headed the nonprofit initiative since 1986, directing the daily operations and all activities involved in implementing MICRO and its loan fund. He is responsible for managing a \$400,000 loan portfolio with 173 active loan clients in six different target areas. Frank is responsible for fund raising for the MICRO Loan Fund, which is capitalized at over \$1.4 million. He has dispensed more than 1,000 loans, to over 500 microenterprises, and helped create more than 350 jobs and stabilize over 250 microenterprises.

A pioneer in microenterprise development, Frank was one of the first to encourage the SBA to provide money to Project PEP for lending to rural microbusinesses. Four years later, Congress appropriated millions of dollars for SBA's Microloan Demonstration Program. PMHDC/MICRO was granted a \$750,000 loan fund and \$187,500 in technical assistance funds to provide business and management training.

Frank has provided special outreach to low-income Hispanic and woman entrepreneurs. Through his efforts, PMHDC/MICRO was awarded a three-year grant from the Health and Human Services Job Opportunities for Low-income Individuals Program. The grant provides training and start-up loans to low-income people on public assistance who may have the potential to achieve economic self-sufficiency through self-employment. Frank has also pushed for Spanish translations of training materials on self-employment and other business information.

Frank has helped to educate many large Arizona banks on the benefits of special initiatives to meet the credit needs of disadvantaged and minority entrepreneurs. He has been instrumental in establishing many pilot programs, including a major agreement with Bank One of Arizona in which he is leveraging \$100,000 from the Ford Foundation as a guarantee for microenterprise loans in the state.

Frank has worked with ACCION International since 1986 on the role of

expanding microenterprise development for Spanish-speaking people in the United States. He has hosted groups from Brazil, Poland, Peru and Hungary who want to learn about microenterprise development, as well as representatives from prestigious organizations such as the Ford, Charles Stewart Mott, and Hitachi foundations. In 1991, Frank traveled to Santa Fe, to present the paper, "Microenterprise Assistance: Foundation for Community Economic Development," to the President's Council on Rural America.

Frank currently represents more than 150 microenterprise development systems in the National Association for Enterprise Opportunity and the Coalition of Community Development Financial Institution.

Promoting reform of laws and regulations that might inhibit the success of microenterprises, he has testified before presidential task forces and congressional committees. He has mobilized policymakers and funding sources at all levels in both the public and private sectors.

Frank's efforts have brought attention to the plight and potential of the very smallest of enterprises. For his efforts, Frank has won numerous awards, received local and national media coverage, and garnered the gratitude of the area's many entrepreneurs who call him "Frank Santa."

Veteran Advocate of the Year
Maurice Akira "Joe" Munechika
Special Projects Manager
Grove Farm Land Corp.
3-2600 Kaunualii Highway, Suite 3001
Lihue, Hawaii 96766
(808) 245-8756

Maurice Akira "Joe" Munechika is considered by many to be the "voice" that bridges the interests of veterans and business organizations in Kauai, Hawaii. He provides the link by staying abreast of veterans programs, benefits and issues, and by disseminating business information to veterans first-hand.



Frank Trujillo Ballesteros
Minority Advocate of the Year, 1994

Joe is himself a veteran who served in the U.S. Army for 22 years, attaining the rank of sergeant major. He was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in ground operations against hostile forces. Joe also served two years at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow—an appointment that required proficiency in three languages.

In 1978, Joe retired and returned to Kauai, where he began his affiliation with an array of military and veteran organizations, including the American Legion; Veterans of Foreign Wars; American Veterans (AMVETS) of World War II, Korea and Vietnam; The Retired Enlisted Association; Kauai Veterans Council; National League of POW/MIA Families; Disabled American Veterans (DAV); and Kauai Vietnam Era Veterans Association.

A person who thrives on commitment and service, Joe also joined business organizations such as the Kauai Chapter of (SCORE) and the Kauai Chamber of Commerce, where he served as the executive director. He worked with veterans who turned to these organizations for assistance. He has been instrumental in organizing workshops for potential entrepreneurs and he often serves as an instructor of "How To Start A Business" seminars.

Joe has helped a great many veterans on numerous occasions. For instance, a

The Small Business Advocates and Special Award Winners

Vietnam veteran who sought financing to open his own optometry business. Because of poor documentation, he was denied a loan by several banks and the SBA. Joe helped him assemble a new loan application, complete with revised business plans; the optometrist was granted a loan and became a successful business owner.

Joe is a prominent supporter of the programs of the SBA and served as a member of its Honolulu Advisory Council from 1987 to 1993, and as chairman in 1991. During his term, the council became more visible in the community and increased its advocacy for the small business owner. Small business leaders frequently depended on Joe's input on both neighbor-island issues and veterans' concerns.

As well as maintaining a full-time position as special projects manager for Grove Farm Land Corp., Joe has been a member of the Kauai County Council since 1986 and he has held offices on several of its committees. He was also treasurer of the Hawaii State Association of Counties.

As a councilman, he is in a unique position to be an ardent advocate for small businesses and promoter of veteran causes on a governmental level. Joe was instrumental in persuading the Kauai County Council to help sponsor the annual Veterans' Parade. He also has worked to expand the opportunities for veteran-owned businesses to receive public exposure.

Joe has served as a member of the Kauai Business Council and the Kauai Economic Development Board, two organizations he helped create. Through these groups, Joe is able to heighten veterans' awareness of business opportunities.

Joe supports veterans in many ways, from assisting them in developing business plans to selecting business locations. He even matches veterans with mentors in similar businesses.

Joe also serves as a liaison between veteran-owned businesses and potential veteran employees. Because of his close affilia-

tion with both veteran and business groups, he has successfully advocated a "Veterans Hire Veterans" program. Not only does this help the established veterans' companies, it also provides training and inspiration to veterans who may someday want to open their own businesses.

Joe also has been or is currently a member of a host of community organizations, including the Kauai Rotary Club, the East Kauai Lions Club, the Governor's Ocean Resources Tourism Development Task Force, the Tax Foundation of Hawaii, the Governor's Conference on Education, and the Kauai Community College Business Education Advisory Committee. The former chairman of the Business Education Department of Kauai Community College said "...Joe has his finger on the pulse of the business community and has assisted us in determining the direction of the business curriculum..."

Joe's strong ties to veterans groups, his affiliation with business organizations, and his active involvement in the community allow him to be a strong advocate for the advancement of small business and for armed forces veterans.

"A Concerned Voice" — Joe's motto in his campaign to become a Kauai County Council member — reflects his attitude towards others, towards his community, and especially towards his fellow veterans.

Women in Business Advocate of the Year

Jill J. Johnson

President

Johnson Consulting Services

P.O. Box 32372

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55432-0372

(612) 571-3101

Women business owners have a forceful crusader in Jill J. Johnson, founder of Johnson Consulting Services, a Minnea-



*Maurice Akira "Joe" Munechika
Veteran Advocate of the Year, 1994*

polis-based marketing and management consulting firm.

A fervent advocate for women in business, Jill consistently takes a leadership role in local and national organizations, event planning and media outreach. She shares her expertise in entrepreneurship, aids women business owners in financial matters and supports them in the political arena. She is committed to increasing opportunities for the creation and expansion of women-owned companies.

Most of Jill's advocacy is achieved through her membership in the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO). Jill joined NAWBO in 1984 as a local corporate partner in Minnesota. Her active involvement led to her election to the chapter's board of directors in 1985. A past president of Minnesota NAWBO, Jill has served in a wide range of leadership positions. She chaired two of the chapter's most successful and visible special events:

Small Business Week 1994

"Herstory" in 1984 and the "Strategies for Success" conference in 1989. She has developed relationships with the media and frequently represents NAWBO with other business organizations in which she is active, including the Greater Minneapolis and Minnesota chambers of commerce.

In 1992, Jill was the recipient of Minnesota NAWBO's President's Award and in 1993 received the Minnesota Women Business Ownership Advocate of the Year Award. In 1993, she received the National NAWBO Advocate Award.

Jill has chaired NAWBO's national Financial Services Council since 1992. Her achievements include enhancing corporate partner relations and helping to establish NAWBO's Disaster Relief Fund. Jill also developed the idea for NAWBO's "angel network," in which established business women invest more than \$125,000 in other members' businesses.

Membership in the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) is another avenue through which Jill supports women in business. She served as regional coordinator for women's business ownership for SCORE's Region V for eight years, promoting women's business ownership throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. Jill worked many hours through SCORE to advance women-owned business and to improve the counseling they receive.

She also developed the first national strategic plan for SCORE's Women's Business Ownership Program. Jill has donated hundreds of hours to the program. She helped increase the sensitivity of male counselors to women clients, and worked with district coordinators to improve communication and to exchange ideas about how to bring more women into SCORE.

Jill has also worked closely with the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership on a local, regional and national level. She has served as a special adviser to the agency on issues of women's business



*Jill J. Johnson
Women in Business Advocate of the Year, 1994*

ownership and has supported SBA-sponsored initiatives nationwide. Jill was a volunteer for two SBA-sponsored "Women In Business Initiative" conferences held in 1984 in Iowa and Minnesota. She spoke at both conferences and helped lead the planning of Minnesota's conference.

Jill is a frequent speaker on women's business ownership at area conferences and events for women in business. She has been on radio and television and in print nationwide and has written several articles to educate the public on the economic and social impact of women-owned businesses. In 1992, she was invited to speak to the Manitoba Women's Business Ownership Association in Winnipeg, Canada. Later, she successfully initiated conversations between NAWBO and its Canadian counterpart.

Jill actively promotes international trade for women-owned businesses. She works with the Minnesota International Center and the U.S. Department of Commerce to promote relationships with women business owners traveling to Minnesota from other countries. She shared her knowledge with women business owners from France, Denmark, Russia, Canada, and numerous countries in Africa. In 1992, she worked

with the Minnesota NAWBO Chapter to provide information to women business owners from Russia through a chapter-sponsored event.

Jill is also a motivational speaker and mentor for groups that work with young women. In one of several articles, Jill describes the evolution of women in the work force occurring in a series of waves that have changed the landscape of today's business community. She writes, "Now we must extend our hands back to the young women coming after us. Through this generational linking of information, insight and knowledge, women can continue on the fourth wave that will move us—and the world—forward."

Entrepreneurial Success Award Winner

Marguerite M. Paul

Executive Vice President - Administration
BEST Power Technology, Inc.
Route 106
Necedah, Wisconsin 54646
(800) 356-5794

Imagine what would happen in a computerized workplace if, while in the process of entering data or writing reports on computer, a power outage occurred. A reliable back-up system would probably kick in, but it might allow a momentary disruption of power that could result in the loss of hours of work.

It would never happen to Marguerite Paul however, because her company, BEST Power Technology, Inc., manufactures high-tech uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), that are designed to prevent major power disruptions and the minor ones that are more likely to occur. BEST products are used by 911 emergency operations, hospitals, correctional facilities and other institutions that rely on continuous power.

The BEST company was co-founded by Marguerite, her husband, Willard, and son, Steven, in Necedah, Wisconsin, in 1977.

The Small Business Advocates and Special Award Winners

An inverter that transformed direct current (DC) into alternating current (AC) was the company's original product.

Innovator Steve designed an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) system that combines an inverter with a device called a ferroresonant transformer, to efficiently deliver the clean, no-break power needed by computers. In 1983 the new system called "FERRUPS," for Ferroresonant UPS, was introduced. It is one of the quietest, smartest, most compact and efficient on-line computer-grade UPS systems on the market today.

Since the introduction of FERRUPS, BEST has grown and now employs approximately 800 and boasts sales in excess of \$132 million. The original 10,000-square-foot building has seen 22 additions and today, BEST's facilities cover more than 350,000 square feet.

BEST continually updates its product line and prides itself on presenting a new line every 18 to 24 months. Between 1991 and 1992 BEST introduced approximately 151 new products.

Marguerite believes innovative products deserve innovative packaging. All BEST products have three labels to alert customers of potential shipping accidents. One label warns customers not to accept products unless they arrive on a pallet. The other two, the Shockwatch and Tip-n-Tell, are devices that signal customers if products have been jolted or tipped.

"No dissatisfied customer" is the company's motto. Many preach it, but BEST and Marguerite live by it. BEST calls each customer within six to 12 months after purchase to check on satisfaction. One hundred customer-service telephone lines—47 of them toll-free—operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

BEST exports to over 120 countries, and has wholly-owned subsidiaries headquartered in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Canada and Mexico. Advertising and literature are printed in



Marguerite M. Paul
Entrepreneurial Success Award Winner, 1994

14 different languages. In 1992, BEST received Wisconsin's Export Award.

Marguerite attributes some of the company's success to financial assistance provided by the SBA in the form of a direct energy loan in 1979 and a loan guarantee of \$185,000 in 1982. These loans enabled BEST to continue research and development, to expand existing product lines and to create new products. The loans funded advertising and marketing, capital improvements to the Necedah manufacturing facilities, and the addition of high-caliber employees.

BEST Power Technology, Inc., has evolved from an intriguing idea into a immensely successful company, a significant exporter and a major employer in a rural area.

"Our dream was to be successful," says Marguerite, to provide jobs and to reward the stockholders who put their trust in our ability to make a go of it. Many times during those early years, we did not know whether we could survive. The hours were long, the money was scarce, and the doors

kept wanting to close. But with a dream, fortitude, good will and God's blessing, the impossible became a reality."

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

William Jeffrey Thompson

President

Peripheral Outlet, Inc.

327 East 14th Street

Ada, Oklahoma 74820

(405) 332-6581

He is not just an ordinary 22-year-old University of Oklahoma senior, majoring in finance and expecting to graduate next December. He is also the owner and president of Peripheral Outlet, Inc., a distributor and reseller of Apple-Macintosh computer memory products, monitors and accessories that is recognized worldwide as a leader in the computer peripherals industry.

He is Jeff Thompson and his amazing tale of entrepreneurial success began in 1981, as a ten-year-old delivering the *Ada Evening News*. While other kids rode bikes after school for pleasure, Jeff rode his on a paper route. He demonstrated his instinctive salesmanship by increasing the route from 50 papers to 150 papers a day. Seven years later, Jeff's accomplishments and enthusiasm were rewarded with the Oklahoma Press Association's Newspaper Carrier of the Year award.

At 13, Jeff took over a small computer bulletin board which had previously been managed by an adult. Through the job, Jeff expanded his knowledge of the computer business. He realized he possessed not only a natural ability for earning money with the bulletin board, but also for identifying computer problems and fixing them.

By 1987, Jeff, now 16, was not content merely earning excellent grades in high school, playing the trumpet in the marching band, and participating in other traditional teen-age activities. He established a sales and service business called *Peripheral Outlet* in the basement of his family's home, funded with \$2,500 saved from his newspaper route.

The company primarily bought used Macintosh computers, repaired them, cleaned them up, installed more memory and resold them, usually at a few hundred dollars profit. Ever the businessman, Jeff even offered a lifetime warranty. Not a bad deal considering, as he explained to one customer, "I'm only 16. Think how long a lifetime is for me!"

The company grew as Jeff began to advertise in the Oklahoma City and Dallas newspapers. In 1989, he changed the company's focus. Gradually, the repair business was dropped, the sale of Apple-Macintosh memory became the emphasis, and the company took off. Jeff, who considers himself to be more of a marketing whiz than a computer whiz, began placing small advertisements in national Macintosh publications. Within 12 months, the company had moved from the family basement to an 1,800-square-foot office in a downtown building. Worldwide sales were about \$500,000 for 1989.

Jeff was not daunted by the reality that *Peripheral Outlet* was headquartered in a small town in Oklahoma when most of his competitors were based in California's Silicon Valley or Austin, Texas, another huge computer hub. Jeff insisted on keeping *Peripheral* in Ada to bolster the economy of his hometown, even resisting moving the company 60 miles to Norman, where he was to attend the university. His decision proved advantageous for Pontotoc County; the company provides jobs and returns hundreds of thousands of dollars to the local economy. Jeff recruits salespeople



William Jeffrey Thompson
Young Entrepreneur of the Year, 1994

from the Ada area rather than hire industry professionals from the outside. He has trained these people—some of whom have only a high school education and could not look forward to high-income jobs—to become experts in the sale of the company's products.

In 1990, when Jeff was a high school senior, his company employed a staff of four and recorded sales of \$3 million. In 1992, company sales were \$8 million, the number of employees increased to 18, and products were exported to even more foreign countries. In 1993, a banner year for *Peripheral Outlet*, sales shot up more than 40 percent from 1992 and profits were high. On July 1, 1993, the company was incorporated, *Peripheral Outlet, Inc.*

Jeff's business acumen has been recognized by many. In 1991, Oklahoma Governor David Walters honored him with a commendation for Distinguished Entrepreneurial Achievement. In November 1992, the president-elect, Bill Clinton, selected Jeff to join several hundred national leaders in Little Rock, Ark., at a presidential economic conference. Jeff was the youngest person invited.

Jeff Thompson is an intellectually curious risk-taker who possesses a solid work ethic. He has distinguished himself as one of the nation's brightest and most enterprising young business owners.

Small Business Exporter of the Year **Gordon F. Thomsen**

CEO & Chairman of the Board

Trail King Industries, Inc.

300 East Norway (P.O. Box 1064)

Mitchell, South Dakota 57301

(605) 996-6482

Thinking big is something Gordon Thomsen does partly because he has to—he manufactures massive trailers. Gordon's company is the largest manufacturer of specialized trailers in the country. Trail King offers a complete line of light, medium, and heavy duty trailers, built to the customer's specifications. Gordon successfully exports his trailers to Canada and other countries, overcoming tremendous difficulties due to the trailers' cumbersome sizes and the complex and varied worldwide regulations confronting the industry.

Trail King Industries was founded by Gordon in 1974 in his Mitchell home; the entire staff consisted of Gordon, his wife Shirley, and two additional employees. Originally named *Western Ag-Sales, Inc.*, the company distributed a variety of agricultural equipment and represented several trailer manufacturers.

Trailers quickly became the specialty of the company. One of the trailer lines Gordon found most promising was the "Trail King", then manufactured by Plains Industries of Mitchell. *Western Ag-Sales* purchased Plains Industries in 1977.

The company began trailer manufacturing in earnest and the corporate name was changed to *Trail King Industries, Inc.* in 1983. As sales doubled and then tripled, the company began a series of moves and

The Small Business Advocates and Special Award Winners



*Gordon F. Thomsen
Small Business Exporter of the Year, 1994*

expansions. Trail King Industries now has corporate headquarters that total more than 267,000 square feet.

Trail King began advertising in Canada, and Central and South America in the mid-1980s that resulted in record-breaking Canadian sales and a substantial increase in the total sales volume. When Canada fell into a recession, trailer sales sagged substantially for two years. Instead of pulling out, Trailer King continued to advertise and 1994 fiscal year projections indicate sales in Canada will be near 1991 levels.

Gordon believes that sales in Mexico and South America are due in part to a continued advertising presence. In addition to videotape conversion to international formats, Trail King's basic sales literature has been translated for use in the larger, non-English speaking markets.

Gordon's willingness to tackle the tough jobs other companies won't touch resulted in the production of the widest trailer ever to be manufactured by Trail King Industries. When Chile's state-owned copper mining company required a trailer designed for hauling 130-ton blast-hole drills, Trail King drew upon its technological expertise to produce a customized trail-

er measuring 20 feet wide and 66.5 feet long. Built in two sections, final assembly was completed at the mining facility site.

Gordon takes market research seriously, and adapts his trailers to the countries to which they are shipped. Gordon believes business people should be open to new ideas and become familiar with foreign specifications and regulations. He says "When we shipped trailers to Switzerland, we didn't sell the same thing we had in this country. You have to adapt to the different countries of the world."

Trade missions are a form of marketing highly touted by Gordon. "We ought to have more trade missions originating from the Midwest," he advises, "and if people want to export, the embassies overseas are the most cooperative people." He has made trade missions to Japan, Taiwan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and other countries.

A member of the Truck Trailer Manufacturers Association, the South Dakota Export Council, and many of the major organizations that serve the trailer industry, Gordon volunteers his time, energy, and experience to small companies interested in exporting.

In addition to Trail King, Gordon started his own advertising agency in 1980. In 1984, he bought a Mitchell radio station and spent \$118,000 to revamp it. It is now a 24-hour, 100,000-watt operation.

Gordon is a business realist and an export enthusiast. He says, "Our world is shrinking, and the marketplace is expanding. Many people are worried about the onslaught of foreign imports, and how imports will affect their business. We need to stop worrying and take aggressive action to become a part of the global marketplace."

National SCORE Chapter of the Year

Northeast Tennessee Chapter 584

Chapter 584 of northeast Tennessee is the 1994 SCORE Chapter of the Year. Congratulations to Robert Graham, Chapter Chairman, and the members of this very busy and productive chapter.

