



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## ***Summersville Family Business To Receive State and Regional Recognition May 13 Event To Honor L.J. Hughes & Sons, Inc.***

**SUMMERSVILLE, W.Va.** – Little did L.J. Hughes know when working as a diamond core driller for Hoffman Brothers Company in the 1920's, he was creating a legacy which would extend into four generations of the Hughes family.

A hard-working, steam-powered Sullivan core operator, Hughes was consistently out-producing the 50 or so drilling rigs under the employ of Hoffman Brothers and thought his pay should reflect such. When he approached Mr. Hoffman for a raise and was promptly rejected, Hughes used what funds he had to purchase two drilling rigs and set out on his own. That entrepreneurial leap of faith by Hughes is being rewarded as the company bearing his name, L.J. Hughes & Sons, Inc., is being honored as West Virginia's 2010 **Jeffrey Butland Family-Owned Small Business Person of the Year** by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The company is being recognized at the annual West Virginia Small Business Awards luncheon on Thursday, May 13, 2010 at the Tamarack Conference Center in Beckley. The largest diamond core drilling contracting company on the East Coast has also been selected as SBA's Region III top Family-Owned Small Business. Region III includes Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C. and West Virginia.

The Awards Celebration is being hosted by the West Virginia Women's Business and Training Center and will run from noon until 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 13. Cost is \$40 per person. Register now by contacting Karen Jones at (800) 766-4556, via email at [kjones@westvirginiawbc.org](mailto:kjones@westvirginiawbc.org), or register online at [www.westvirginiawbc.org](http://www.westvirginiawbc.org).

In 1942, Hughes brought his equipment to West Virginia to do an exploratory drilling project for a subsidiary of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad and found the states coal industry provided plenty of work. He was joined by sons Robert and Charles in 1946 and eventually the entire family settled in the Summersville, Nicholas County area.

Then in the early 1950's Hughes's daughter and son-in-law, Evelyn and Fletcher G. Herold joined the business. Hughes and his two sons remained active in the business until their deaths which necessitated the entrance of the third generation of the Hughes family into the management of the business.

Upon the untimely death of Robert and Charles within two years of each other, Charles' twin sons, David M. "Mike" and John M. "Mick," and cousin Fletcher G. Herold, Jr., were suddenly thrust into the role of company leaders. Already active in the business since their graduation from college, the trio had expertise in all aspects of the drilling process, but were they ready to take the reins of their grandfathers company?

Apparently so - as their continued success and growth would indicate as well as the recent selection as the 2010 Family-Owned Small Business of the Year.

The company continues to operate under the leadership of Mick, Mike and Fletcher as well as Fletcher's sister, Rebecca Atkins. And in 2006, their nephew, Jeffrey Lilly, came on board as the fourth generation.

If the past generations of ownership are any indication, the company is in great hands.

L.J. Hughes & Sons was nominated by Jim Epling, center manager at the Region 1 Workforce Small Business Development Center in Summersville.

Also being honored at the **2010 West Virginia Small Business Awards Celebration** on May 13<sup>th</sup> are: Craig W. Hartzell, president and CEO of Azimuth, Incorporated in Morgantown as the 2010 **Small Business Person of the Year**; Jalon "Jay" Petre, president of Renick Millworks, LLC, Renick as **SBA Young Entrepreneur**; C. Thomas and Rosemary Grant from First Choice Bookkeeping, Inc. in Huntington as **Financial Services Champions**; Diane Lewis, president of Action Facilities Management in Morgantown as **Minority Small Business Champion**; Kara Gray, owner of New Horizon Consulting in Dallas as **Women in Business Champion**; and Scott M. Hedges, president & CEO and Michael J. Grady, vice president from Power Sonix, Inc. in Martinsburg as **Small Business Exporters**.

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