



NEWS RELEASE

WEST VIRGINIA DISTRICT OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seven West Virginia Businesses and Champions Honored Tamarack Site of Annual Small Business Gala

BECKLEY, W.Va. – Judy K. McCauley, director of the U.S. Small Business Administration’s West Virginia Office welcomed business leaders and officials from all corners of the state to the Tamarack Conference Center in Beckley today to honor West Virginia’s top entrepreneurs and small business champions at the annual Small Business Week Awards Celebration.

“Small Business Week gives us to opportunity to recognize and reward the hardest working men and women in West Virginia,” said McCauley. “West Virginia’s 125,000 plus small businesses have proven time-and-again that the American dream is powerful, resilient and adaptable. Their grit and determination have helped lead us through our recent difficult times toward a greater economic growth and it is good we acknowledged them as such.”

The event was keynoted by Susan Sisk, general manager for the United States Capitol Visitor Center. Sisk took the opportunity on Thursday to praise West Virginia’s small businesses and champions during her address, and took time to visit the small businesses which make up the Tamarack Foundation’s Artisans Resource Center. The Capitol Visitor Center strives to purchase products made in the United States and Sisk explored the possibility of utilizing products generated by Tamarack artisans at the Visitor Center.

Recognized as West Virginia’s **Small Business Person of the Year** was Craig W. Hartzell, president and CEO of Azimuth, Incorporated in Morgantown. In addition to his recognition at the Celebration, Hartzell will also be recognized at the 47th annual National Small Business Week gala in Washington DC on Tuesday, May 25, 2010 where he will learn whether he will be selected as the **National Small Business Person of the Year**.

Also honored at the **2010 West Virginia Small Business Awards Celebration** were: Jalon “Jay” Petre, president of Renick Millworks, LLC, Renick as **SBA Young Entrepreneur**; Roberta Johnson, 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**.

Recognized as West Virginia's 2010 **Jeffrey Butland Family-Owned Small Business Person of the Year** was L.J. Hughes & Sons, Inc. in Summersville. The company is operated by twin brothers David M. and John M. Hughes and cousin Fletcher G. Herold, Jr. The largest diamond core drilling contracting company on the East Coast was also selected as SBA's Region III top Family-Owned Small Business. Region III includes Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C. and West Virginia.

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The mission of the SBA is to aid, counsel, assist and promote the interests of small businesses by providing financial, procurement and business development assistance and advocating on their behalf within the government. All SBA programs are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.