Operating from donated space from two local area chambers of commerce and the First Tennessee Bank, the Northeast Tennessee SCORE Chapter covers a territory of five counties. It has produced *The Small Business Startup and Management Guide*, that educates clients on the subtleties and specifics of business practices; *Starting a New Business in Tennessee*, which denotes all of the appropriate licensing offices, public service departments,



*Robert W. Graham
Chapter Chair, Northeast Tennessee
Chapter 584
National SCORE Chapter of the Year, 1994*



James T. Garvey
President
National SCORE Association

newspapers and Chamber of Commerce offices in each of the five counties it serves; and *The Northeast Tennessee Small Business Commercial Lending Resource Guide*, that categorizes local lending institutions.

**Congratulations to SCORE on its
30th anniversary!
Keep up the good work!**

Prime Contractor of the Year
Dynerics, Inc.
 Ft. Walton Beach, Florida
Dr. R. Duane Hays
Senior Vice President

Dynerics is a dynamic, employee-owned business that provides a highly motivated team of professionals who solve complex problems of national interest. The company, with its headquarters in Huntsville, Ala., and offices in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and Dayton, Ohio, has 280 employees and annual revenues of \$30 million. In its 19 year history, Dynerics has earned an outstanding reputation for its expertise in radar system performance evaluation, aerodynamic support, object-based modeling and simulation, electro-optical/infrared

sensors, optics, exploitation of foreign systems, and electronic and optical hardware. Dynerics is a prime contractor for large contracts with extensive subcontractor participation. Dynerics' teams support the Space and Strategic Defense Command, the Army Missile Command, the Air Force Development Test Center, and other customers in contracts ranging from \$16.3 million to \$250 million.

Subcontractor of the Year
ACCRA Manufacturing, Inc.
Lynnwood, Washington

Joseph M. Rieger
President

Daniel G. Lyon
Vice President

ACCRA Manufacturing, Inc., was founded in March 1978. Initial sales were targeted at the electronics industry, but the company soon entered the aerospace market and was certified by Boeing in 1984. ACCRA has established a reputation for excellence based in part on its ability to manufacture machine parts from material previously manufactured as forgings or castings, thus saving customers thousands of dollars. ACCRA continually strives to maintain high standards in the machining of castings, die forgings, and multilevel assemblies. It utilizes a fully automated accounting and manufacturing control system. The manufacturing programming department is equipped with the latest software, a CAD/CAM system which interfaces with customer software allowing ACCRA to retrieve drawings and data directly from customer files. The company's motto is "Precision with Pride." ACCRA was awarded Boeing's sustained DI-9000 approval of their Quality System in December 1991. ACCRA, housed in an 18,000 square-foot facility, employs 47 people.

Small Business Institute
Cases of the Year
Graduate Winner

School: Seattle University
Seattle, Washington
Director: Dr. Harriet Stephenson
Students: John Hartquist, Jr.
Junko Imai
William Lauby

The Seattle team of John Hartquist, Jr., Junko Imai and William Lauby, worked with a retail nursery and florist client to increase the cost-effectiveness of the firm's financial, marketing and management practices. Their recommendations were targeted to increase the return on sales to approximately 4.5 percent and to yield a return on equity of approximately 28 percent.

Nominated by:
John C. Bowe
Boeing Commercial Airplane Group
Seattle, Washington

Undergraduate Winner

School: Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana
Director: Nancy G. Dodd
Students: Ann Flint
John Crooks

Montana State University students Ann Flint and John Crooks, and their instructor, Dr. Dodd, consulted with a cattle ranch owner to determine the feasibility of recreational ranching and make recommendations for implementation.

Nominated by:
Ralph K. Frangioni, Jr.
Air Force Development Test Center
Eglin AFB, Florida

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U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business

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Paul Wellstone - MN
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Herbert H. Kohl - WI
Carol Moseley-Braun - IL

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National Business Association
National Business Owners Association
National Federation of
Independent Business
National Restaurant Association
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Congratulations...
NEBS Salutes This Year's
Small Business Persons of the Year!

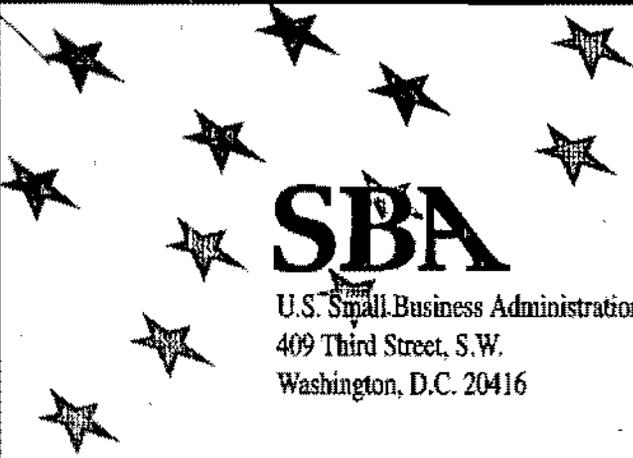
We are pleased to extend our congratulations to all this year's Small Business Winners. Your hard work, determination and entrepreneurial spirit have helped spark the U.S. economy and have created nearly two-thirds of all new jobs in this country. NEBS commends each of you for your accomplishments and the contributions you've made to America's continued growth.

Keep up the good work!

NEBS is proud to be a sponsor of this year's Small Business Week celebration and a continuing supporter of Small Businesses throughout America. We look forward to serving each of you in the future.



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Small Business Winners
for
1995



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



Message from the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Welcome to Washington, D.C., as you celebrate Small Business Week 1995. Coming from a variety of backgrounds, each of you has made significant contributions to your community and the nation. Not only have you beaten the odds by operating a successful business, you have also created jobs, strengthened the tax base, and volunteered time and resources to the benefit of all. Strong and competitive small businesses like yours were crucial to our recent economic recovery, and they are vital to America's future.

Our most recent figures on small business growth demonstrate that we are on the right track. In 1993, the number of new corporations increased 6 percent, and the number of new firms with employees rose 5.8 percent. Of an estimated 3.3 million jobs created in 1994, more than 2 million were created by industries dominated by small businesses. They generate more than 52 percent of all sales and half of the domestic private-sector output.

To sustain this growth, our Administration will continue to work on those issues that you have told us are most important — greater access to capital and less red tape. We are committed to helping you compete in the global economy, and we will continue to give you the modern technological capabilities and the information you need to export your products. An effective partnership between the public and private sectors helps you — and every American — gain the tools needed to succeed. Your success is America's success.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to recognize the many contributions made by small businesses and, in particular, your special accomplishments.

Congratulations to each and every one of you.

Bill Clinton



Message from the Administrator

Welcome to your nation's capital and to Small Business Week 1995. Congratulations on having been chosen as one of the best entrepreneurs in the country. We are here to recognize your accomplishments, your leadership and your entrepreneurial spirit.

You, and America's other small business owners, lead the world in innovation, employ more than half the workers in the United States, and serve as examples of the unequalled success of the free enterprise system.

You create new businesses and new jobs. You turn around businesses that are floundering and thereby save jobs. You find safer, better ways to do things, improving the quality of life and preserving the environment. You make great personal sacrifices, work long, hard hours, and often take enormous risks. And if all that were not enough, you also give generously to your communities in talent, time and resources.

At a time when many large companies are shrinking, small businesses continue to be established at the rate of more than 300,000 a year, clear evidence that the American Dream is alive and well. Successful businesses like yours inspire us to take risks and to pursue our entrepreneurial visions.

I am proud to represent the SBA and its men and women who serve every day as your advocates, counselors and partners. In that capacity, let me congratulate you and invite you to enjoy several days filled with interesting activities for you and your family and guests.

I look forward to meeting you personally this week.

Sincerely,

Philip Lader
Administrator

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SMALL BUSINESS WEEK 1995

THE STATE SMALL BUSINESS PERSONS OF THE YEAR

THE SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATES

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS AWARD WINNERS

THE SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS

**The State
Small Business
Persons
of the Year
1995**

Judy Brown Montgomery, Owner

Judy's Place
2007 Peach Orchard Road
Hartselle, Alabama 35640
(205) 773-2537

Can a woman with dyslexia, no business experience and no financing build a successful business from the ground up? If you say no, you clearly have not met Judy Montgomery. Her business has grown from a small craft shop in a cotton field in rural Alabama to two nationally known framing shops with nearly \$1 million a year in sales. Judy built this unique store with a commitment to excellence, an unwillingness to give up, and an innate sense of the trends in and needs of the custom-framing market. Her shop offers custom framing and design as well as restoration and preservation of antique documents and art.

Judy has overcome a series of seemingly overwhelming obstacles. Her first was convincing officials at SouthTrust Bank to loan her the money to build her first store without prior business experience or a business plan. After managing that feat, she opened Judy's Place and offered painting supplies, art and some of her first frame creations. During her first years in business, she faced heavy competition from an area WalMart, which offered many of the same items at a lower price. In order to distinguish her products, she realized that she would have to specialize. Her dyslexia prevented her from studying from books, so she signed up for as many seminars — where she could learn by observation — as she could. She learned about custom framing and was the first of only six framers in Alabama to become certified. She taught her customers about quality and enjoyed watching her reputation grow by word of mouth.

Through her presence at training seminars and her ability to learn new techniques quickly, Judy now often finds herself in the position of teacher rather than student. Her french-matting technique makes artwork out of the frame itself, using colorful silks, linens, suedes or moirés trimmed with such accessories as foil, marble paper or ribbon. So popular is this technique that her work is featured annually at Framarama in New York City, and the training sessions that she holds in her home each year are sellouts. Judy's Place



Judy Montgomery
1995 Alabama Small Business
Person of the Year

trains employees of the Bombay Company in framing and french-matting and is a test-marketer for 3M and United Manufacturers.

Judy's 17 employees are some of the highest-paid laborers in Hartselle and receive a generous benefits package. She is an active member of the Hartselle Chamber of Commerce and serves on the boards of the local American Cancer Society and the Southern Wildlife Festival. She is also president of the board of directors of the River Oaks Center.

D. Larry Wilmarth, President

The Surveyors Exchange
3301 DeArmont Road
P.O. Box 111037
Anchorage, Alaska 99516
(907) 345-6500

Humble beginnings...a fitting description of The Surveyors Exchange in the early years. Larry Wilmarth started what was then called Grade Stakes and Supplies in 1969, making wood stakes out of scrap wood and retailing them out of the family's mobile home.

Larry sometimes worked two or three jobs to make ends meet, rising at 4 a.m. to work at his other jobs and then returning home to work past midnight cutting stakes in the shop. During the day, while Larry's father cut stakes, his wife, Judith, handled the books and phones, in addition to supervising her two kids and babysitting five others. Larry also enlisted the help of then 4- and 3-year-old Donna and David to stack and bundle the stakes. At 2:00 p.m., Judith would bundle the seven kids in the car and make deliveries for the day. Sales totaled \$4,000 that year.

Today, The Surveyors Exchange is a highly successful business, which provides state-of-the-art surveying equipment, radios and supplies to federal, state and local governments, surveying firms, contractors, Alaska Native corporations, and mining, geophysical and exploration companies. The firm currently has 19 employees



Larry Wilmarth
1995 Alaska Small Business
Person of the Year

and sales totaling \$2.4 million. Larry is also cultivating a secondary market in developing countries for good-quality, used surveying instruments.

Larry's road to success hasn't been without its potholes. The embezzlement of more than \$350,000 from the company by a former employee, and the failure of the bank where Larry secured an SBA loan for expansion into radio service and repair, each presented significant challenges for the savvy businessman. But Larry's personal integrity and reputation as a highly respected businessman in the community prevailed. He convinced creditors and FDIC officers who took over the loan that he would be able to repay in a timely manner. A distinguished entrepreneur worthy of recognition, Larry owns a total of five companies located in Alaska, Oregon, Hawaii and Eastern Russia, and employs a total of 32 people.

Larry is also an active member of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the World Trade Association.

Denis J. Young, President

Gary D. Young, Vice President

Jeannine A. Young, Secretary

Young's Farm
P.O. Box 147
Dewey, Arizona 86327
(520) 632-7272

The slogan for Young's Farm is "A Wonderful Family Experience," and it is just that. Located in Dewey, Ariz., a small rural community near Prescott, the business began in 1978 as a partnership between Elmer Young and his two sons, Denis and Gary, when they bought a neighboring farm. The business has grown from an initial fresh-produce stand by the side of the road to an operation that includes a retail store, a restaurant, a bakery, and a poultry slaughtering and processing plant.

In 1992 Denis and Gary obtained ownership of the business. The size of the operation has nearly doubled in the last four



Denis Young
1995 Arizona Small Business
Person of the Year



years, and Young's Farm had sales of \$2.3 million in 1994.

As each part of the operation expands, the Youngs build the capabilities of the others. For example, their poultry business has become the most important element of the farm in terms of being a catalyst for growth. The store started as a simple distribution point for fresh produce (especially corn) grown on the farm and now meets a high demand for its locally grown meat, poultry, eggs and produce. The restaurant boasts hearty country-style breakfasts and lunches and has plans to serve a Thanksgiving harvest dinner this year. Each year, the farm hosts a pumpkin festival, a Memorial Day pie festival, an Easter sunrise breakfast and service, and a farm auction.

The Youngs work together as a team: Denis concentrates on the business end and Gary on the farming operations. Gary's wife, Jeannine, brings her talents of organization and events planning to the farm.

The Youngs have been careful to plan their growth, realizing that too-rapid expansion could strangle their resources. They also know that diversification of their activities is vital to survival and plan their operations for greater sales opportunities throughout the year, rather than just in the summer or holidays.

This not only stabilizes their income, but also provides more regular employment opportunities for local residents. With 80 full-time and 120 part-time employees, Young's Farm has become the largest private-sector employer in the Dewey area.



Gary Young
1995 Arizona Small Business
Person of the Year



Jeannine Young
1995 Arizona Small Business
Person of the Year

**The State
Small Business
Persons
of the Year
1995**

Avis B. Bailey, President

Avis Nissan, Inc.
3372 N. College St.
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703
(501) 442-4251

When Avis Bailey and her two partners bought the local Nissan dealership in Fayetteville in 1991, they faced a significant challenge: winning back the confidence of potential customers. With hard work and imaginative marketing, Avis turned the troubled dealership around, doubling both employment and sales over the past three years and establishing the dealership as a major player in northwest Arkansas.

Avis, the youngest of six children from Prairie Grove, Ark., married right out of high school and took a bank job in Tulsa, Okla. Twelve years later, she was a single parent and returned to Arkansas to work for her brother at a transmission-repair and tow shop in Fayetteville. In 1971 she entered the automobile business as a cashier at the Pontiac/Cadillac dealership in Fayetteville — one of her three jobs at the time.



Avis Bailey
1995 Arkansas Small Business
Person of the Year

Within six months, she was the dealership's bookkeeper. A year-and-a-half later, she started selling Pontiacs and Cadillacs and became one of the state's top salespeople over the next 10 years. She finally worked her way up to manager of the Pontiac-Cadillac dealership before leaving to purchase her own business in February 1991.

The business was nearly bankrupt, its image and credibility destroyed. In order to win back that lost credibility and good will, Avis put into action a simple yet effective sales plan — make honest deals and give the customers what they want, a strategy she calls "going the extra mile to ensure the customer is satisfied."

Avis added some creative advertising pitches. Every July, she holds a promotion to guess how long it will take a block of ice weighing several tons to melt in the hot summer sun. The tonnage has gone up every year, along with the

prizes awarded and sales of Nissans. July is Avis's biggest sales month every year.

The dealership has grown from 12 employees in 1991 to 30 today, and Avis has doubled sales to more than 1,100 cars and trucks in 1994 — \$11.7 million in total sales. Avis and her partner have also bought four more automobile dealerships in Arkansas.

Despite the demands of working long hours, Avis gives to the community. She works with and is a member of the chambers of commerce in both Fayetteville and Springfield and is involved in a number of other community projects. She is also an avid supporter of both the men's and women's athletic programs at the University of Arkansas.

Max P. Schlienger, President

Retech, Inc.
100 Henry Station Road
P.O. Box 997
Ukiah, California 95482
(707) 462-6622

Max Schlienger had one of those life-defining moments in 1963: after suddenly being transferred to another city as a plant manager for a large company, he realized how much he valued his autonomy. Rather than moving with the company, he took the skills he had built and started Schlienger Engineering, manufacturing systems for melting and processing high-performance metals for the commercial and military aerospace industry. In 1970 Max sold 80 percent of the firm to Corning. Five years later, he bought back the firm, moved it and renamed it Retech, Inc. The firm manufactures specialized equipment used to melt, refine and cast high-grade metals and alloys. Most of its customers made components for the aerospace industry. Since its origin, the company has grown from three employees to 168.



Max Schlienger
1995 California Small Business
Person of the Year

One of Retech's biggest challenges was that of defense downsizing after the massive buildup

of the 1980s. In 1988, 77 percent of its \$17 million dollars came from defense/aerospace-related industries; in 1989 sales dropped by more than half, and by 1991 they were under \$5.7 million.

Max needed to redefine his market and turned to hazardous-waste cleanup. In 1989 Retech built the first Plasma Arc Centrifugal Treatment system, designed to stabilize hazardous metals, destroy organics and produce a chemically inert glassy slag that can be easily disposed of. In 1994 Retech's sales increased dramatically to a projected \$21.5 million, with about 89 percent of it coming from the new technologies. This year Retech began construction to expand its engineering and manufacturing facility. In March 1995, Max sold an interest in the firm to a division of Lockheed-Martin in order to expand worldwide use of Retech's environmental-cleanup technology and equipment.

Besides Max's activities in industry, he supports education and is on several community-oriented committees. He has dedicated time, equipment and training to local schools to update their equipment and to ensure that what students learn in the classroom will help them in the work place. Retech employees are reimbursed the cost of tuition and texts for employment-related classes.

Max serves as the subcommittee chair for hospice care at a local hospital and serves on the governing board of the Ukiah Valley Medical Center. As the area business representative to the California Economic Revitalization Team, he brings his expertise to state and federal efforts. Retech supports the local blood drive, United Way, and other charities. It has also adopted a stretch of highway for litter clean-up and is sensitive to the concerns of its residential neighbors. Max is so well-liked by his employees that they nominated him for this award.

Gina R. Day, President

Diane M. Greenlee, Vice President

Rockies Brewing Company
2880 Wilderness Place
Boulder, Colorado 80301
(303) 444-8448

If there was any doubt that women are now players in every aspect of small business, the success of Rockies Brewing Co. and its two female owners instantly dispels it. Gina Day and Diane Greenlee head the oldest operating microbrewery in the United States, an industry that has been traditionally male-dominated.



The company produces award-winning high-quality, hand-crafted ales in small batches for distribution throughout Colorado and 11 other western states. Production has increased from 3,000 barrels in 1990, when Gina and Diane took ownership of Rockies Brewing Co., to an estimate 26,000 barrels in 1994.

These two talented entrepreneurs have produced a successful turnaround of a failing business and have demonstrated extraordinary results. They immediately streamlined product and facilities management and improved relations with their distributors. An aggressive marketing campaign of their new, more consistent products led to a turnaround from revenues of \$870,000 and a net loss in 1991, to revenues over \$3 million with a net profit in just two years. Total employment has grown from 20 employees to 60 and is expected to surpass 80 within the next couple of years.



*Gina Day and Diane Greenlee
1995 Colorado Small Business Persons of the Year*

Located at the base of the foothills in Boulder, Rockies Brewing Co. and its on-site pub make a favorite destination for Colorado visitors and residents of the Boulder area. Every batch of Rockies Brewing Co. product begins with the freshest barley, hops, quality yeast and Arapahoe Glacier water. These ingredients produce a variety of styles with distinct flavors, which range from a hearty stout or porter to a lighter Boulder Extra Pale Ale or Rockies Premium Ale.

Gina Day says, "The tastes of American beer consumers are becoming more educated and more diversified. Increasingly, Americans are looking for flavor, richness and uniqueness in their beer." Enter the microbrewery, which caters to a market that now approaches its beer-drinking like a wine connoisseur. Rockies' products took top honors in the Great American Beer Festival in 1992, 1993 and 1994.

**The State
Small Business
Persons
of the Year
1995**

Richard C. Flath, President/Owner

Flath & Associates Consulting, Inc.
105 Huntington Street
New London, Connecticut 06320
(203) 443-2020

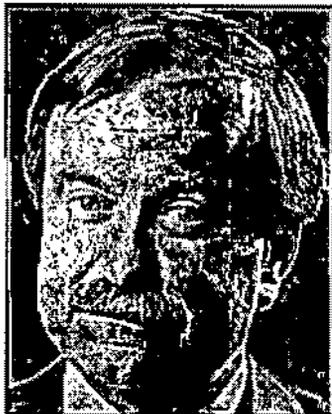
Practical solutions to real problems — that's the motto of Flath & Associates Consulting, a firm specializing in human-resource development. Founded by Rick Flath in 1989 amidst stiff competition from larger firms and a recession that hit New England especially hard, the firm has made a name for itself in both the public and private sectors.

