

News Release

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U.S. Small Business Administration Alaska District Selects 2009 Alaskan Small Businesses Person of the Year

JUNEAU ALASKA: The U.S. Small Business Administration is pleased to announce that Breeze-In Corporation's Allan Ahlgren of Juneau Alaska will be honored as one of the Nation's Top State Small Business Winners in Washington May 17-23, 2009 for the National Small Business of the Year Awards.

From humble beginnings as a cattle rancher's son in Minnesota, Allan Ahlgren parlayed years of hard work and commitment to become one of Juneau's most successful business owners who now employs more than a hundred Alaskans.

Ahlgren began working out of a small nook in the Juneau International Airport. By 1982, he had diligently saved enough funds to open his own stand-alone location in the Mendenhall Valley in Juneau. The new Breeze-In location offered local residents and tourists with a local source to obtain high quality convenience goods, including fresh-baked donuts, cookies, hand-made sandwiches, salads and soups, at an affordable price. All of these products were made in production facilities in Juneau keeping it a truly local business in every sense of the word. With business booming, he decided to once again expand into a new region of town with a third location. It was at this point in 2006 that Ahlgren approached Alaska Pacific Bank about building a new facility and was introduced to the SBA's 504 loan program. "All Ahlgren is exactly the type of business person SBA is designed to assist and we are happy to be part of that process" says nominator Leslie Dahl, Alaska Pacific Bank. After many months of hard work and commitment from Mr. Ahlgren, AK Pacific, and the SBA the new location was opened in early 2008.

It is apparent that Ahlgren's years of hard work as an on-site active business owner and his positive attitude have contributed to his success. The Breeze In has proven to be a good steward of the community and has been a frequent contributor to many Juneau organizations throughout the years from financial to in-kind donations. Ahlgren feels his greatest accomplishments have been building a small business and raising his family. Being able to combine the two, having a business that has the capacity to employ his family is a source of great pride. Like many small business owners, for Allan Ahlgren, the Breeze-In is more than just a business: it is his legacy.

Karen Forsland, SBA Alaska District Director said "Small businesses like the Breeze-In Corporation have tremendous impacts on their communities, especially in rural Alaska. We are pleased to recognize Allan Ahlgren and his team as the 2009 SBA Alaska Small Business Persons of the Year."

The SBA selects a Small Business Person of the Year for each of the 50 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. Winners are selected based on their staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales and/or unit volume, financial strength, innovation, response to adversity, and community contributions. For more information about Small Business Week go to:

<http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com>.