Flath & Associates provides services in compensation planning and implementation, human-resource policy and compliance issues, labor relations, safety and health issues, and training programs in management development, supervisory skills and outplacement.

It is in this last area that Flath & Associates has gained high visibility for providing a model career-transition program that has trained thousands of outplaced workers in job-search skills. One of the largest firms in Connecticut offering this type of program, it has been lauded by the Department of Labor for its work. Rick instructs outplaced employees in the job-hunting process, provides them with the confidence to go out and get the job, and helps them take their experience and apply it to other professions.

Today the firm has five employees, \$300,000 in sales and an impressive clientele, from Fortune 500 companies to nonprofits to municipalities. It has three offices in Connecticut and has a unique market focus as a fully qualified outsourced-human-resource department. A key element for the company is its commitment to its clients to help them in all their human-resource needs.

Rick is a noted speaker and writer who has given some 25 speeches in the last two years. He has published dozens of articles as well as a business book, "How to Develop an Effective Compensation Program." He is an officer and board member of several non-profit corporations and has been instrumental in the revitalization of New London. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of New Haven.



Rick Flath
1995 Connecticut Small Business
Person of the Year

Dominick A. Pulieri, President

Grotto Pizza, Inc.
4299 Highway One
County Corporate Center
Rehoboth Beach, Delaware 19971
(302) 227-3567

The word "grotto" may mean "cave" in Italy, but in Delaware it means one thing: pizza, and lots of it. Placed end to end, the pies sold by Grotto Pizza each year would stretch over 100 miles, longer than the state of Delaware itself! But Grotto Pizza was no overnight success. Dominick Pulieri and his brother-in-law, Joe Pagliante, went to Rehoboth Beach in 1960 because they had heard pizza hadn't reached this resort area yet. They thought this meant an automatic corner on the market. They soon discovered, though, that no competition meant no market. Local people weren't interested in the unfamiliar "ethnic" food; however, vacationers had at least heard of the product, even though it didn't have the national recognition it has today. On its first day of business, the pizza take-out stand sold only two pies.

Dominick, the 17-year-old manager of the business, didn't give up. He and his sister Mary Jean, Joe's wife, stood on the sidewalk handing out free samples to skeptical vacationers. Their perseverance paid off. Since that modest start 35 years ago, Grotto Pizza has expanded into a corporation operating 10 restaurants in Delaware and Pennsylvania, realizing sales of over \$20 million in 1994, and employing 1,600 people during the peak season. Dominick is now president of Grotto Pizza, Inc. of Delaware.



Dominick Pulieri
1995 Delaware Small Business
Person of the Year

Dominick is famous for saying, "You're never ever THERE." The company continues to look for ways to expand and improve product quality and customer service. He and his staff regularly attend industry trade shows to learn about state-of-the-art equipment and processes. They've introduced many innovations, including conveyor ovens, a computerized ordering system and a pump system for spreading sauces on pizzas. The company also employs a full-time entertainment director responsible for booking talent at the various restaurants.

Dominick's personal compassion and generosity are as well known as his pizza. Grotto Pizza sponsors many local charities and events, such as the "Slam Dunk to the Beach" basketball scholarship tournament, the MS Society's "Bike to the Bay," and various others. Dominick extends his compassion and generosity to Grotto Pizza employees, too. He wins loyalty by recognizing employees' strengths and accepting their weaknesses. He gives employees second chances. One former inmate from the Delaware Work Release Program has been employed by the company for four years and is now a supervisor in the Wilmington restaurant. Grotto Pizza responds to employees' needs, making health and life insurance available and providing competitive pay, paid vacation and holidays, and other benefits.



Yong K. Kim, President

User Technology Associates, Incorporated
 4301 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 400
 Arlington, Virginia 22203
 (District of Columbia winner)
 (703) 522-5132

If computer-speak is Greek to you, then User Technology Associates, Inc. may have the answer to your information technology needs. But even if you don't need their high-tech services, this is one company that bears watching.

User Technology Associates is going places — fast. For the last three years the company has been ranked among *Inc. magazine's* 500 fastest-growing private companies in the United States and *Washington Technology's* Fast 50 for the fastest-growing private companies in the Washington, D.C., area. The high-tech firm's employee and revenue growth point to phenomenal success. The company started in 1985 with three employees and earned \$50,000 in income that first year. Today, UTA has close to 500 full-time employees and revenues of \$30 million. The reason for this success? The unique vision and philosophy of the company's president and founder, Yong Kim.

Yong founded UTA to bridge the gap between technology and the user. He correctly understood that customers want systems they can understand and use. He noticed that many of his competitors were creating elaborate systems that customers did not want, need, or comprehend. Hence his philosophy: total user support and the user technology concept. Both involve actively listening to the needs of the customer and providing customized solutions to address those needs.

Yong's clients have responded to his approach. UTA has a \$120 million contract backlog. In 1988 UTA received certification under SBA's 8(a) Minority Small Business Contract Set-Aside Program. The company has current contracts with 30 federal agencies and will be hiring up to 100 new employees throughout 1995, just to handle one contract.

Yong is just as committed to his employees as he is to his customers, and education is key. UTA has created an in-house, employee-managed and taught training program. Senior managers teach courses on both technical and management topics, while junior and mid-level employees can participate in a six-month training and mentoring program for future managers.



Yong Kim
 1995 District of Columbia Small Business Person of the Year

UTA is also committed to serving its community. In 1992 Yong initiated UTA's School Partnership Program with a nearby high school. Under the program, UTA employs disadvantaged students and assigns each student to a senior-manager mentor.

Michael F. Balanky, President

Truck Options
 5865 University Boulevard W.
 Jacksonville, Florida 32216
 (904) 731-5222

Those commercials featuring the-kid-inside-the-man driving a four-by-four in the mud are made for Mike Balanky and millions like him. But what looks like a lot of fun can be hard on a vehicle. One of the problems Mike faced was that he couldn't drive his Jeep Cherokee off the road when he went hunting, because of the damage driving in the woods would do to the truck body. Little did he know that his attempts to solve this problem would lead to a successful business.

Mike looked in vain for months to find some sort of protection for the body of his truck, then decided to make his

**The State
Small Business
Persons
of the Year
1995**

own in 1980. Truck Chaps, a camouflage cover with magnetic attachments, was developed and patented over seven years. "It's perfect for those people who want to do some off-the-road driving and also want to use the truck to go to church on Sunday," said Mike. He soon realized the commercial potential of such a product, accurately predicting that the light truck market was going to explode (the full-size pick-up truck was the top-selling vehicle in 1991, 1992 and 1993).

While developing a marketing plan for Truck Chaps, Mike saw yet another opportunity: a retail store that would sell an extensive inventory of aftermarket accessory products for light trucks, vans and sport-utility vehicles. He invested \$35,000 of his savings, convinced private investors in Truck Chaps — mainly friends — to invest in the store, and persuaded a local bank to loan him \$50,000. The



Mike Balanky
1995 Florida Small Business
Person of the Year

store, Truck Options, opened in November 1987. It offers next-day delivery and expert installation on every item sold in the store. If they do not stock a specific item, they find it. A customer software program allows the store to minimize on-hand inventory.

Mike recently used an SBA-guaranteed loan to expand his business. He now operates two locations in north Florida, employs 21 people, and is aggressively marketing franchise opportunities in the area.

Mike received a great deal of training and counseling from the North Florida Small Business Development Center. In return, he has volunteered as an advisor to the mayor of Jacksonville on entrepreneurial issues. Truck Options is an annual sponsor of a local baseball program and produced "Truckin' Mania" in 1991 and "Auto Olympics" in 1993, custom car-and-truck shows benefiting the Special Olympics and the Police Athletic League, respectively. Mike has also served as a team captain for the American Cancer Society's annual fund raiser.

Lee Bufford, President
Beverly Seckinger, Executive Vice President
The Seckinger-Lee Company
3500 Piedmont Road, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30305
(404) 816-7053

At family gatherings throughout the years, Lee Bufford noticed that her Aunt Bobbie Escoc's cheese biscuits were always the first item to disappear amid lavish praise. Lee and Beverly Seckinger, her friend and business partner in an executive search firm, thought that the biscuits might elicit the same response in the general public. They rented a kitchen, spent endless hours after work baking bite-sized cheese biscuits, and held their first "marketing test" in 1985 at a Jimmy Buffett concert. The biscuits got rave reviews, though many doubted that they would sell at the price the partners had come up with after estimating their costs. Never daunted by a challenge, however — Lee was the first female journeyman bricklayer in the state of Georgia — the friends persevered.

Escoc's Cheese Biscuits made their debut in a fiercely competitive market: gourmet food was in and everybody had a product to sell. The initial success was attributed to the exuberant, never-take-no-for-an-answer sales technique of Beverly, who landed their first contract with Macy's in Atlanta. Today, annual sales are over \$2 million, and the company has grown to 28 employees.

Seckinger-Lee now has two lines of gourmet biscuits. Escoc's Cocktail Cheese Biscuits come in the original cheese flavor, bacon-cheese (made to satisfy the suggestion of male clients for a heartier biscuit), and jalapeño cheese. GG's



Beverly Seckinger and Lee Bufford
1995 Georgia Small Business Persons of the Year

Little Dessert Biscuits (named after Lee's Grandma GG) offer three not-too-sweet flavors: butter pecan, cinnamon and chocolate chip. All are marketed worldwide through five department stores, upscale gourmet and gift shops, airlines and luxury hotels. The biscuits are their own best advertisement — travelers who taste them in Atlanta will often do anything they can to find the biscuits once they arrive back home. Beverly and Lee recently won the right to market the original cheese and butter pecan biscuits as an official licensed product of the 1996 Summer Olympic Games.

Beverly and Lee foster a team spirit among their employees and involve all of the staff in marketing efforts. The company is involved in a number of local and national charities, with a special emphasis on organizations oriented to women's and children's issues. One of their main beneficiaries is the Shepard Spinal Center, the largest spinal hospital in Georgia. The company participates in a number of events to benefit the Georgia Alliance for Children, the Task Force for the Homeless, the Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, the Council of Battered Women and the Eggleston's Children's Hospital, among many others. Every year, Seekinger-Lee also donates its products to the "Toast to Buckhead," a fund-raising effort by local restaurateurs, caterers and food manufacturers to benefit the Atlanta Historical Society.

Antoinette D. Sanford, President

David N. Sanford, Vice President

A-D Sanford & Co.
Automated Professional Systems, Inc.
Advanced Retail Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box GH
Agana, Guam 96910
(671) 472-2894

Toni and Dave Sanford are quite used to introducing "firsts" to their native Guam, an especially notable feat in the often hard-charging, fast-changing world of computers and data processing.

In 1986, for example, the couple formed A-D Sanford as the first company offering IBM systems support and accounting/inventory processing services. In 1989 they



teamed to create Automated Professional Systems, Guam's only independent payroll service, offering unrestricted customer banking and customized output for benefit programs and reports.

This was followed in 1991 with another ground-breaking enterprise, the creation of Advanced Retail Solutions, Guam's only authorized industry remarketer for IBM's store systems. As we said, the Sanfords are used to firsts.

Toni is often quoted as saying, "I started this company with nothing but a blank piece of paper and a vision." In the span of eight years, that vision has led to assets that have grown from around \$50,000 the first year to more than \$750,000 in 1994, while equity moved from just over \$50,000 to \$550,000. In this same time frame, the employee roster for all three firms grew from four to 25. Combined sales in 1993 reached \$1.9 million.

Not content to limit accomplishments to the business community, Toni is a much-sought-after speaker who often finds herself giving talks to graduates, social and civic groups, and youth organizations. She also served a term as chairperson for the Guam Chamber of Commerce and was selected in 1993 as the *Guam Business News* Executive of the Year.

Dave splits his spare time among professional, civic and service clubs, notably the Guam Society of Certified Public Accountants and the Guam Chamber of Commerce. Recently, he initiated a continuing education program for the territory's accounting community.



Toni and Dave Sanford
1995 Guam Small Business Persons of the Year

**The State
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Persons
of the Year
1995**

Donald M. Sasaki, Owner/President
Cal-Kona Produce, Incorporated
P.O. Box 16
Kealahou, Hawaii 96750
(808) 322-6033

nonprofit organization for Hawaiian people), Big Island Bounty, Meet-n-Eat Program and several other community causes.

Talk with Hawaii's Don Sasaki about the value of small business and his support is unequivocal — support from the small business community literally saved Don's wholesale fruit and vegetable company.

In the mid-1980s, the food requirements of the tourist trade throughout Hawaii were sufficient to sustain a fairly brisk trade for Don's new firm, Cal-Kona Produce. True, the early days were austere. The company, incorporated in 1984, was operated out of his parents' home. But the many luxury hotels and upscale restaurants dotting Kona-Kohala and Hilo welcomed the opportunity to get fresh locally grown oranges, avocados and tangerines.

With only two employees, first-year sales were about \$200,000. Expansion soon came by way of a new refrigerated transporter, introduction of specialty imports from New Zealand and Australia, and extended service throughout all of Hawaii. But as the '80s drew to a close, tourism began to sputter, and so did the sales of Cal-Kona. New markets had to be found, and quickly.



Don Sasaki
1995 Hawaii Small Business
Person of the Year

Don, raised in a family that owned a small farm, began to look to the neighborhood — the mom-and-pop markets, grocery stores and specialty outlets. The result was not an immediate surge in sales, but a broadening of the customer base and a diversification of the core business. Cal-Kona Produce began to reacquaint itself with stability.

At the same time, Don re-engineered his operation to reduce handling, thereby cutting costs and limiting the potential for damage to the fruits and vegetables. What this has all resulted in today is a solid \$4 million firm that provides welcome employment to 35 Big Island residents.

Aloha — the concept of giving and caring about other people — is a part of Don's personal life. He donates generously to the Hawaii Food Bank, to Hui Malama (a local

Gary L. Mahn, President

Fisher's Office Products, Inc.
825 W. Idaho Street
Boise, Idaho 83702
(208) 345-2403

“Get creative or die!” That's the challenge Gary Mahn faced when large, high-volume discount stores such as Office Depot came to the Boise area. As owner and president of Fisher's Office Products, Gary was ready to meet the challenge.

A wholesaler and retailer of office products for nearly 60 years, Fisher's serves the southwestern Idaho area, providing office supplies, furniture, equipment and executive gifts.

After purchasing Fisher's in 1986, Gary soon discovered that to compete against the new retail giants in town, he would need to carve out a niche in the marketplace.

Gary developed a game plan based on the company's philosophy of commitment to providing quality products and services to customers, and accepting customer needs as first and foremost. He focused his attention on the price- and service-sensitive businesses and purchased a sophisticated computer system which automated the point-of-sale, inventory and general ledger systems and allowed customers to place orders, check backorders, and do price and stock checks. He also obtained an SBA-guaranteed loan, which put the company on more stable financial ground, and joined an independent office-products dealers' cooperative, which saved the company 15 percent to 20 percent on its most commonly sold products and provided the opportunity to service national accounts.



Gary Mahn
1995 Idaho Small Business
Person of the Year

With this strategy, and the move of the company's commercial and retail operations to the historic Broadbent Building in downtown Boise, Gary helped Fisher's to become either the primary or secondary vendor of office supplies to the majority of the 30 largest organizations in Boise. Sales have increased from \$900,000 in 1985 to \$7.5 million in 1994, and the number of employees has grown from 12 to 85 in the past nine years.

Gary is an active member of numerous community and business organizations. He is a co-founder and past president of the Downtown Boise Association, an organization of retailers which sponsors various events to attract shoppers to downtown Boise.

Patricia G. Ewert, President/CEO

Joseph Electronics
8830 North Milwaukee Avenue
Niles, Illinois 60714
(708) 297-4200

After more than 40 years in business, Joseph Electronics was failing fast. Mismanaged by an investment group and abandoned by a bank not interested in saving it, the electronics distributor was on the verge of bankruptcy. Its 46 employees were demoralized and unproductive, and its reputation ruined.

But Pat Ewert saw a golden opportunity and bought the ailing business, then went to work creating the kind of company she wanted to work for. Bringing back respected former top executives, Pat set about to raise the spirits and productivity of her team, in spite of having to lay off 20 percent of the staff and temporarily cut wages. She changed banks, brought in a human-resources-management company, and instituted a wellness campaign that includes a massage therapist. Then there are "fun" days — like Ugly Tie Day, Ethnic Food Day, and, on the coldest day of the year, Taste of the Tropics, complete with beachwear, leis, sunglasses, a putting green and wading pool. Pat arranged for two new mothers to work at home on alternate days; their productivity increased.



Pat Ewert
1995 Illinois Small Business
Person of the Year



She started seminars for employees and customers, instituted Total Quality Management, and tightened financial controls. She refocused the work force into smaller, more efficient departments, increased the sales force, and streamlined operations.

But customer service was the key. Pat knew that her expert staff could provide services that larger firms could not. Her team could not only supply parts, they could also design entire systems. She forged alliances with customers who were willing to pay for the added expertise. Within a year, the company was profitable; sales jumped from \$6.5 million to \$10 million in three years. And in just two years, she made Joseph Electronics one of the top 25 women-owned businesses in Chicago. With more than 40 employees, the company is 80th in sales volume among almost 2,000 electronics distributors nationwide and the largest woman-owned businesses of its type. It is one of the largest Sony and Panasonic replacement-parts distributors in the country. High-profile jobs include the audiovisual system at Chicago's United Center sports facility and a cable installed by CNN at the White House.

Pat is always ready to roll up her sleeves and do hands-on work. Her executive vice president says that "when it comes to the delicate work of modifying circuit boards, she has the hands of a surgeon." She serves her community with the same dedication she gives to running her business and is involved in a number of civic and community activities. Among numerous honors, she was named the 1994 Chicago Woman Business Owner of the Year. Not bad for a woman who once worked as a carnival barker.

Thomas D. Teter, President/Owner

Teter Tool & Die, Inc.
409 Washington Street
La Porte, Indiana 46350
(219) 362-7086

Next time you get on a Boeing 757, you probably won't think of Tom Teter, although he had a hand in producing one of the most important parts — the door. In 1992 his company was chosen by Boeing to produce dies that mold a special kind of aluminum used in jetliner door frames. These present a particular challenge because of the nature of aluminum, and Teter Tool & Die was chosen because of its experience in working with dies for the metal. That first contract led to a continuing relationship with Boeing.

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Persons
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To even be considered, Teter had to have a state-of-the-art system called CATIA — Computer-Aided Three-Dimensional Interaction Application. Teter was the only tool-and-die company within about a hundred-mile radius that had it at that time. The system translates specifications from a diskette into a program that controls a computerized die-making machine. Developed for the aerospace industry, CATIA also allows Teter's employees to send designs by modem to customers for approval. What once took two weeks can now be done in one to six hours.

State-of-the-art equipment is one of the keys to Teter's success. Early on, Tom recognized the need for innovation in his business and has twice replaced all but a few machines with the latest equipment available. His determination to produce the best product by the most innovative means has made Teter Tool & Die a leader in the industry.

In 1951 Tom began an apprenticeship with Mayer Tool & Die. When his father-in-law, John, started Diamond Tool & Die in 1962, Tom went with him. In 1980, in order to buy the company from John's estate, Tom sold his house for the down-payment. The firm has since grown from 11 employees to a three-company operation that employs 60 and is still growing. T-K & Associates is a prototype-development company and Teter Stamping & Fabricating is a low-volume stamping and die-tryout facility; both complement Teter Tool & Die. Sales increased 530 percent to \$6.1 million by 1993.

Tom is very involved with his community, generously giving of his time to numerous activities. He is active in local politics, once running for mayor, and is a member of several professional organizations. He also established a scholarship at Vincennes University for LaPorte High School graduates who want to enter the tool-and-die field and offers apprenticeships at Teter Tool & Die. Tom has been vice president of the LaPorte Jaycees and has served on the board of directors. In 1992 they elected him a J.C.I. Senator, the highest honor a local chapter can award.



Tom Teter
1995 Indiana Small Business
Person of the Year

Walter W. Smith, Chairman/CEO
Thombert, Inc.
316 E. 7th Street N.
Newton, Iowa 50208
(515) 792-4449

Walt Smith's leadership and management skills at Thombert, Inc., his family's successful, 48-year-old manufacturing company, had never faced a test as severe as the one that arose in November 1991. That's when the company's biggest customer — accounting for 35 percent of Thombert's sales — suddenly broke off a 10-year relationship and took its business to a less expensive supplier.

In the face of that shock, Walt stuck with Thombert's strategy of providing quality products and excellent customer service. Rather than pull back and take a defensive position, he continued investing in vertical integration, new equipment and diversification. The strategy paid off, and although profits in 1992 were lower than the previous year, the bottom line set records in 1993 and 1994.

Thombert was founded in 1946 by brothers Thomas and Robert Smith. Walt, fresh from military service and with a degree from Iowa State University in industrial administration, joined the family firm in 1972. After working in purchasing, sales and management, he became president seven short years later. At the time, company sales were \$2.6 million.

Today the firm has \$8 million in sales. It produces high-performance polyurethane wheels and tires as well as custom-manufactured molded polyurethane products for a wide variety of industries. Some 40 percent of Thombert's products are sold as replacement parts throughout North America by a network of independent dealers and distributors. In 1988 ITWC, Inc. was started to produce prepolymers, the raw material Thombert uses; its 1994 sales topped \$3 million, an employee roster of 18. In late 1992, yet another company, CYKO, Inc., was created to market high-quality replacement wheels for inline skates. It employs two so far, with sales of \$250,000.

In 1994 Thombert donated 2 percent of its pre-tax earnings to address community needs. A former Eagle Scout, Walt is active in the Boy Scouts,



Walter Smith
1995 Iowa Small Business
Person of the Year

the United Way, the Newton Development Corporation, and Children & Families of Iowa, as well as numerous other civic organizations. His efforts over the years to facilitate community improvement and enhance the small business sector have made a major difference in the quality of life of the area.



Edward J. Schifman, President

Interconnect Devices, Inc.
5101 Richland Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66016
(913) 342-5544

In an industry that sometimes measures success by as little as 15 one-thousandths of an inch, Interconnect Devices, Inc. has become a giant. That dimension is the size of one of the revolutionary probes made by IDI as a testing device for circuit boards.

IDI was formed in 1979 to supply testing components for the electronics industry. At the time, 96 percent of sales were to a single customer. Ed, who came on as director of marketing in 1981, predicted problems: as long as one client defined the firm's sales, prospects for growth were dim. He ushered in a new era of spring-loaded contact probes, tiny pin-like devices used to test circuit



Ed Schifman
1995 Kansas Small Business
Person of the Year

boards with low-voltage electrical currents. Under his direction, IDI attacked the market with low prices and unheard-of delivery; even today, the company ships 80 percent from stock, and its prices remain extremely competitive.

Ed was named president in 1984. Under his direction, IDI has seen its product line expand dramatically; the original four-page catalog of 1979 is now 110 pages long. Since Ed joined IDI, sales have climbed from \$300,000 to over \$17 million. Where once IDI's employees could fit into a single room, there are now 150 employees on three continents. Today, IDI is the world's largest supplier of probes and receptacles for the Automatic Test Equipment (ATE) industry and the leader in the high-tech, high-profile miniaturization of

this field. To compete in world trade, IDI converted an entire line to metric and offers a metric catalog. The firm has offices in London, Hong Kong, Boston and Los Angeles. With the system it has in place, IDI can make and deliver a product to a Japanese customer faster than a Japanese supplier.

The governing values of IDI state: "Being extraordinary is key ... there is no garden variety here." and "Having fun at it is essential ... laughing is crucial." Ed — who was once a product designer and marketer of toys — has built up a family- and environment-friendly company, which provides family leave, company and individual bonus programs, and tuition reimbursement among its benefits. He and his employees are deeply involved in the community and participate in numerous charity events. Ed has won several awards, including the Blue Chip Award in 1993, exporting honors in 1993 and 1994, Entrepreneur of the Year in Kansas in 1992, and an environmental excellence award in 1994.

William Tullar Jr., President

Michael P. Tullar, Vice President

Tullar Enterprises, Inc.
dba Patti's 1880's Settlement
P.O. Box 111
Grand Rivers, Kentucky 42045
(502) 362-8844

William Tullar Sr. had lost his job and home; all he and his wife, Patti, had left when they moved in with Bill's mother in 1973 could be carried in three suitcases. Little did Bill know then that he and his family would one day build a multimillion-dollar business and help revive an entire region.

Following floods in western Kentucky in 1975, Bill worked as a temporary disaster worker for SBA. Using some of his overtime money, he bought for \$19,900 the tiny Grand Rivers Motel where he'd stayed while working on the disaster relief, and moved Patti and his mom there. Almost 20 years later, their investment has grown into a full-service family entertainment center that combines great food, a mile-long miniature golf course, and a taste of historic Kentucky.

It was Patti's idea in 1977 to open a restaurant. William Jr. — Chip — left graduate school in L.A. to help her start Hamburger Patti's Ice Cream Parlor, a 20-seat restaurant, in her living room. Patti's just managed to survive its first year, generating \$8,000 in sales, but it kept growing and

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growing. Chip's brother Mike came east 12 years ago as head cook and carpenter. In 1991 and 1993, SBA-guaranteed loans helped establish Mr. Bill's — an old-time saloon with a stage for live Opry-style entertainment — and a miniature golf course. This year Patti's 1880's Settlement will generate over \$4 million.

Grand Rivers, originally just a few log cabins between two rivers (now man-made lakes), was built up in the 1890s by millionaire Thomas Lawson, who dreamed of creating an industrial powerhouse. But he bet on iron, and steel made the dream go bust by the 1920s. The Tullars are rebuilding Lawson's dream: his home, one of only two remaining Victorian houses in the town, as well as four Kentucky log cabins have been restored at Patti's 1880's Settlement. The cabins house shops, and an entire Victorian village is planned...as a beginning. The idea is to make Grand Rivers, population 350, "Kentucky's Resort Village." Last year, Patti and Bill retired; Chip and Mike bought the business and continue the family's dream.

Patti's signature menu items include "mile-high" meringue pies, two-inch-thick grilled pork chops, strawberry butter and flower-pot bread; one pie recipe, featured in *Bon Appetit* magazine, is now offered in several restaurants. Bill's puppets are famous, and his petting zoo, which started with a Vietnamese pot-bellied pig, now includes more animals than you can count.

The Tullars have survived competition from chains and copy-cats, seasonal shifts, bad weather, too-rapid growth, unsuccessful expansion, lack of financing, 21 percent interest, power outages, computer crashes, management mistakes and more. Patti's is the area's second largest employer, with about 180 workers in

peak season, and offers a growing benefits package. It draws customers from a 200-mile radius. The Tullars give Christmas parties for more than 600 handicapped children and adults from three states, are equally generous with local organizations and causes, and are very active in the community.

Thomas David Harvey, CEO/Treasurer

Python Corporation
2315 Highway 190 West
Slidell, Louisiana 70460
(504) 649-0916

When David Harvey graduated from high school in 1969, his classmates voted him "Least Likely to Succeed." What they didn't count on was his knack for engineering and innovation, and his determination to build a thriving business from scratch. Today, Python Corp. is one of the largest and fastest-growing companies specializing in concrete restoration and environmental-protection services in the Gulf South market area. Known for setting quality and safety standards, Python is a preferred contractor for such clients as Dupont Chemical, Laidlaw Environmental, Mobil Oil, PPG Industries and the BASF Corp.

While in the Army in the early '70s, David earned the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in electronics and became a member of the President's Honor Guard. Following his discharge, he became a bulldozer operator, but after working 12 hours a day, seven days a week, he figured there must be a better way to make a living. He took a job with another construction firm, where he learned almost every aspect of the field. He worked his way up the ladder at several firms, eventually becoming a vice president of field operations. In 1985, David and Vicki, his wife and company president, started Python out of their home. There were just three employees, almost no equipment, and \$29,174 in total revenues. With the help of an SBA surety bond guaranty in 1987, Python won a contract to rehabilitate the understructure of the University of New Orleans Library. It also began branching out into con-



Chip Tullar
1995 Kentucky Small Business
Person of the Year



Mike Tullar
1995 Kentucky Small Business
Person of the Year



David Harvey
1995 Louisiana Small Business
Person of the Year

tracts for the petrochemical industry. Today, the firm's work includes structural rehabilitation of bridges, dams, water-control locks, foundations, and corrosion-resistant liners and concrete containment structures for environmental protection. By 1994, Python had 47 employees, more than \$2.12 million in revenues, and a solid reputation for innovation, quality work and pioneering new technology — especially in the use of polymers in concrete repairs.

David treats the employees like family, trains them well, and gives them the opportunity to perform. As a result, employees are often cited for their motivation and ability to work without supervision.

David provided technical assistance to the state of Louisiana in writing its comprehensive policy manual on structural repairs of concrete cracks. He is an active member in local community activities, including the Slidell Boys and Girls clubs and the Slidell Lions Club, and is a pacesetter in this year's United Way of New Orleans campaign.

Jane A. Theberge, President

Custom Stitchers, Inc.
550 Lisbon Street
Lewiston, Maine 04240
(207)784-5143

They all have become household names — Bass, Timberland, Sebago, Zodiac, Eastland, Nordstrom, L.L. Bean, Eddie Bauer and Orvis. They all have one thing in common: Custom Stitchers, Inc. of Lewiston, Maine.

Custom Stitchers was founded by Jane Theberge and two partners in 1984, using the assets and machinery left from her father's contract stitching business, a casualty of the industry's flight to offshore production. A third-generation shoemaker, Jane built her company on a willingness to produce the short runs and meet the impossible deadlines common in the shoe-manufacturing business. Within two years, she bought out her partners. But the U.S. shoe industry was going into a severe decline: more and more companies were depending on cheap overseas labor. By 1991 Custom Stitchers was nearly done in, and Jane's 50 loyal workers faced a bleak future.

Three things turned the business around: the "Made in the USA" campaign, an SBA-guaranteed loan, and Jane. She developed a strategic plan that included client diversification, a proper marketing mix, and expanded geographic boundaries. A new appreciation for work done by American



workers, flexibility — one day it's sneakers and the next, wingtips — and Jane's tenacious pursuit of high-quality jobs helped set the business on the road to success.

Today, Custom Stitchers and American Pride, a subsidiary started in 1992, employ 200 people and can produce 20,000 pairs of shoes a week. Between 1991 and 1993, sales increased more than 370 percent to \$5.7 million. A new training program teaches workers the skills they need before they go on-line, preserving the high quality Custom Stitchers is known for. And a recent training grant for the unemployed created 18 new jobs.

In addition to running two businesses, Jane finds time to serve on several boards, foundations and committees. She is also a pilot. In January 1994, Jane was presented the Business Leadership Award by the local chamber of commerce.



Jane Theberge
1995 Maine Small Business
Person of the Year

Daniel J. Roche, President

Rapid Systems Solutions, Inc.
8850 Stanford Boulevard, Suite 4000
Columbia, Maryland 21045
(410) 312-0777

In an industry driven by technology, Dan Roche has built a booming business by putting people first. Dan is president of Rapid Systems Solutions, Inc., a systems-integration and software-development company providing technology-based solutions to business problems.

Dan believes, though, that "technology does not solve problems, people using technology solve problems." Rapid Systems Solutions helps clients bridge the technology gap; communication with the end-users is key.

At Rapid Systems Solutions, "rapid" is more than a name, it's a culture. Dan believes that most of his competitors are guilty of taking years to develop applications and systems for their clients. He is redefining the computing-solutions industry by using rapid application development tech-

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Thomas G. Bos, President/CEO

A.D. Bos Company
One West 5th Street
Holland, Michigan 49423
(616) 392-5991



During a snowstorm in 1990, A.D. Bos's warehouse roof caved in. The next day, all deliveries were made on time, as usual. Customers never knew how difficult it was to maintain operations over the next several months; in fact, sales continued to increase — as usual.

That kind of service is a hallmark of the company. Started by Tom Bos's family in the 1920s as the Bos Tobacco and Candy Co., it became the Alvin D. Bos Co. in 1940, named for Tom's father. When Tom took over leadership in 1966, it was a very small business: Tom, his father and one employee. Since then, the A.D. Bos Co. has evolved into one of the largest vending-machine and food-service companies in western Michigan.

Under Tom's leadership, the company has grown from three employees in 1966 to 85, doubling in size every five to seven years. Sales have flourished, increasing from \$3.4 million in 1990 to \$6.1 million in 1994.

The company has not been without its share of troubles, however. During 1982 and 1983, A.D. Bos lost money. The country was in a recession, and the company, which was highly leveraged, was paying 20 percent interest rates. Two key employees left, the computerized accounting system crashed, and Alvin died of a heart attack. Tom dealt with this crisis in the same way he built a successful firm: he examined every aspect of the business and determined what was working and what could be done better.

A.D. Bos prides itself on the ability to offer customers innovative services and products. It was the first vending company in Michigan to offer "heart-smart" vending items, value-enhanced cup sizes for beverages, and bean grinders for improved coffee quality.

Tom has been involved in his community for decades. He served in the Coast Guard Auxiliary, teaching boating safety in the winter and volunteering for search and rescue work in the summer. He



Tom Bos
1995 Michigan Small Business Person of the Year

has been active in numerous business and civic organizations and activities, including the Holland Jaycees, the YMCA, the Holland Downtown Development Corporation, the Michigan Junior Achievement Program, the Rotary Club of Holland and the Holland Chamber of Commerce. He has been a deacon of his church since the 1960s, taught Sunday School and sung in the choir. He also reads to a local elementary school class each week.

Carl A. Caspers, Owner/President

Scott J. Schneider, Vice President of Operations

Northwestern Artificial Limb & Brace Company
510 North 25th Avenue
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56303-3255
(612) 251-9392

Northwestern Artificial Limb & Brace — NWAL — is not your average medical facility. There is a fireplace in the cozy waiting room, warm lighting and antiques throughout, as well as a cheerful children's area. Exam rooms, designed for families, are large, with plenty of seating. Each has a television and videotape player, and there is a library of tapes available.



Carl Caspers
1995 Minnesota Small Business Person of the Year

The attention to detail extends to the products NWAL provides. There are stickers and custom laminates, from Power Rangers to Strawberry Shortcake to Harley Davidson, neon colors and, of course, skin tones. The greatest achievement of Carl and Scott, however, is the culmination of nearly 30 years of research and perseverance. The TEC Interface — total



Scott Schneider
1995 Minnesota Small Business Person of the Year

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environment control — is a revolutionary urethane sleeve that an amputee's leg fits into. The TEC acts as a shock and friction absorber between the limb and the prosthesis. NWALs patients come from all over the world and include a Bosnian child, the world's fastest amputee (whose time is just two seconds off of Olympic-runner Carl Lewis'), and an Afghani freedom fighter who thanked Carl for giving him back his life. When successful, as it is in 95 percent of cases, the TEC is a miracle.

To complement the TEC, Carl and Scott also developed a new artificial leg socket design, and more products are in the works. The company produces about 100 custom-fitted TECs a week on a 24- to 48-hour turnaround. An artificial limb can cost from \$1,200 to as much as \$30,000, depending on the componentry.

Carl and Scott support the community by using local vendors whenever possible. They fly in patients from around the world and negotiate hotel discounts for long stays. They donate money, services and time, teach, coach sports, and sponsor national programs for disabled athletes.

The company started in 1978 with Carl and a secretary. Today it employs more than 30 people in a newly expanded 15,000 square-foot facility and 12 outreach clinics. Carl has a particularly personal interest in prosthetics; during his senior year of high school, an accident cost him his left leg below the knee. Scott came to the business in 1988, is now vice president for operations and is heavily involved in research and development for TEC.

Alley Stephen Ballard Jr., President

GoodWood Lumber Company
35 Park Street
Hernando, Mississippi 38632
(601) 429-3500

Being a successful small business owner requires doing your homework, trusting your instincts, and, above all, taking risks. Steve Ballard was willing to do just that. In 1981, he left a secure future as a bank president and opened the Stateline Lumber Company with two of his friends. The company sells hulk wood products and building supplies, and designs and installs docks and fencing for its customers. Stateline survived several turbulent early years in business, weathering both a recession and a very competitive market. In 1986, Steve bought out his partners

and set about to make his company grow. His banking experience had taught him the importance of an aggressive business plan.

He changed the name of the company to GoodWood and opened a second location. He devised a well-defined "identity" campaign to boost his company's recognition in local markets. Rather than compete with large chains and building-supply dealers, he focused on building his company as a "hometown business." His staff is committed to knowing the area and the needs of the customers, and to providing personalized service. One of the strongest emphases is on following up with the customers and anticipating their needs. Steve's managers are capable, competent, people-oriented, and know their market inside-out.

He coped with thin margins and a need for working capital to cover company growth with help from the SBA: a guaranteed loan in 1992 and a line of credit in 1994. With these, he has been able to expand inventory, discount purchases, buy equipment for the company's present and future needs, and manage the balance sheet and income statement. Since 1989, sales have jumped 350 percent. At this point, Steve is considering several options, including expanding into home improvement and paint sales, and is investigating franchising opportunities.

Steve keeps an active interest in his community. His policy is to use local suppliers if at all possible. He is an active member of the chamber of commerce and the DeSoto County Soil and Water Conservation Board, and serves on the board of the First Tennessee Bank. The company regularly contributes time and funds to the 4-H Club and to area schools. The company also donated the materials to build a home for abused and neglected boys in the area.



Steve Ballard
1995 Mississippi Small Business
Person of the Year

James D. Henry, President/CEO

R.C. Wilson Company
126 South Main Street
St. Charles, Missouri 63301
(314) 946-6700



Just say "collection agency," and people tense up — it's something most of us hope we never have to deal with. But say "R.C. Wilson Co.," and you're onto something different. Yes, it's a collection agency, but one with a difference: Jim Henry's philosophy of "providing professional service and outstanding results while maintaining the fine image of [the] client and the dignity of the consumer." Add a few extra services and a positive, supportive environment, and you have the makings of success. Under Jim Henry, this firm has established new industry-wide standards for excellence and changed the image of the business.

When Jim bought the 51-year-old R.C. Wilson Co. in 1985, he took on the challenge of expanding and enhancing the delinquent-account collection services of the agency. He fully computerized the firm, with optical-disk storage, direct on-line capability with clients, and on-line connections for employees working from home. In 1990, it was the first accounts-receivable management firm in Missouri to install a computerized dialing system.

Jim also increased the services available. Innovations encompass loaning employees to clients to meet temporary personnel needs, electronic billing of insurance accounts, and accounts-receivable financing, among others. Over the past 10 years, the company has grown to 114 employees from 25, with over 1,000 clients nationwide. Billings have increased from \$1.25 million to nearly \$4 million, with a success rate nearly 50 percent better than the industry average.

Besides a monthly incentive plan, the firm provides health and dental benefits, profit-sharing, a 401K with 50 percent matching funds, training, tuition for continuing education, and a policy to "promote from within." Many employees have been with the company 20 and sometimes 30 years.



Jim Henry
1995 Missouri Small Business
Person of the Year

Rather than follow the trend to relocate to the suburbs, R.C. Wilson renovated the Masonic Hall (circa 1849) in downtown St. Charles, relying in part on an SBA-guaranteed 504 loan.

Jim and his employees are very active in the community, supporting numerous medical, educational, charitable and professional organizations and causes. During the recent Midwest floods, they piled sandbags, then later helped with flood-relief efforts.

Laura Hanners Wakeman, President

Peter Wakeman, Vice President

Great Harvest Franchising, Inc.
28 South Montana Street
Dillon, Montana 59725
(406) 683-6842

Pete and Laura Wakeman have created a successful business from a very modest beginning. When they were in college, Laura would bake bread between classes, and the couple would sell loaves on the street corner of their college town. Today, they have 88 bakeries operating, 19 in the process of opening, and have a staff of 27 in the local franchise office. The Great Harvest Bread Company franchises have proven their staying power by the continued growth of bakeries that are part of the system.

In 1984 Pete and Laura hired two part-time employees. In 1987 they hired their first full-time employee and today have 22 full-time and five part-time employees. Of the \$2.2 million gross annual revenue, over \$900,000 goes directly to staff in the form of payroll and profit-sharing plans.

There are many successful franchises throughout the nation; however, there are many things about the Great Harvest Franchise that are unique. The emphasis on a "system of free owners" breaks from the traditional notion that within a franchise all locations must look alike and think alike. None of the bakeries look alike and few of them think alike. They're located in strip malls, interior malls, downtown locations and even residential areas.

One of the principles by which Great Harvest lives is that of generosity — to customers, to employees and to communities. To overcome the adversity of operating a corporate office in a small community and to attract the best employees, Pete and Laura work very hard to keep employees happy. In doing so, they have gained a reputation as a top-notch employer.

**The State
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Persons
of the Year
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The original mission statement of Great Harvest was, "The best bread and the nicest people in every town." It was recently changed to: "Be loose and have fun, bake phenomenal bread, run fast to help customers, create strong, exciting bakeries and give generously to others." Pete and Laura truly believe this and have proven that it works.



Laura Wakeman and Peter Wakeman
1995 Montana Small Business Persons of the Year

Harlan F. Hamernik, President

Shirley J. Hamernik, Vice President

Bluebird Nursery, Inc.
319 Bryan Street
Clarkson, Nebraska 68629
(402) 892-3457

Harlan Hamernik had every intention of being a newspaper publisher. After graduating from high school in Clarkson, Neb., and attending college for a year, Harlan pursued his ambition by attending a Linotype school in Charles City, Iowa. During that time, he also worked in a greenhouse. Harlan returned to Clarkson intending to purchase the Colfax County Press, only to find out that the owner was not yet ready to retire. This turn of events encouraged Harlan to pursue his new interest — horticulture.

Harlan and his wife, Shirley, started Bluebird Nursery in 1958 with one greenhouse they purchased for \$500. No bank would loan the business start-up capital so they made ends meet by carefully watching their expenses and controlling their costs.

Sales in the early years were moderate, but once Bluebird found its niche in the perennial plant market, sales

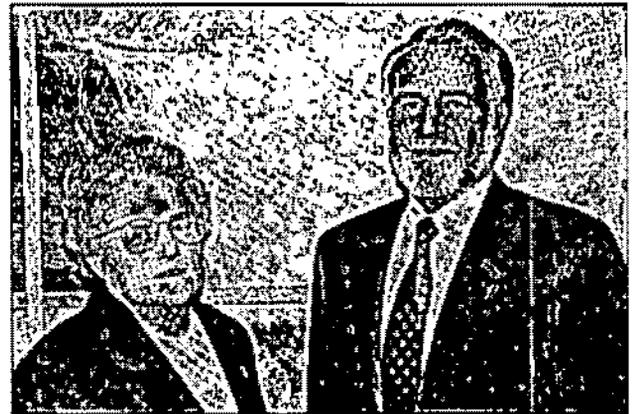
doubled every four years, reaching \$2.9 million in 1994. Today, Bluebird Nursery is a successful wholesale/retail grower of more than 2,000 varieties of choice perennials, grasses, wildflowers, herbs and ground covers.

Bluebird consists of three divisions: a wholesale division, marketing to garden centers, landscapers, botanical gardens and zoos throughout the United States, Mexico, Canada and other foreign markets; a retail division, selling trees, shrubs, landscaping services, perennials, annuals and garden plants; and a video productions division, which created a 4-volume video series called "Hardy Flowering Plants: A Closer Look."

There might not be a Bluebird Nursery, however, if it hadn't been for the SBA. Disaster struck in the spring of 1984, when torrential rains destroyed much inventory and severely damaged many of the greenhouses. The Hamerniks applied for a \$125,000 SBA disaster assistance loan, which enabled the company to get through the year. They credit the loan with saving the company.

Bluebird is a major job source in the region, employing nearly 90 full-time staffers. The Hamerniks' three sons, Tom, Chuck and Mike, are managers in the company.

The Hamerniks give back to the community by allowing employees to devote time to community beautification efforts and by supplying plants and caretakers to several gardens in Clarkson. In addition, considerable plant material has been donated to botanical gardens, colleges and universities, and beautification projects throughout the United States.



Shirley Hamernik and Harlan Hamernik
1995 Nebraska Small Business Persons of the Year

Linda J. Lewis, President

The Plantworks
3850 W. Tropicana Avenue, #B
Las Vegas, Nevada 89103
(702) 795-3600



Linda served on the board of directors of Reno's Small Business Development Center, and she is a frequent guest speaker. In Las Vegas, she served as secretary for the Network of Executive Women in Hospitality, where she has also served as a speaker.

It's become such a welcome sight as you walk through malls, office buildings, hotels and, especially memorable, the gaming sites throughout Las Vegas: those lush plants and the colorful foliage that quietly line the perimeter or boldly dominate the hallway.

But where do those arrangements come from? One source is the award-winning firm The Plantworks, owned by Las Vegas resident Linda Lewis. It's a company with roots in Reno, Nev., but which really flourished in the sunshine (and bright lights) of Las Vegas. Some of Linda's more familiar clients include the Mirage, Las Vegas Hilton, Tropicana and MGM Grand.



Linda Lewis
1995 Nevada Small Business
Person of the Year

It was 1977 when Linda and her roommate, working with about \$1,000 in cash and a Volkswagen van, began providing local firms in Reno with live plants. The SBA had an early involvement: Linda was the first client of the newly opened Small Business Development Center.

The business has seen many changes. The partner moved on to other pursuits, there was an expansion to Las Vegas and, perhaps most telling, the firm shifted in 1984 to selling silk plants. The silk allows for maximum creativity and lower maintenance. The line has become a favorite not only with the casinos, but shopping centers and office complexes both here and abroad.

But just to show how some relationships sustain, the SBA is expected to once again be featured in the firm's evolution as plans call for using a 504 loan to build a 10,000-square-foot building.

Since 1989, the company has experienced a 75 percent rate of growth, and the 1993 sales of \$1.5 million are expected to reach \$2 million in 1995. Employment has grown from three in 1978 to an even dozen today, with local hires brought on as needed.

William E. Brunkhorst, President

Eastern Analytical, Inc.
25 Chenell Drive
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
(603) 228-0525

In 1978, Will Brunkhorst faced a hard decision: teach chemistry or "do" chemistry. After earning a degree in zoology, he had discovered, while substituting, that he enjoyed teaching. He earned his credentials and began teaching in 1973. Five years later, he decided to "do" chemistry in the state lab. Besides, the father of two said, "As a parent, you never really leave education."

Eight months later, Will was offered a position designing, constructing and running a private lab. Once the lab was built and operational, however, the challenge was gone, so Will and a partner struck out on their own. They founded Eastern Analytical in December 1980, breaking into the new field of environmental analytical chemistry. Will borrowed \$13,000 from a relative and used his house as collateral on an \$80,000 SBA-guaranteed loan. Then interest rates jumped to 22 percent, and Will's partner bailed out. Things looked bleak.

Poverty, however, became the mother of creativity. Instead of purchasing equipment, employees built it; instead of using resources just once, employees found ways to recycle. The creativity became part of EAI and has helped make it not only successful but a great place to work. And while the environmental-lab business has become saturated and many firms have failed, EAI has grown steadily at 10 percent to 20 percent a year; sales are expected to reach \$2.3 million in 1995, and the work force — two-thirds women — is now 24 in number.



Will Brunkhorst
1995 New Hampshire Small
Business Person of the Year

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Another SBA loan is financing a large, new facility, and a partnership with a firm in Arizona — to be Western Analytics — is in the works.

The company covers all health insurance costs and pays for employees to use a nearby health club. It provides disability insurance, a pension plan, and parental leave for men and women. EAI also reimburses employees for continuing education.

Will includes his employees in decisions on every level and gives them a great deal of autonomy in solving problems. The result is a state-of-the-art company with very low turnover, high standards, a great reputation and an employee force that nominated its boss for this award. Will was also named Employer of the Year by the Concord Business and Professional Women's Organization in 1994.

Michael R. Cunningham, President

Cunningham Graphics, Inc.
629 Grove Street
Jersey City, New Jersey 07310
(201) 217-1990

One might say that Michael Cunningham was raised to be a success in the printing business; he started as a part-time press assistant at the tender age of 14, catching envelopes from the back end of a printing press. Later, on weekends and during vacations from college, Michael worked at a Manhattan printing company, learning every aspect of the trade. He impressed the firm so much that they hired him as a salesperson out of college.

In September 1983 Michael started Cunningham Graphics as a printing brokerage. To better serve his clients, he opened a printing manufacturing facility in Jersey City in 1989. In just six years he created 200 good jobs with opportunities for advancement. During that period, he also saw an important need in the marketplace for high-quality, two-color, fast-turnaround work using both offset and digital technologies. CGI's reputation for quality and speed have allowed it to survive a near-fatal recession in 1991 and to increase its sales volume 1,500 percent in the last five years.



Michael Cunningham
1995 New Jersey Small Business
Person of the Year

in 1991 and to increase its sales volume 1,500 percent in the last five years.

Cunningham empowers his employees in company decision-making; key employees have the authority and the responsibility to implement decisions. CGI has an in-house training and education program, full health and life insurance, and a 401K retirement plan at company expense.

Michael believes that customer loyalty is essential to survival in a highly competitive economy. CGI strives to exceed customer needs and to attract a diverse customer base. "We do what we have to do to get the job done," says Michael. "The most important thing is that the customer knows he can trust us." Loyal customers range from the American Bible Society to Merrill Lynch. Today CGI offers clients state-of-the-art technology in digital communication and printing.

Michael has donated company services to several religious and medical organizations. He and his wife led fundraising efforts to construct a new church for the Catholic Community of St. John Neumann. He is a benefactor of the American Red Cross and supports, both financially and personally, a local school for autistic children. Each summer, he and his wife send underprivileged kids to wrestling camp.

Jennifer L. Norrid, President

PC Support, Inc.
2100 Airpark Road S.E., Suite #100
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106
(505) 243-2923

In 1983, Jennifer Norrid was 22. With only a GED earned in 1978 (she never attended high school), she held a sales job at a retail computer store and had \$248 in her savings account. With keen vision, however, she used her \$248 to start the first personal-computer training firm in New Mexico.

PC Support has 60 employees and sales approaching \$4 million per year. Its clients range from Sandia National Laboratories and Intel Corp. to El Paso Natural Gas and the city of Albuquerque. With the help of the firm's third SBA-backed loan, Jennifer anticipates over 50 percent increases in revenues and employment by the end of this year.

No longer just a training firm, PC Support now provides a full range of services to support work-group and enterprise-wide computing. Local- and wide-area networking comprise the largest service area, followed by desktop-applications support. Last year, PC Support was designated a Microsoft Solutions Provider; several similar alliances will be

announced at the opening of PC Support's new Technology Learning Center, due to open in July.

PC Support met its share of obstacles along the way to success. Jennifer's inexperience and financial setbacks nearly closed the company in its second and third years. There was a failed office lease, a case of embezzlement, two burglaries and a roof cave-in that rendered the office and training facilities unusable. But perseverance, adept timing and a reputation for being better than the competition won the firm loyal customers. That allowed PC Support to offer new services and expand its customer base. Training led to jobs to tailor software and hardware for specific customer needs; that dovetailed with network and systems integration services.

Volunteer work, contributions and employee sponsorships have served a wide range of causes including victims of domestic violence, the homeless, at-risk youth and foster children. A much-needed kitchen floor was provided for a residential drug-treatment facility, and basketball equipment was made available in an area where teenage youth didn't have any recreational facilities. An exhibit of therapeutic art by women and children who were victims of domestic violence also was sponsored. Some of the organizations and charities that have benefited from PC Support's success include: the From the Heart Foundation, the Rescue Mission, New Life for Women, the Menninger Foundation, the Woman's Community Foundation, the Storehouse and dozens of needy families adopted by PC Support employees at Christmas.



Jennifer Norrid
1995 New Mexico Small Business
Person of the Year

Greg Frisby, Chief Executive Officer

Frisby Airborne Hydraulics, Inc.
Frisby Technologies, Inc.
417 South Main Street
Freeport, New York 11520
(516) 378-0162

Greg Frisby has a keen sixth sense, and it has catapulted him into the limelight as a leader in defense conversion. In the mid-1980s, the future looked bleak for Frisby Airborne, the company Greg's father had started nearly



a half-century before. But in 1986, Greg and his brother Jeff took over, and they saw a different future. Greg, as CEO, quickly converted the almost totally defense-dependent company to one that now sells 75 percent of its products commercially. Frisby Airborne, a manufacturer of hydraulic systems, components and machine parts for commercial and military aerospace applications, is now touted as a national model for defense diversification.

The company was receiving fewer contracts, even under former President Reagan's military buildup, because it manufactured conventional weaponry. So Greg went to the experts: his employees. Together, they "re-thought" every aspect of the company and its products. "We focused on making better, simpler parts by asking our employees how," he says. "With such a highly intelligent work force, the more we listened, the more we learned."

Frisby has continued to grow while many defense-dependent companies have folded. In 1994, sales were nearly \$7 million and are expected to reach \$10 million this year. Frisby provides a profit-sharing plan and cross-training in other aspects of the business. The firm also pays for those who don't speak English to learn the language.

Again on the cutting edge, Greg recently signed an "insourcing" agreement with EDO Corp., a New York defense electronics and aerospace company, that will create 45 new jobs. Frisby Airborne will assume all manufacturing for EDO and will share R&D, sales and other information. This agreement has been viewed as a model for other defense-diversification efforts. At Frisby Airborne last October, Vice President Al Gore and SBA Administrator Phil Lader announced a new SBA loan program for similarly impacted firms.

Three years ago, Greg launched Frisby Technologies Inc., which focuses on advanced-technology product development. Now in its third year, annual revenues are \$1.35 million, and the company expects to double in size this year.

Greg's success has put him in front of TV cameras, in top newspapers, and at Congressional hearings. Greg has addressed dozens of military,



Greg Frisby
1995 New York Small Business
Person of the Year

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defense, technology and small business forums, produced a training video and taught Ukrainian business people how to convert military plants. He is a past chairman of the Small Business Development Center's National Advisory Board and serves on numerous boards and organizations.

Thomas L. Finger, President

Knight Manufacturing, Inc.
123 Lyman Street, P.O. Box 3278
Asheville, North Carolina 28802
(704) 254-1919

There is something truly appealing about the American Dream: the opportunity to roll up one's sleeves and reach for a better future, build a successful business. Tom Finger has done even more — he has built a dynamic organization of several businesses.

Instead of following his family's footsteps as a brick mason, Tom majored in engineering at North Carolina State University. Two years of working as an engineer with Taylor Instruments both honed his skills and taught him that independence was most important to him. He returned to his native town of Lincolnton, N.C., in the 1970s and went to work controlling his own destiny.



Tom Finger
1995 North Carolina Small Business
Person of the Year

One of the things Tom's father taught him was the importance of an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. Tom put in a lot of honest work over the next few years: he started a landscaping business that led to a garden center and then a hardware store. But it wasn't easy: to make it through a long, lean season in the late '70s, he freelanced part-time as a manufacturer's representative, and his wife taught school.

Their tenacity finally paid off, and things began to pick up in the 1980s. In 1983, Tom acquired Asheville Metal Finishing after learning the business as a manufacturing rep. In 1987, he bought Ritter Dental, a nationally known company with 12 employees. He renamed it Knight Manufacturing,

reevaluated his market, and began manufacturing innovative new dental equipment.

Today, Knight products occupy a significant market niche in over 50 countries. Tom recently set up a joint venture with Lithuania to manufacture and distribute parts throughout the Eastern Bloc.

Currently, he is exploring similar options with South American and Asian countries. Sales in 1994 approached \$7.5 million.

Tom's holdings continue to grow; he has added three subsidiaries since 1991, doubling employment and sales in one and tripling employment in the other. One of Tom's greatest contributions is that of 225 jobs for his fellow North Carolinians, 115 of them at Knight. Employees enjoy higher wages than the average for the area. Benefits include bonuses, a generous 401K plan and a 125 "cafeteria" plan as well. Tom is active in his church and Little League, and is also generous both in his community and abroad, supporting and serving numerous causes.

Suzanne K. DeClercq, President

Word Express, Inc.
417 Main Avenue, Suite 201
Fargo, North Dakota 58103
(701) 293-1114

Suzanne DeClercq grew up on a small dairy farm in west central Minnesota. Her first job after earning a diploma as a medical secretary was transcriptionist at a hospital in Fargo, N.D. She worked nights while earning accreditation as a medical records technician and by 1977, was supervisor of medical records at another hospital. Over the next nine years, she held various jobs in the medical field, becoming director of medical records for The Neuro-psychiatric Institute in 1984. Two years later TNI was bought, and Suzanne — a single mother of two boys — found herself out of a job.



Suzanne DeClercq
1995 North Dakota Small Business
Person of the Year

She and two other women made a bid to provide transcription service to the facility that bought TNI. They were offered a six-month competition

with a national service, but after just three months, Suzanne and her colleagues were selected, and Word Express Transcription Service was on its way. Today, it is the region's largest independently owned medical transcription service providing support to health-care facilities in six states.



By 1989, when Word Express became the first tenant of the Lake Agassiz Regional Council Small Business Incubator, Suzanne was using almost her entire house as an office for seven employees and their equipment. Today, the company has two offices and 32 employees, including transcriptionists, quality experts, computer technicians, health information managers and support staff. Sales have grown from \$500 the first month to nearly three-quarters of a million dollars today.

The mission of Word Express is threefold: providing accurate, timely and confidential medical word-processing support to customers; providing a supportive atmosphere for its employees that encourages education and recognizes achievement; and utilizing professional business practices to insure the growth and endurance of the company.

Suzanne continues to work toward a degree in business administration — she is a junior — while raising two teenagers, running a business, and serving in numerous business and civic organizations.

Frances A. Doll, President

Superior Staffing, Incorporated
120 East Mill Street, Suite 420
Akron, Ohio 44308
(216) 253-8080

I had a dream," said Fran Doll, "that if you treat people the way you've always wanted to be treated, it would work." Fran carried out her philosophy at Superior Staffing. How does this sound? Long-term cross-training so employees understand the entire business and are then encouraged to make their own decisions and use their own initiative. Free hair care and AAA membership, a week-long, paid retreat in Florida every other year, Fridays off every six weeks, fresh flowers in the office, and profit-sharing. There are awards for reaching sales goals and fully paid trips for staff and spouses when long-range goals are met. That's just for the 17 full-time staff. The roughly 2,000 temporaries get birthday cards, gifts, thank-you notes and a newsletter devoted just to them.

Needless to say, customers receive red-carpet treatment as well: they are remembered on holidays with gifts, on special personal occasions with cards, and with candy. Employees are encouraged to take customers to lunch often. Calls are returned within an hour. A first-day complaint about a temp means no charge. There is even a Silver Service program for clients who use Superior exclusively. It's no wonder that Fran has built a \$6 million-a-year company with a waiting list for employment!

Fran's past was not so happy. Coming from an alcoholic home, she went to work right out of high school. In the '60s, she worked as an executive secretary, then stayed home for a few years to raise six children. She returned to work in 1971 as a temp herself, then was hired by a national temporary service as a sales rep in 1972. She worked her way up to district sales manager by 1978 and made the Akron/Cleveland district first in the United States. Frustrated with the corporate structure, she quit in 1979. She sold Mary Kay cosmetics and worked for the University of Akron while four of her kids were in college there. In 1980, when banks weren't lending, she got a start-up loan at 22 percent to put her ideas to work; in 1982, she opened a Cleveland office. Following an "open, honest and up-front" philosophy, she built a company that grew 33 percent from 1992 to 1993.



Fran Doll
1995 Ohio Small Business
Person of the Year

In 1981 she was honored as Ohio's Woman of the Year; in 1982 she was in Ohio's Top 100 Minority-Owned Companies. Last year she was the first woman to be named Small Business Entrepreneur of the Year by the Small Business Council of the Akron Regional Development Board. She recently sold the Cleveland office and is "semi-retired," which means she only works four days a week. Her caring extends beyond working hours; she gives generously of her time, money and assistance to anyone in need. She continues to be widely involved in her community as well.

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Rudy J. Alvarado, CEO/COB

LB&M Associates, Inc.
211 S.W. A Avenue
Lawton, Oklahoma 73501
(405) 355-1471

It was the mid-1980s, and Rudy Alvarado, co-founder and former president of three high-tech companies. Air Force veteran and entrepreneur, found himself over 50 and unemployed. Even his solid background in computer marketing and management was of little help. He decided he would have to create a job for himself by starting a business.

It wasn't easy. He ran into ethnic and financial barriers, once learning that his proposal to a major California computer-disk manufacturer had been ridiculed in racial terms.

In 1990, he mortgaged his house and car, dipped into his life insurance and retirement funds, and bought controlling interest in LB&M, a small, high-tech problem-solving firm in Lawton, Okla. It was there that Rudy's skills and experience produced a winner.

LB&M was started in 1983, with four employees and a single location. By 1990, the company had 17 employees and sales of about \$2.2 million. Today, with Rudy at the helm, LB&M has grown to 280 employees at nine offices around the country and total sales of nearly \$12 million.



Rudy Alvarado
1995 Oklahoma Small Business
Person of the Year

The company initially specialized in operations research and systems analysis, training development, logistics systems, and support and information technologies. Today, LB&M has expanded into other areas, applying cutting-edge computer technology to solving problems in air transportation, communications technologies, defense, facilities management and environmental services. The company's services are constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of its customers.

LB&M's success is due largely to Rudy's ability to analyze the requirements of a situation or task, determine the necessary resources, and pull together teams of very talented individuals who combine their efforts for optimum solutions.

Rudy gives freely of himself, sharing his insights and knowledge with others in both business and community endeavors. He serves on the governor's task forces on small business and minority relations. He was founder and chairman of the Hispanic Cultural Center and writes a weekly column for El Nacional, a bilingual newspaper. A leading authority on minority business opportunities, regulations and laws, Rudy takes every opportunity to promote small disadvantaged businesses.

Lowell H. Miles, President

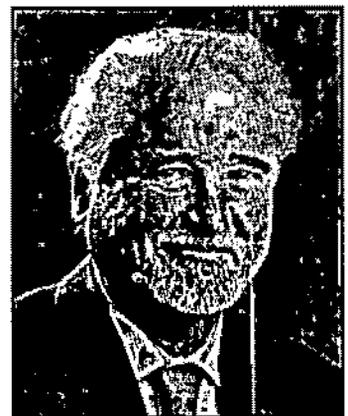
Miles Fiberglass & Plastics, Inc.
1516 Main Street
Oregon City, Oregon 97045
(503) 775-7755

A space ship created for Dark Horse Comics, a submarine for tourists, and a golf cart in the shape of a computer mouse made for Microsoft magnate Bill Gates — Lowell Miles of Miles Fiberglass & Plastics loves a challenge.

Most of the time, however, MFP manufactures truck hoods and fenders, recreational vehicle parts, hot tubs and other fiberglass items. It has also made the main body superstructure and towers for ocean-viewing submarines used in Hawaii and the Caribbean.

The entrepreneurial spirit struck Lowell Miles early. In 1957, at age 19, he started Glasscraft Products. He sold it in 1963 and started MFP in conjunction with another firm that needed fiberglass products manufactured.

Through research and development coupled with ongoing employee training, MFP has broadened its product line, steadily increased sales and created opportunities for good-paying professional and skilled jobs at two facilities. Employment has doubled from 30 to 60 in the past eight years, and sales have grown from \$2.6 million in 1989 to \$3.2 million in 1993.



In 1985, Lowell bought Tiara Spas as a

Lowell Miles
1995 Oregon Small Business
Person of the Year

subsidiary of MFP. Over the next few years, two major customers, owing \$600,000, filed for bankruptcy. Then, because of processing requirements, a large trucking firm pulled its \$1.5 million account. Rather than file bankruptcy, Lowell set up repayment agreements with suppliers and paid the debt in two years.

Lowell is active with numerous business, professional, educational and civic organizations. His many honors include being named 1994 Citizen of the Year by the Oregon City Chamber of Commerce. He was also appointed by Gov. Barbara Roberts to serve on the state Worker's Compensation Labor-Management Advisory Committee.

Sara A. Sargent, Owner

The Sargent's Group
210 Main Street
Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15901
(814) 536-8908

Sally Sargent never expected a small act of kindness to help solve her business problems — but it did. For years, Sally regularly bought and cooked a bone for her neighbor's dog. The neighbor, president of a local bank, offered to return the kindness if he could ever be of any help.

In 1985, after being turned down for a business expansion loan at several banks — not unusual for a woman business owner — Sally took him up on his offer. The neighbor gave her a chance to present her proposal, but wouldn't make any promises. He didn't need to; Sally's proposal spoke for itself, and she received the loan. She needed it to purchase a new building because her business had outgrown its present space. In fact, Sally's company, The Sargent's Group, was almost growing too fast.

In 1980 Sally left a civil-service job to start a court-reporting business out of her home. In 1989 she diversified and created Sargent's Personnel Agency and Sargent's Temporary Services. By 1991 the court-reporting business was doing so well that it had developed a five-month backlog on transcripts and clients were getting impatient. Sally needed to hire more staff, but the company had already outgrown the first floor of the new building. To renovate the unoccupied second floor would take two months; rental space provided a short-term solution.

To further complicate things, Sally received a state contract for almost \$1 million, doubling her sales. She needed 28 new staff just to handle the contract, and she had two



weeks to put the team in place. Sally and her managers quickly developed a plan of action for the hiring, production and training challenges.

Sargent's Court Reporting Service now employs 160 people, 156 of whom are women. With revenues exceeding \$5.1 million in 1994, the company has 11 offices throughout Pennsylvania and is expanding into other states. The personnel and temporary services employ five full-time people and about 200 temporaries, and together brought in over \$2.5 million in revenues in 1994. The Sargent's Group is the largest woman-owned business of its kind in Pennsylvania.

Sally believes in giving back to her community. She actively supports the Cambria County Area Community College and helped to develop the new court-reporting associate degree program there. She has committed to hiring the top 10 students from the first graduating class.



Sally Sargent
1995 Pennsylvania Small Business
Person of the Year

Juan Rodriguez Barroso, President/CEO

Allied Maintenance Corporation
Box 9600, Avenida Luis Muñoz Marín
Caguas, Puerto Rico 00726
(809) 743-0210

In 1977 things looked bleak for Juan Rodriguez Barroso. The CB radio company that had recently hired him away from another management job had just gone bankrupt. Juan found himself out of work with a wife and family to support. For six months, he tried unsuccessfully to find work. The family lost their car and their home, and had to move into his mother's small apartment.

With just \$400 left, Juan was considering trying his luck in the United States. Then he hit upon an idea, to develop a company that provides total maintenance for businesses. "At the time," he says, "there existed in the market a great need for a company that offered that kind of service." He hit the streets, looking for contracts, and finally secured one. Then he went to the bank to get the money he needed to buy equipment and pay employees.

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Juan found himself up against the same wall many new businesses hit: the bank wasn't the least bit interested in loaning him money. At first, the bank manager wouldn't even talk to him, but Juan persisted. He showed the manager his signed contract. Finally, the bank manager relented and opened an account; from that point on, Juan never looked back.

Today he heads a firm that provides not only cleaning but also painting, electrical, plumbing, sand-blasting, surface-treatment, engineering, architectural and landscaping services. The business, one of the top three of its kind in Puerto Rico, has sales of \$8 million. Its 600 employees service more than 70 contracts throughout Puerto Rico. Allied Maintenance has grown with the SBA's help, including a loan last year to buy a new industrial facility that will include a training center, new offices and room to grow.



Juan Rodriguez Barroso
1995 Puerto Rico Small Business
Person of the Year

Juan is active in civic and social programs. His company "adopted" the Antonio Longo School in Caguas through an adopt-a-school program. In 1993 Juan was named the Caguas region's Businessman of the Year in Services by the Asociación de Industriales. The same year, he was named the island-wide Service Sector Manager of the Year.

Linda A. Brunini
President, Two Hands, Inc.
Vice President, International Etching Inc.

Jonathan J. Zucchi
President, International Etching Inc.
Vice President, Two Hands Inc.
7 Ninigret Avenue
Providence, Rhode Island 02907-3023
(800) 327-0001

When Linda Brunini and Jonathan Zucchi think of their partnership, they are reminded of this quote: "In a true partnership, you don't know in the end who had what idea, you just know that together you were better than you would have been apart." (Unknown)

Jon and Linda believe that they have fueled each other's resiliency and creativity, and that has, in turn, sustained their business. This is most evident in their ability to fight adversity. In 1993, while they were negotiating an SBA-backed loan to expand Two Hands, a fire destroyed most of their equipment. Linda and Jon were faced with the decision whether to take the insurance money and walk or to re-build the businesses. They took one look at the first shipment of merchandise for Two Hands and decided not to quit. The next day, they salvaged what they could and started shipping.

In 1982, Linda was a very successful jewelry designer. With SBA-backed financing, Jon had just bought International Etching, Inc., a manufacturer of metal products for the gift, jewelry and accessories industries. Jon knew Linda's work and recognized that his business needed creative design and marketing. He called her and negotiated a partnership agreement.

Most of IEI's work was for other manufacturers who would finish and market the products. Gradually, as many manufacturers stopped finishing, that changed; today, 90 percent of IEI's products are finished goods. The company faced fierce competition from third-world countries and also paid a price for being state-of-the-art in pollution control when many competitors were not.



Jon Zucchi and Linda Brunini
1995 Rhode Island Small Business Persons of the Year

To survive, Linda and Jon decided to diversify and began developing a new business to complement the high-tech processes of IEI. It was when their lead designer suggested getting children involved in designing whimsical pieces that something clicked. In 1992, Two Hands was incorporated and in 1993, offered its first products for sale.

The concept of Two Hands — as in "I made it with my own two hands" — is a combination of charitable work, children and design. Working with the nearby Meeting Street Center, Two Hands introduced art and design to children with disabilities. A project on the rain forest led to a large mural

created by the children — those who couldn't draw, described while teachers drew. For the first product line, the designers at Two Hands created jewelry closely based on the mural. The company then donated 1 percent of the net sales to the center — \$4,670 in the first seven months alone.

This ongoing relationship has been extremely successful. In 1994, its first full year of operation, the company expected to give the center \$12,000, based on net sales of \$1.2 million. Two Hands has nearly doubled its work force to 22 (IEI is up 78 percent to 16). Children come to the plant frequently to interact with the staff and see their work and ideas become jewelry, bookmarks, Christmas ornaments and other products (apparel and a line of watches are in the works). Two Hands products, marketed on cards that explain the relationship with disadvantaged children, are in more than 600 stores already. It's just the first of what Linda and Jon hope will be a portfolio of nonprofits benefiting disabled, disadvantaged and seriously ill children that will gain from a relationship with Two Hands.

Frank Knowles AuCoin, President

Sign It Quick, Inc.
5101 Dorchester Road
Charleston, South Carolina 29418
(803) 552-2626

Franks AuCoin is a student of life. A successful marketer, he has made it to the top, but the path wasn't easy. Frank has spent most of his life teaching himself to succeed, often in the most difficult of circumstances. Born in Whistler, Ala., Frank and his seven siblings were raised by a single mother. He dropped out of school at the age of 14, but at the time, neither he nor his family realized he had dyslexia. Unwilling to give up, however, he joined the work force and educated himself.

Frank admits he had "many, many jobs," including a stint as a radio and TV talk-show host in his teens. Frank and his wife, Teresa, began operating a chain of bookstores in South Carolina and Georgia in the early '70s. They couldn't get signs printed fast enough, so they began making their



Frank AuCoin
1995 South Carolina Small Business
Person of the Year



own. Frank realized that the proliferation of all types of franchises would mean that the traditional method of creating signs — one at a time — would not meet the needs of a market that required uniformity. At the time, however, the technology needed to create computer-aided signs had not been developed. Frank bided his time. When the technology finally became available in 1987, he and Teresa put their life savings into the concept of Sign It Quick, the first business of its kind. They learned to run the computers, create layouts and designs, price their products, install signs, and market this new service. He launched the first store by inviting the media and the public to witness the making of the world's largest sign — the length of five football fields — in an overnight event.

Frank has had some major successes. He has created signs for two Super Bowls, the Hard Rock Café chain, Euro-Disney and Donald Trump. His philosophy — to provide quality service in a convenient and timely manner and at a cost-effective rate — has helped his company become a premiere sign-making chain in the Southeast. Sign It Quick has expanded into three states with eight franchisees. His newest franchisee, Martha Murphy of Nashville, Tenn., was able to start her business with the help of an SBA loan. Sign It Quick now employs over 60 people and generates nearly \$4 million in sales.

Frank and his staff do not only make signs; they assist companies in marketing their overall product. Frank lectures nationwide and teaches marketing at the College of Charleston and Charleston Southern. He serves on the board of directors for the Center for Entrepreneurship at the College of Charleston.

John R. Boyd, Owner

Boyd's Gunstocks Industries, Inc.
P.O. Box 305
Geddes, South Dakota 57342
(605) 337-2125

John Boyd came back to Geddes in 1982, after his dad had a heart attack. He helped move his father's gunsmithing business into a 400-square-foot shop, and they worked together on gun repairs. Later that year, they bought a two-spindle carving machine that could make four to eight gunstocks a day. Today, Boyd's is one of the largest original-equipment manufacturers of gunstocks in the country. In 1986, the business had sales of \$29,000; last year the company had sales of \$1 million.

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They moved the firm into town to a 3,500-square-foot complex in 1986, bought a three-spindle automatic copy lathe, and hired three people. Since then, they have steadily grown. Boyds' now occupy 13,500 square feet. It has added more multiple copy lathes, three computer milling centers, and computer checking equipment. John eventually bought out his father's interest in the company, which is devoted almost entirely to gunstocking now; they occasionally make stocks for bows and crossbows as well.

One problem with operating a successful business in a town of 300 is finding workers. By the time he had 10 employees, John had tapped out the available labor. He started an aggressive search for workers and expanded employee benefits. Today, Boyds' is the largest employer in Geddes, with 22 full-time and 10 part-time workers, as well as 10 who do contract labor at home. John is exploring opening a facility in another town to overcome the labor shortage and hopes to employ more at-home contractors.

With the assistance of the SBA, John was able to add new equipment and obtain a warehouse for raw materials in 1992. He also started a joint venture with his brother, producing and distributing trigger assemblies; they expect to distribute 40,000 assemblies this year.

John was instrumental in founding the Geddes Development Corp., and has served on the city council. He is a volunteer fire fighter and emergency medical technician, and teaches black-belt karate.



John Boyd
1995 South Dakota Small Business
Person of the Year

John Jackson, III, Principal

Walter Person, Principal

Jackson Person and Associates, Inc.
66 Monroe Avenue
Suite 104
Memphis, Tennessee 38103
(901) 526-8386

Teamwork. It's an approach that paid off for John Jackson and Walter Person. The pair met in the early '80s at the Pickering Co., an engineering firm that gave both men their first opportunities to make their marks in

landscape architecture, land planning and land surveying. Walter began his career at Pickering in 1970 as a rodman and chairman on a survey crew. Hard work, determination, and a commitment to his continuing education helped him advance up the ranks to operations field supervisor. John joined the firm after graduating from Mississippi State as an intern landscape architect in 1983. Both moved on to management positions in 1987 at Tales and Associates, another engineering and surveying firm. Walter handled land surveying and human resources; John directed marketing and landscape architecture. Finally, they were able to realize their ultimate goal: a partnership in their own firm.

The two men began Jackson Person & Associates in 1991. The firm offers a variety of professional services in landscape architecture and land surveying. Walter and John built a solid reputation based on several principles: exceed clients' expectations, maintain trust and respect, compete aggressively in the marketplace through quality service, and recruit superior employees and provide them with the opportunity to succeed. In the beginning, they often worked seven days a week. Each quarter, they took several days as a retreat to plan their next accomplishments and to evaluate their progress.

Their early discipline has been rewarded. The company's portfolio is extremely diverse and includes work on college campuses, churches, corporate facilities and transportation corridors. The firm was involved in the creation of the National Civil Rights Museum, the Veteran's Administration Hospital expansion in Memphis, and the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta. It also worked on the field hockey venue for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. The firm now employs 29 professionals. Both Walter and John have served as business mentors for youth in the Southeast. The firm has won numerous accolades, including the Tennessee Outstanding Achievement Award from Gov.



John Jackson and Walter Person

Ned McWherter and the *Memphis Business Journal's* "Small Business of the Year Award" (1-25 employees) in 1994.



Tragically, on November 27, 1994, a tornado touched down in Memphis. Walter, his 11-year-old son, Nicholas, and Walter's brother-in-law, Elijah Bewitt, were killed in the Person home. In perhaps the most vivid testimonial to Walter's contributions to his community, over 2,000 people attended the funeral services. Walter is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter. John Jackson continues to operate Jackson Person & Associates under the guiding principles the two partners set out four years ago.

T. Oscar Trevino Jr., President

J.L. Steel, Inc.
6405 Smithfield Road
Ft. Worth, Texas 76180
(817) 498-6293

It was 1989, and Oscar Trevino was comfortable with his company car and steady paycheck. He and neighbor Jan La Pointe were chatting on the lawn after dinner, while the kids played out front. It seems that Jan was having trouble expanding her two-year-old company, and Oscar was interested.

Before he realized it, he had worked out a business plan on his computer, and they were in business as J.L. Steel. Oscar borrowed against his retirement account, his credit cards and from family to become 51 percent owner of the firm. From \$400,000 in revenues that first year, J.L. Steel has grown to nearly \$13.6 million in revenues last year, making it the fifth fastest-growing Hispanic-owned company in the United States, with an annual growth rate of 235 percent.

J.L. Steel installs reinforced steel in highways, bridges and buildings. The firm competes for government and private contracts in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana, and satisfies its customers with reliable estimates, quality workmanship and attention to detail in the reams of accompanying paperwork. The firm has called on the SBA twice: in 1992 for a loan guarantee to finance growth and again in 1993, when it was certified as an 8(a) contractor, allowing it to compete for jobs from the federal government.

Oscar himself started out as a laborer, working summers for a major general-contracting firm while he earned a civil engineering degree from Texas A&M. He stayed with

the firm after he graduated in 1978, advancing to become project manager by 1989. He hasn't forgotten how difficult it can be for others, and J.L. Steel has an aggressive equal-opportunity policy.

Oscar supports fledgling companies by helping them with marketing, construction practices and subcontracting opportunities. His tireless advocacy work on behalf of minority- and women-owned businesses includes work on various boards and committees, including the Dallas Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Committee and the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Support Services program of the Texas Engineering Extension Service. He also helped the Association of General Contractors of Texas develop and promote fair and equitable goals, and training and apprenticeship programs for minorities and women.



Oscar Trevino
1995 Texas Small Business
Person of the Year

Peter R. Metcalf, President

Black Diamond, Ltd.
2084 East 3900 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84124
(801) 278-5552

It was, in many ways, the brutal 14-day climb of Mt. Hunter that made it all possible. In 1988, the climbing-equipment company Peter Metcalf worked for — and had built up from \$1 million in sales to \$7 million — was forced into Chapter 11 by liability lawsuits. Peter led an employee buy-out to create Black Diamond. The effort of buying and building the company — it took a year of 14-hour days and seven-day weeks — then moving it from Southern California to Utah was sometimes overwhelming. In those moments, Peter would draw on his Mt. Hunter experience and the "monomaniacal" focus that got him through it: "If you got through yesterday then you'd get through tomorrow, and no day could be any worse than the previous day." Profitable even in its first year, Black Diamond has beaten all odds with its phenomenal success.

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Black Diamond is a designer, manufacturer and marketer of high-quality technical climbing, mountaineering and back-country skiing products. Just five years after its creation, it has achieved the top market-share position in the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, Korea and Norway and has strong showings in other international markets. The company employs over 200 workers and has been growing 40 to 45 percent annually. Sales in 1994 totaled more than \$18 million, with 1995 numbers anticipated to end in the low \$20 million range.

The firm has conventionally financed close to \$3 million in infrastructure improvements and nearly \$1 million in capital investments. Peter decided to locate the company in a residential area and then went door-to-door to gain neighborhood support to open there; now he is working with the community on expansion plans.

Born in New York City, Peter first developed his love of the outdoors as a Boy Scout. He took a five-week climbing course in his teens, and, since then, climbing has been the focus of his life. He has been widely involved in many civic and environmental organizations and has worked to promote Utah as a great place to do business. He is involved in charitable work and is a popular speaker.



Peter Metcalf
1995 Utah Small Business
Person of the Year

Todd G. Alix, President/Owner

Bumwraps, Inc.
Route 242, Box 1008
Montgomery Center, Vermont 05401
(802) 326-4080

While Todd Alix was in college, he and some friends decided to throw a party — a really big party. To raise the money, they sold custom-made T-shirts as tickets, at \$10 a pop, and raised \$5,000 — enough for two roasted pigs, kegs of beer and a band.

Todd's life was never quite the same. He'd been pretty clear about the direction his life was going; with a major in finance and a minor in advertising, Todd planned to be on the

creative or financing end of some kind of business, or maybe head for Wall Street. But the T-shirts became a business, and the business was grossing nearly \$100,000 by the end of senior year, with Todd designing, screening and peddling. In 1991 he added embroidery. Today he heads a company that sells silkscreened and embroidered T-shirts and sweatshirts, all his own designs, all over the world.

By carefully marketing his products, primarily to resorts of all kinds, he has a steady, year-round business. In spite of tremendous growth — sales went from \$700,000 in 1991 to \$1.3 million in 1992 and exceeded \$5 million in 1994 — Bumwraps has had no working capital problems, rarely needing to touch its line-of-credit.



Todd Alix
1995 Vermont Small Business
Person of the Year

Including the employees at the Bumwraps plant and five retail stores in Vermont and New Hampshire, sales reps and subcontractors, Todd's company employs more than 60 people. He recently put more than \$100,000 into renovating three Main Street storefronts in Newport, Vt., as part of a revitalization effort for the town, opening a retail store in one building and leasing the others. He pays his workers between \$5 and \$10 an hour, an average of \$8 after one year, and provides paid holidays, "earned" time, health benefits and profit-sharing. Todd's contributions to the poor "Northeast Kingdom" area of Vermont don't stop there, however. He recently donated \$7,000 toward a computer system for a local school and gave money to a high school's solar car project. An avid sportsman, he sponsors kids' motocross racing. Todd, his wife and son live next to the Bumwraps factory.

Randall H. Frazier, President

R. Frazier, Inc.
1300 Intervale Drive
Salem, Virginia 24153
(703) 387-3799

R. Frazier, Inc. did what many smart companies do — identified and seized a specific market niche. But what happens when that niche dries up and takes company profits with it? Randy Frazier's business

almost found out. But, thanks to his leadership and vision, it responded quickly to a potentially fatal situation and came out stronger than ever.

In 1988, Randy started out by dismantling old mainframes and selling the metal parts to recyclers in the U.S. and China; IBM represented over 60 percent of the company's revenues. Four years later, though, the profit margins on this type of work began to slip, and R. Frazier was forced to cancel contracts with IBM.

The company redoubled its marketing efforts, cut staff and expanded its services. R. Frazier, Inc. is now a global leader in the field of asset end-of-life management. It recycles cast-off computer and telecommunications equipment, reconditions and resells original equipment and parts, and shares the profits with its clients. The company has grown from 10 employees in 1988 to now over 70 employees. Revenues climbed from \$608,000 in the first nine months of operation to over \$8.7 million in 1993.

In the U.S., one in four people has access to a computer. But in the fast-emerging Peoples Republic of China, where only one in 6,000 people has computer access, what's old here is new. R. Frazier has established sales offices in the People's Republic of China and Costa Rica, a major European operation in Scotland, and joint venture arrangements throughout the world. Export sales reached \$2 million in 1993.

Randy's clients — which include AT&T, Dell Computer, MCI, BellSouth and Circuit City — not only avoid land-fill costs but actually profit from equipment disposal, while emerging nations receive necessary technology. Randy likes to think of it as win-win-win.

Perhaps the biggest beneficiary, though, is the environment. Randy is committed to sustainable development, and about 98 percent of all equipment handled by R. Frazier, Inc. is recycled in whole or part.

Randy hires many of his employees from the local Total Action Against Poverty agency. His many community activities range from serving as a member of Virginia's Fifth District Planning Commission Private Industry Council to coaching the Little League baseball team.



Judith M. Jacobsen, CEO

Me Two Corporation
dba Madison Park Greetings
1407 11th Ave.
Seattle, Washington 98122
(206) 324-5711

When you're competing among giants — Hallmark, American Greetings and Gibson — you have to find your own market niche. That's just what Judi Jacobsen did. Judi, whose greeting cards are sold in upscale boutiques, offers top-quality products at moderate prices.

Judi first started selling her paintings in 1977 at local arts and crafts fairs. Friends suggested that the paintings would lend themselves well to greeting cards, so Judi joined another artist and formed Lucy and Me, a company producing greeting cards with original artwork. In 1984 the two artists decided to part company. It was then that Judi and daughter Laurie, also an artist, decided to start their own greeting-card business, Me Two.

The company, now marketing as Madison Park Greetings, offers more than 10 distinct collections of cards, stationery and invitations, with unique characteristics such as windowed and translucent envelopes. Company sales are approach \$3 million, and the firm now employs up to 40. Judi's sons, Mark and Brian, also joined the company as president and general manager, respectively.

An advocate for Seattle's inner-city communities, Madison Park offers a nonprofit program which provides business skills and training to inner-city junior-high and high-school students. Club Studio's main goal is "to cultivate leadership and empower inner-city high-school students to become future business and community leaders."

The focal point of Club Studio is Studio Two which provides entrepreneurial training through the real-life experience of operating a greeting-card company. Greeting cards are produced and marketed by teens under the direction of Madison Park. All sales proceeds are used to provide scholarships and additional support for artistic, creative, educational, social and vocational development for youth. Madison Park also donates 1 percent



Randy Frazier
1995 Virginia Small Business
Person of the Year



Judi Jackson
1995 Washington Small Business
Person of the Year

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of sales from new greeting-card lines to organizations focusing on inner-city youth and families.

Married and the mother of four, Judi received the Small Business Hero Award in recognition of her business success and community involvement and has received over 20 Louie nominations for professional achievement.

Dr. Joseph A. Megy, President

CM Tech, Inc.
Jamegy, Inc.
P.O. Box 91
New Cumberland, West Virginia 26047
(304) 564-5694

Dr. Joseph Megy has built not one, but two successful businesses by turning one industry's trash into another industry's treasure. Joe's businesses, CM Tech and Jamegy, convert hazardous-waste by-products from the aerospace industry into useful products for the aluminum industry.

The aerospace industry, specifically the aluminum industry, produces a waste called spent pickle acid that, until Joe's process came along, was costing the industry dearly to haul off site and dispose of properly. A second hazardous by-product, called wet grinding swarf, had to be burned in an open field. Now, through technology that Joe developed and patented, these materials are used to produce grain refiners for the aluminum industry.



Joe Megy
1995 West Virginia Small Business
Person of the Year

Such refiners enhance the properties of metal. The technology may sound complex, but we all benefit from it every day in practical ways — from our beverage cans to the flame retardants in our children's clothing. We also benefit in a larger way — through the elimination of major hazardous-waste sources from the environment.

The community of New Cumberland, where both CM Tech and Jamegy are based, has benefitted, too. Like many rural towns, New Cumberland has seen a decline in

population and a loss of jobs; thanks to Joe and his businesses, things are beginning to turn around. Joe developed the plan for a 70-acre industrial park surrounding his manufacturing plants. Largely through his efforts, the state approved \$600,000 in funds for an industrial access road. The completed park should provide over 300 new small business jobs.

Joe started CM Tech in 1988 and Jamegy in 1991. The two companies now employ 33 people and generate sales of about \$3 million. In addition to his New Cumberland plants, Joe operates manufacturing facilities in Missouri and Tennessee, and 1995 promises additional expansion. Joe's plants now supply a significant portion of the grain refiners used by the aluminum industry in North America. He also markets and sells the products in Europe.

Mark E. Schlichter, President

Mark S. Barton, Vice President/General Manager

August Lotz Company, Inc.
146 North Center Street
Boyd, Wisconsin 54726
(715) 667-5121

The buzzing around the August Lotz Co. today isn't the sound of bees, as it was when the business was started nearly a century ago. The buzzing you hear today is saws. Originally started in 1897 as a bee farm, the August Lotz Co. expanded into bee-keeping supplies and eventually into wood-products manufacturing.

In 1991, when Mark Schlichter and Mark Barton purchased the 20-employee firm, it had been through several owners and was in decline. Since that time they have brought about the most dramatic period of growth in the history of the company.

The August Lotz Co. now employs 125, a six-fold increase in under four years. During the same period, sales almost tripled, to approximately \$5.5 million in 1994. To accommodate this growth, the company has expanded its facility twice with the most recent expansion in 1993, a 15,000-square-foot addition.



Mark Schlichter
1995 Wisconsin Small Business
Person of the Year

The new owners are focusing on expanding the markets in which the company has been most competitive: industrial bench tops, kitchen products such as bread boards and cabinet components, and laminated products. The company is also expanding into small specialty furniture lines.

The company has patented a unique edge-coating process for commercial tabletops and is currently the only manufacturer in the United States with this type of technology. It is also the second largest domestic producer of futon frames and has patented its conversion-movement hardware.

Managing their dramatic growth is just one challenge the two Marks have faced; attracting skilled employees to a small rural area of the state is another. A nearby technical college helped them develop their own in-house training program for new employees. It not only provides needed technical training, but also instructs employees on safety measures.

The company sponsors a YMCA swim team, AYSO soccer, girls gymnastics and Little League, where both Marks also coach. Over the past four years, their firm has also supported several organizations in and around the surrounding communities.

Stuart J. Hickman, President/CEO

Alta Construction, Inc.
P.O. Box 1021
Lyman, Wyoming 82937
(307) 786-4834

Stu Hickman and his brother, Matt, launched their general contracting company with nothing but a second-hand backhoe. But Stu had a vision — to build a company that would someday erect buildings throughout the region and



would create dozens of jobs. His vision has become a reality.

Today, Alta Construction, which began in 1981 with just the two brothers, now employs 41 people with an annual payroll of nearly \$700,000. Stu believes in empowering his employees. Many of his key superintendents started as laborers and have been promoted to management positions.

Alta grossed just under \$225,000 in sales the first fiscal year; sales were almost \$2.8 million in fiscal year 1993. This growth has taken place without the addition of new debt, and the company now operates nearly debt free. The firm offers a range of construction services. Job control, supervision, site work, concrete work, steel erection, insulation and rough/finish carpentry are just a few of Alta's areas of expertise.

Clients include Union Pacific Resources, Inter-Mountain Health Care, Solvay Minerals, AMF Tuboscope, Chevron, Amoco, Exxon, Western Gas Processors, C.E. Randall, Phillips Petroleum and more. These clients continue to return to Alta for their construction needs because of their high level of satisfaction in the work. Over 80 percent of Alta's business comes from repeat customers.

Stu, who bought out Matt's interest in the company in 1990 and became president and CEO, has expanded his vision of Alta's future. He plans to construct a facility that will not only showcase his own company, but will also serve as an incubator for related businesses, such as drafting and engineering firms.

Stu's visionary leadership extends to his community involvement as well. He believes that young people can gain important values and skills through participation in sports and volunteers his time to coach young wrestlers. He also served four years as the volunteer athletic director for his church.



Stuart Hickman
1995 Wyoming Small Business
Person of the Year



Mark Barton
1995 Wisconsin Small Business
Person of the Year

Accountant Advocate of the Year

Tom J. Dugger, President

Tom J. Dugger, CPA PC

6 N. Main

Stillwater, Oklahoma 74075

(405) 372-3909

The complexity of business requirements can be overwhelming. Businesses constantly are stymied in their attempts to communicate effectively with creditors and bankers. Often operational management and accounting issues are the most complex and troublesome for a new or emerging firm. That's where Tom Dugger, CPA, comes in, providing many hours of financial counseling to both clients and nonclients.

In addition to offering accounting services, Tom frequently leads seminars that focus on business taxation, OSHA rules, personnel policy, liability, property and workers' compensation issues, going into business, licensing, and other important small business topics. Attendees often seek Tom's help after the seminars have been concluded, and Tom always finds the time for their questions.

It is not unusual for him to provide free counseling to nonclients at their place of business. What is important to Tom is encouraging and assisting small business growth. "Our efforts are directed toward the total economic impact on the community. That is vital for us all," says Tom.

Tom's commitment to helping small businesses succeed also means communicating with government officials about financial and regulatory issues that affect small firms. He may provide input directly to legislators or become involved in consensus-building among those who will form the impetus for action. Tom continues to be a voice for small business on issues such as simplification of tax laws and bank lending requirements, Subchapter S requirements, and limited liability proposals.

Tom Dugger also is actively involved with the Meridian Technology Center, the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, the Stillwater Homebuilders Association, the



Tom Dugger
1995 Accountant Advocate
of the Year

Small Business Advocates of the Year The Entrepreneurial Success Award & Special Award Winners

Oklahoma Society of CPAs, local Rotary and Exchange Clubs, youth programs and several other community organizations. He also was a visiting adjunct professor at Langston University.

Perhaps most important to Tom Dugger are the words that form the slogan of his firm: honesty and integrity. "When serving clients by counseling them regarding their business practices, policies and ideas," says Tom, "you do much more than provide them operating numbers and tax reports. You help define their identity."

"If we can provide small businesses the benefit of our experience, be a resource in their decision process, encourage them to seek their niche and identity and do all this with the utmost honesty and integrity, our clients stand a better chance of success and we have achieved our objectives."

Financial Services Advocate of the Year

Donald J. McGowan, President and CEO

Flagship Bank

306 Main Street

Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

(508) 799-4321

Flagship Bank is a community bank with assets of \$260 million. When Flagship was founded in 1987, it was Worcester's first new bank in more than 30 years. One of the founders of Flagship Bank, Donald J. McGowan, is today its president and chief executive officer.

From the start, Don's vision was for Flagship to be Worcester's community bank, helping the region's small businesses survive, grow and create jobs, being socially responsible, and putting depositors' money to work at home.

The recent recession hit New England very hard, and Flagship's mission was truly put to the test. At the height of the recession, Worcester's unemployment topped 10 percent; some 25,000 workers lost their jobs. In a national rating of 75 major American cities during the recession, Worcester came in dead last, rated as the worst place to find a job.

Recognizing the importance of small businesses to employment and job creation, Don was committed to finding a way to help small firms make it through Worcester's bleak economic time. In 1993, after two years of meticulous research, Don introduced the SBA Express Loan Center at Flagship Bank. The idea was to make SBA loans fast, easy

and inexpensive. The bank would cut approval time, slash red tape and eliminate fees.

Flagship was perhaps the first bank in the country to pay the 2 percent SBA guarantee fee for the loan applicant and eliminate the need for a loan packaging fee, saving a business owner up to \$1,500. For the small business owners who did not have to pay the 2 percent guarantee fee, the program provided a tangible boost to their bottom lines.

The loan express program is credited with helping create or maintain more than 1,500 jobs to date. In recognition of its innovation and creativity, Flagship won the Bank Marketing Association's 1994 Golden Coin award.

Don's strong belief that local banks have an important responsibility in meeting the needs of the community formed the basis for another Flagship unique program: the Worcester Fund, which targets loans to community areas with the greatest need.

Don's commitment to Worcester's small businesses benefits the entire community. In 1993 he was named Visions 2000 Citizen of the Year by the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette*. Don was the *Worcester Business Journal's* "Business Person of the Year" in 1992.

As a voice for small business, Don offers this message to members of Congress: "The SBA guaranteed loan program works. It creates jobs. If a community bank like mine can create or maintain 1,500 jobs in a city like Worcester through SBA lending, think what can happen across the country!"

Don McGowan has a recommendation for small business owners, too. "Shop around until you find a banker who believes in your company as much as you do. Your business is as important to you as any fortune 500 company is to its management."



Don McGowan
1995 Financial Services Advocate
of the Year



Media Advocate of the Year

Maureen Regan Smith, Publisher

The Denver Business Journal
1700 Broadway, Suite 515
Denver, Colorado 80290
(303) 837-3500

"I was born an entrepreneur!" says Maureen Regan Smith, publisher of *The Denver Business Journal*, a weekly business newspaper. "It's my passion mainly because I have been an entrepreneur in the past. So I have a good understanding for what small business people are going through."

Maureen puts that passion and understanding to work, providing information—and inspiration—to *The Denver Business Journal's* 53,000 readers, 45 percent of whom work in very small businesses with fewer than 10 employees.

As publisher, Maureen has implemented a bold change in the way small business is covered in the Denver metropolitan area. She recently introduced "Small Business Strategies," a 20-page stand-alone section geared to the concerns of small businesses on subjects such as law, finance, computers and software, health care, franchising, human resources, commercial and residential real estate, sales and marketing, and the travel industry.

For the past several years, *The Denver Business Journal* has also sponsored the SBA's "Guide for Small Business," a resource booklet for startup entrepreneurs. In conjunction with the guide's publication, the *Journal* supported a week-long local television series on how to start a business and distributed the guide to more than 400 viewers.

The Denver Business Journal has won many prestigious awards for its coverage. Recently, the paper received a first-place award from the Society of Professional Journalists for business-feature writing and another first-place award for editorial writing about a small business issue.

Maureen Regan Smith has always worked for the advancement of small business issues. She founded the *Women's Yellow Pages*, an annual directory of information and services geared to



Maureen Regan Smith
1995 Media Advocate of the Year

**Small Business
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& Special Award
Winners**

metropolitan-area women and among the first publications nationwide to advocate the needs of women in business. She also has been recognized for her contributions to improving understanding of the small business contributions to the U.S. economy. She was named Outstanding Woman of the Year in 1990 by the Colorado Chamber of Commerce.

Two features in "Small Business Strategies" provide stories about how small business owners have made it. "Whether it's a young entrepreneur marketing his family's salad dressing or a retired corporate executive winging it on her own with a fledgling high-tech venture, these features convey the reality of small business at work in Colorado — with all the heart and soul the owners give it," says Maureen. "We believe every small business has a story to tell — an interesting, rich story that can provide a wealth of resources for others — and we take great pride in telling them."

Her advice to small business owners? "Participate in your community. Get out and get active — it will pay off in many ways. Also, read and be aware of the world around you. Knowledge is power!"

**Minority Small Business Advocate
of the Year**

Margaret A. D'A, Procurement Specialist

New Mexico Native American Business
Development Center
3939 San Pedro, N.E., Suite D
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87190
(505) 889-9092

"Procurement specialist" is a title Margaret D'A wears proudly, but it barely hints at the influence she has exerted on behalf of business people, especially Native Americans and other minorities in New Mexico and the Southwest region. Margaret's expertise extends beyond procurement, marketing and financial-resource development, to cultural, legal and legislative issues that affect the Native American and minority communities of the Southwest.

Her efforts on and off the job have created employment for several hundred people throughout the region. For example, when Gregory Enterprises, a manufacturer of hazardous waste containers, received more orders than they could handle, Margaret went to the Mescalero Indian Reservation and asked them if they wanted to make the containers. She then arranged for training for 18 people at the

reservation through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Gregory Enterprises. In addition to the job growth at the Mescalero site, jobs also are expanding at Gregory Enterprises. The company, which employed 10 people three years ago, now employs more than 200 in Carlsbad, N.M., an economically depressed area.

Margaret introduced to the Pueblo of Laguna a proposal for making alternative fuel. She met with the governor and with state- and federal-agency representatives and obtained a \$75,000 grant for the first alternative-fuel project to be undertaken by Native Americans in New Mexico.

She relocated Steve Dennis, a Native American, from New York and encouraged him to start a steel-fabrication plant on an Indian reservation. Kewa Steel now employs 32 people.

She assisted Phil Archuleta in writing a business plan to start a sign company in Mountainaire, N.M. Within a year, he obtained a five-year, \$1.5 million contract. His company now employs 22.

Before coming to work for the New Mexico Native American Business Development Center, Margaret D'A ran her own successful mechanical heating and cooling construction company, Sun Country Services. Most of her contracts were with state and federal agencies.

Since then, Margaret, a Hispanic American, has opened doors for many other minority and women business owners. She has a vast and valuable file of federal, state, local and private-sector contacts to draw upon. She serves on the Kellogg Foundation Advisory Board, the Governor's Rural Economic Development Committee, the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, and Sister Cities, among many others. Margaret has advocated on behalf of Native American concerns before the state legislature.

Margaret's tireless professional and volunteer efforts have earned her many awards, including the 1994 Trailblazer Award from the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women. To New Mexico's minority business community, an appropriate title for Margaret D'A might be "mover and shaker."



Margaret D'A
1995 Minority Small Business
Advocate of the Year

Veteran Advocate of the Year

Martin L. Saper, Counselor

Service Corps of Retired Executives
1330 Glenhurst Lane
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
(517) 487-6340



Martin L. Saper retired on his 65th birthday. A mechanical engineer, Martin had 30 years of entrepreneurial experience behind him in the ready-mix concrete, automatic-car-wash, and land-development and building businesses. He was also a World War II veteran who enlisted in July 1942 and served in the China-Burma-India theater as an aircraft-maintenance officer.

When he retired, Martin had several friends who were business counselors with the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and he wondered if he, too, could put his business knowledge to use as a SCORE counselor. In 1985 Martin became a SCORE trainee and now is a SCORE counselor at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce.

In 1987 SCORE was looking for a national director of veteran affairs. No one seemed to know what the job would entail, but Martin was willing to test the waters.

James Abdor, the SBA administrator at the time, wanted veterans' affairs to be a significant SBA program. The mission of the Office of Veterans Affairs was to ensure that special consideration be given to veterans in all SBA programs.

Martin began to set things in motion for the SCORE program for veterans. He helped develop the program to meet SBA's goals and to reach out to all veterans seeking to start or succeed in a small business. He created the SCORE Veterans Handbook, compiling information on financing, transition training and counseling programs available to veterans. He made presentations at the local, district and regional levels on how SCORE can better serve veterans. He represented SCORE at meetings of AMVETS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and the Vietnam Veterans of America. He organized and trained SCORE's veteran counselors from around the country.



Martin Saper
1995 Veteran Advocate
of the Year

He coordinated SCORE's participation in efforts to assist veteran contractors and businesses affected by defense downsizing. He advocated taking steps to analyze and minimize the effects of downsizing and to plan for future growth.

In other advocacy efforts, Martin has met with the National Committee for Business Development for Veterans to lobby in the interests of the veterans' affairs. He has attended various veteran conferences and made formal presentations to market SCORE as a resource available to veterans with a business orientation.

Martin has worked with the Veterans Business Resource Council establishing training programs to prepare leaders of start-up training sessions for veterans. He has helped establish a mentoring program for these small business owners to further assist them in the basics of running their businesses.

Martin advises prospective veteran business owners, "Those who wish to be viable in the business community today and tomorrow must first sit back and take stock of themselves."

Know yourself. It's time-tested advice, born of wisdom and much experience.

Women in Business Advocate of the Year

Elaine M. Demery, President

Nelson, Coulson and Associates, Inc.
333 West Hampden Avenue
Suite 507
Englewood, Colorado 80110
(303) 761-7680

Elaine Demery is president and chief operating officer of Nelson, Coulson and Associates, Inc., a temporary staffing agency specializing in permanent and temporary employment in engineering and related fields. She worked her way up through the ranks, beginning in accounting and administration, advancing to manager of finance, and assuming the presidency of the company in 1993.

A passionate believer that women can and do make a positive difference in business, Elaine's advocacy efforts are seen on many levels — personally, in her business, within the women's business community, within Colorado's business community, and at the statewide policymaking level.

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Elaine is a founding member of the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce, the first chamber of its kind in the nation. Elaine chaired the board in 1993. Among her many contributions to the chamber is the annual Tribute to Women in Business. Elaine created this awards event to showcase the accomplishments of individual women in business, to focus attention on women's contributions to the world of business, to motivate businesses to create healthy business environments for women, and to raise money for college scholarships for women. More than 1,000 people attended the 1994 tribute.

Elaine also is very active in the Colorado Women's Leadership Coalition, a statewide coalition of 44 organizations, representing 25,000 women and 31,000 girls. The coalition supports the leadership of women in business, government and the community at large. In 1992 Elaine created CWLC's Certification Action Alliance, to seek universal statewide certification standards for women- and minority-owned businesses in Colorado. Largely because of the constructive and inclusive manner with which Elaine built the case, the state's business community today enjoys the benefits of uniform certification.

In 1994 Elaine played a key role in obtaining approval for a Women's Business Office for Colorado. Elaine ensured that the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Women Business Owners, the Colorado Women's Economic Development Council, and other women's business organizations within CWLC worked



Elaine Demery
1995 Women in Business Advocate
of the Year

together to persuade the state's policymakers to establish the office. Colorado Governor Roy Romer established a women's business office by executive order on September 7, 1994.

Elaine recently accepted Governor Romer's appointment to the Colorado Women's Economic Development Council and is spearheading the council's efforts to establish a statewide electronic-bulletin-board system for women in business. The system, to be known as WomanNet, will serve as a clearinghouse for information on, for and about women business owners in the state. WomanNet is expected to debut this summer.

The single greatest influence on Elaine's life, she says, was her grandmother, who immigrated to America from Italy in 1912. Her grandmother taught Elaine to work to the best of her ability and to fight hard for what she believes in. Out of these values came a social awareness that translates to Elaine's community involvement.

Elaine Demery, mentor and more. Her every instinct is to act to change the situation for the better.

Entrepreneurial Success Award Winners

Robert J. Geresi, President

Paul T. Sorrentino, Vice President

New York Bagel Enterprises

521 West Elm

Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

(405) 624-3700

"New products for new markets," goes the conventional wisdom—but bagels for Oklahoma? Isn't that a little like opening a grits shop on the Upper East Side?

Childhood friends, the "Bagel Boys," as Robert Geresi and Paul Sorrentino have come to be known, both worked in New York City bagel shops and delicatessens while in high school. Their friendship and bagel-and-deli experience — and Oklahoma's lack of bagel stores — brought the pair together in a new business venture in Stillwater, Okla., in the mid-1980s.

A college town, Stillwater seemed the perfect place for a bagel and deli-sandwich operation. Nevertheless, loan request after loan request was turned down. In 1986, however, Robert and Paul took their business plan to Stillwater Bank and Trust Co., and the bank financed the first location of New York Bagel Enterprises.

In its first year of operation, the company recorded sales of \$160,000. In 1988 there were two stores in Stillwater, a third in Oklahoma City, and the SBA was guaranteeing the first of many loans to New York Bagel Enterprises. By the end of 1994, the company had more than 20 stores, and total revenues were in excess of \$11 million. New York Bagel Enterprises was a small company that had made it big.

Robert and Paul proudly offer their employees the opportunity to become store owners, too, as franchisees. When New York Bagel Enterprises started in 1986, there were a total of six employees. Currently, there are some

300 employees working for the company stores, with another 140 employees in its franchise stores. New York Bagel Enterprises was on the *National Business Employment Weekly's* listing of best franchise buys in 1994.

In addition to their business activities, Robert and Paul are involved in many of the area's business and community organizations, including the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, the Main Street USA project, the local Love Feast shelter, the Knights of Columbus and the United Way. In 1993 New York Bagel Enterprises received the Oklahoma Employer of the Year award for their hiring of many physically and mentally handicapped persons.

As the chain has grown, the concept has continued to adapt to new markets. New York Bagel Enterprises strives for consistency of quality, but not for a cookie-cutter approach. New stores have been bought, rather than leased, where appropriate; the look of stores is adjusted to fit the locale without changing the New York Bagel Shop feel. Products are developed to suit regional tastes as well; a jalapeño bagel was created for the Austin area. That's how they stay on the leading edge of this fast-growing segment of the food industry, say the Bagel Boys.

So how are bagels doing in Oklahoma? Even better than OK!



Robert Geresi and Paul Sorrentino
1995 Entrepreneurial Success Award Winners of the Year



Young Entrepreneurs of the Year
Scott William MacHardy, President
Mark R. Lane, Executive Vice President

Coed Sportswear, Inc.
P.O. Box 970
27 Pleasant Street
Newfields, New Hampshire 03856-0970
(603) 772-1990

“Awesome” is about the best word to describe the growth and success of Coed Sportswear, Inc. in Newfields, N.H. The company, founded in 1990 with a \$15,000 trademark purchase by young entrepreneurs Scott MacHardy and Mark Lane, did about \$300,000 in sales that first year. They more than tripled that — to \$1 million — the second year, and by 1994 sales topped \$25 million.

Coed Sportswear markets lifestyle-statement clothing — T-shirts, headwear, boxer shorts, and fleece products — through about 10,000 retail accounts in the United States, Canada and other foreign countries. The company's customers include department stores, chain stores, sporting goods stores, college campuses, novelty and specialty shops, and resorts.

Scott and Mark take pride in “extreme customer service” — no minimum orders and 24-hour shipping. The no-minimum-order policy allows even smaller stores to pick and choose from 80-plus designs, which makes for good merchandise displays. Orders are shipped UPS within 24 hours, which means Coed Sportswear serves, in effect, as their customers' stockroom — retailers can reorder as they sell out of a product. Ever looking for new ideas, Scott and Mark have created a board of advisors made up of their retail customers.

The two believe that the excellent relationships they maintain not only with their customers, but also with their vendors and employees, are the driving force behind the company. The company, which originally employed 4, now employs 40 full-time and 10 part-time workers. The screen printer and independent sales representatives account for an additional 150 jobs. The company expects to employ between 120 and 150 employees in the next five years and makes no predictions about the ripple effect on outside employment.

They see a continuing bright future for the profits of their young company. Mark, who monitors the company's books, says, “I never saw a number I didn't want to crunch.”

The pair's enthusiasm for their work spills over in a spirit of helpfulness and cheerfulness. The company and its employees are helping the nearby community through volunteer efforts. Coed Sportswear was the largest contributor to a

local "Lend a Helping Paw" drive. Scott and Mark donate any defective clothing to Goodwill. And they've started a charitable foundation to provide money for children who cannot afford to pay for fees and uniforms to participate in community sports activities.

Scott and Mark's success hasn't changed their youthful love for sports — or for man's best friend. Once a week Mark's golden retriever, Maggie, and Scott's boxer, Brittany, can be seen playing together and greeting visitors on the company grounds.



Scott MacHardy and Mark Lane
1995 Young Entrepreneurs of the Year

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company would need to expand into new fields in order to grow — or even survive.

In the last several years, as trade barriers were lowered and market opportunities began to open overseas, Susan knew that SI's automated control systems could provide much-needed assistance for electric and hydraulic power, wastewater facilities, and telecommunications. After conducting market research, she focused on China and its developing infrastructure — well-suited to SI's communications technology.

Financing for this new market was tough. "It was difficult to get a bank to underwrite a loan for our exporting ventures," says Susan. "When you're an established small company making the transition from small to mid-sized, it's difficult to get loan approval." She eventually found funding through state and federal sources.

China, however, proved to be a difficult market to crack. Susan persevered and finally developed a marketing strategy that worked. She noticed that, while American firms were bidding individually, manufacturing businesses in other countries were forming teams for bidding. Working swiftly to build teams of American manufacturers, Susan developed business contacts in China. Today, SI has contracts in both defense and commercial areas and has expanded into new markets in the Pacific Rim, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea and Mexico.

SI consistently invests a substantial portion of its revenues in continuing research and development. The result is a substantial accumulation of patents, trademarks and copyrights, which helps the company continue to compete worldwide.

Susan Corrales-Diaz has built a reputation as a true supporter of the exporting community. She has become an important source of export information in her home base of California. She has also traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in roundtable discussions, and in 1994 was selected to travel to China and Russia with Commerce Secretary Ron Brown as one of a handful of American CEOs. She was recently nominated to serve on the National Women's Business Council,



Susan Corrales-Diaz
1995 Small Business Exporter
of the Year

**Small Business Exporter of the Year
Susan Corrales-Diaz, President & CEO**

Systems Integrated
2200 North Glassell Street
Orange, California 92665
(714) 998-0900

Under the guiding hand of Susan Corrales-Diaz, Systems Integrated has grown from a small firm working with submarine technology for the U.S. Navy into a global trader of powerful electronic control systems.

Although SI has been in operation for 20 years, it was Susan Corrales-Diaz' foresight that led to the firm's phenomenal success in recent years. SI was established in 1974 to provide much-needed high-tech computer support to the U.S. Navy. In recent years, however, the global powers — and defense needs — have changed. With her firsthand involvement in defense-related work, Susan quickly saw that the

which is helping reinvent national policy affecting women-owned businesses.

Susan believes that taking advantage of unique opportunities for to shape California's and America's export policies and programs will benefit not only her own, but other small businesses as well. Her knowledge of high technology and the Asian marketplace are invaluable information resources for companies interested in expanding international markets and developing the U.S. economy.

National SCORE Chapter of the 1994 Fiscal Year Atlanta Chapter 48

Atlanta Chapter 48 is the 1994 SCORE Chapter of the Year. Congratulations to Leonard J. Seligman and the entire Atlanta Chapter for their hard work and dedication to SCORE.

Atlanta Chapter members counsel clients every day at their chapter office, or when necessary, at a client's business location. In addition, SCORE members help manage and staff the SBA Business Information Center in Atlanta. The chapter also serves clients daily in any one of its four branch offices located in Athens, Augusta, Columbus and Gainesville.



Leonard Seligman
National SCORE Chapter
Atlanta Chapter 48

The number of entrepreneurs that Atlanta SCORE counseled in 1994 rose by 22.2 percent, and the chapter offers more than 35 small business workshops each year. Atlanta is also developing a computer program that provides up-to-date information on all types of SBA-guaranteed loans. Each SCORE counselor's desk will be furnished with a computer terminal so this information can be accessed immediately and provide clients with the most current data available.

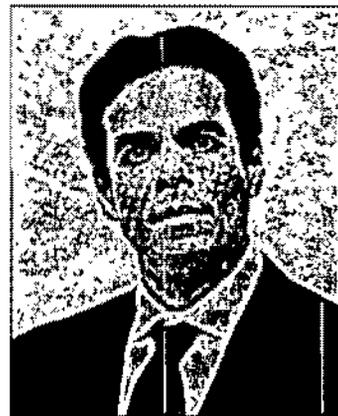


National Small Business
Prime Contractor of the Year
MetroLaser
Irvine, California
Cecil F. Hess, President

MetroLaser is a research-and-development company specializing in lasers and optical diagnostic instruments for aerodynamic and mechanical measurements, nondestructive testing, combustion research, particle sizing, air-worthiness experiments, and structural analysis. With an above-average SBIR ratio, MetroLaser successfully transferred from Phase I feasibility programs into Phase II commercialization. It was the first and only protégé selected by Rocketdyne in the initial year of its mentor/protégé program. MetroLaser has led the worldwide commercialization of laser-based instrumentation, and its scientific teams have an international reputation for excellence in laser diagnostics.

MetroLaser has working agreements with five major universities and is the prime contractor of a multimillion dollar contract with the USAF Phillips Laboratory. It supported the first international microgravity lab on the space shuttle in 1992. The company's sales increased from \$601,000 in 1988 to nearly \$4.9 million in 1994.

Nominated by:
Ernestine Stewart
Phillips Laboratory/PKLA
Lasers and Imaging Division
Kirkland AFB, NM



Cecil Hess
MetroLaser
1995 Prime Contractor of the Year

National Small Business
Subcontractor of the Year
Exotic Metals Forming Company

Kent, Washington

Donald R. Lindsey, CEO

Exotic Metals Forming Company is a family-owned corporation that has been part of the aerospace industry for some 32 years. EMFCO is a world-class manufacturer doing business on a global basis. The products they manufacture range from 1" to 84" in diameter and are primarily found in the hot sections of jet engines and air-ducting applications in aircraft.

EMFCO has participated on a number of Boeing design build teams for both the 777 and 737-700/737-800 as well as on integrated product teams for a variety of external-bleed air ducts on the Pratt & Whitney 4000 series of commercial engines.

Through the years, the success of the EMFCO has been attributable to the pride and individual initiative of the men and women who work there and their ability to develop viable business opportunities in the aerospace industry.

Nominated by:
R. K. Blanton
Small/SDB Programs, Materiel Division
Boeing Commercial Airplane Group
Seattle, WA



Donald Lindsey
Exotic Metals Forming Company
1995 Subcontractor of the Year

Small Business
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& Special Award
Winners

Small Business Institute Cases
1994 Fiscal Year

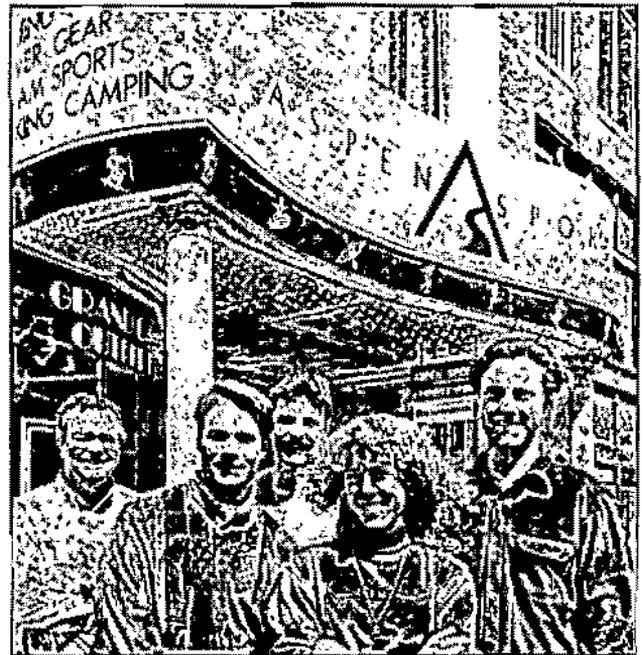
Graduate Winners

First Place Winner: Northern Arizona
University

SBI Director: Lisa Borstadt

Students: David Christensen, Richard Ziegner and
Scott Ford

Case: The SBI team consulted with Aspen Sports which was suffering from a severe cash shortage. The team analyzed the store's current financial condition, identified the reasons for the store's financial shortfalls, and reviewed the historical return of the store's earnings. After the analysis, the SBI team recommended certain changes to help the company gain a more sound financial footing.



First Place Winner: Northern Arizona University
SBI Graduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994
Wayne Fox, SBI Director; David Christensen; Herry McLaughlin,
Aspen Sports Owner; Lisa Borstadt, SBI Case Advisor; and Kurt
Hardin, Aspen Sports Owner.

Second Place Winner: Indiana University of Pennsylvania

SBI Director: Thomas Falcone

Students: Neal Donahue, Joel Erich, Max Green, Erin McCormick, Colleen Smith and Carrie VanHeMark

Case: The SBI team consulted with a newly established business that manufactures replacement windows. The firm encountered difficulties in the first few months of start-up. After the analysis, the SBI team concluded that the firm will bring over 100 jobs initially to the area, and an additional 500 jobs in the future.



Second Place Winner: Indiana University of Pennsylvania

SBI Graduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994

Top row: Dr. Robert C. Camp, Dean, Eberly College of Business; Dr. Thomas W. Falcone, SBI, Co-Director, Dr. Stephen Osborne, SBI, Co-Director. Bottom Row: Erin McCormick, Student Consultant; Raymond Becki, Assistant District Director, Business Development, SBA; Michael Rempel, Vice President and Assistant to President representing Gorell Enterprises, Inc.



Third Place Winner: Duke University

SBI Director: William Sax

Students: Joe Deffner, Laura Lampert, Claudia Matarese, Brenda Rathjen, Chris Sword and Alan Young

Case: The SBI team consulted with a retail store that specializes in fine gifts and home furnishings. Critical to efforts in three areas was the potential for obtaining long-term financing which has caused difficulties in the past. As a result, the SBI team developed a comprehensive business plan that will be used as a guide to increase the company's sales goal by 1998 and help it remain profitable.



Third Place Winner: Duke University

SBI Graduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994

Top row: Chris Sword and Bill Sax (SBI Director)
Bottom Row: Alan Young, Brenda Rathjen, Claudia Matarese and Laura Lampert.

Undergraduate Winners

First Place Winner: California State University, Hayward

SBI Director: R. L. Singson

Students: Robert Bowles and Tricia Drake

Case: The SBI team consulted with a family-owned medical pharmacy and was assigned the task of developing a comprehensive business plan to attract additional customers, increase sales of over-the-counter products and to increase profits. After the analysis, the SBI team presented a two-year business plan and a marketing plan to the pharmacy owner. The plan recommended several operational changes and methods that will achieve greater overall success for the business.



First Place Winner: California State University, Hayward
SBI Undergraduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994
Ken Hauser, Business Development, SBA; Robert Bowles, Tricia Drake, Professor R.L. Singson, SBI Director

Small Business Advocates of the Year The Entrepreneurial Success Award & Special Award Winners

Second Place Winner: Montana State University

SBI Director: Nancy Dodd

Students: Tiffany Heaton and Angela Nace

Case: The SBI team consulted with a retail western and sporting goods supply store and was initially engaged to conduct a general business audit and a feasibility study for moving the store's location. In addition to the audit and feasibility study, the team conducted an organization analysis and developed a marketing plan which are designed to improve the overall operation of the firm.



Second Place Winner: Montana State University
SBI Undergraduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994
Nancy Dodd, SBI Director

Third Place Winner: University of Louisville

SBI Director: Bruce Kemelgor

Students: Susan Huff and Marina Vassiliou

Case: The SBI team consulted with owners of a small, casual seafood restaurant. Although the restaurant had a loyal clientele, it was not as profitable as the owners had anticipated for the time and resources they had invested in the venture. After the analysis, the SBI team designed marketing strategies and made recommendations that will turn the restaurant into a growth business, with the possibility of expansion over the next several years.



Third Place Winner: University of Louisville
SBI Undergraduate Case Study of Fiscal Year 1994
Bruce Kemelgor, SBI Director, Benton "Bud" Miles, SBI Assistant Director, Susan Huff.

104th CONGRESS

Congressional Committees on Small Business

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business

Republicans

Jan Meyers - KS
(Chairman)

Joel Hefley - CO
William Zeliff - NH
James Talent - MO
Donald Manzullo - IL
Peter Torkildsen - MA
Roscoe G. Bartlett - MD
Linda Smith - WA
Frank A. LoBiondo - NJ
Zach Wamp - TN
Sue W. Kelly - NY
Dick Chrysler - MI
James B. Longley, Jr. - ME
Walter B. Jones, Jr. - NC
Matt Salmon - AZ
Van Hilleary - TN
Mark Edward Souder - IN
Sam Brownback - KS
Steve Chabot - OH
Sue Myrick - NC
David Funderburk - NC
Jack Metcalf - WA

Democrats

John J. LaFalce - NY
Ron Wyden - OR
Norman Sisisky - VA
Kweisi Mfume - MD
Floyd H. Flake - NY
Glenn Posbard - IL
Eva Clayton - NC
Martin Meehan - MA
Nydia Velazquez - NY
Cleo Fields - LA
Walter Tucker, III - CA
Earl Hilliard - AL
Pete Peterson - FL
Bennie Thompson - MS
Chaka Fattah - PA
Ken Bentsen - TX
Karen McCarthy - MO
William P. Luther - MN
Patrick J. Kennedy - RI

U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business

Republicans

Christopher S. Bond - MO
(Chairman)

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Conrad R. Burns - MT
Paul Coverdell - GA
Dirk Kempthorne - ID
Robert F. Bennett - UT
Kay Bailey Hutchison - TX
John Warner - VA
William H. Frist - TN
Olympia J. Snowe - ME

Democrats

Dale Bumpers - AR
(Ranking)
Sam Nunn - GA
Carl Levin - MI
Tom Harkin - IA
John Kerry - MA
Joseph I. Lieberman - CT
Paul Wellstone - MN
Howell Heflin - AL
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1995

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Sprint Business
U.S. Chamber of Commerce