

Friday, October 5, 2007

Our Achievement Award winners

The Business Review (Albany)

Congratulations to the 2007 winners of The Business Review's annual Achievement Awards.

This year we celebrate the accomplishments of a mix of companies, ranging from some of the region's iconic industrial and service companies, with histories going back to the 19th century, to new companies built around the latest technologies.

- Carol Constantino, president of **Noteworthy Co.** is our Executive of the Year. Under her leadership, the family-owned company that manufactures promotional products continues to grow and innovate.

Noteworthy has been in business since 1954 and employs more than 300 people in Montgomery County.

Constantino has been leading Noteworthy since the death of her husband in 1989. Under her leadership, the company has expanded its business and more than doubled its employment in Amsterdam.

- **Rose & Kiernan Inc.** is the Large Company of the Year. This employee-owned property and casualty insurance company has been doing business since 1869.

Rose & Kiernan, headquartered in East Greenbush and led by CEO John Murray, has more than doubled in size since 1995. Its 210 employees generate \$45 million in annual revenue.

The company has offices throughout much of upstate New York and in Connecticut.

- The Most Promising New Enterprise is **Solid Sealing Technology Inc.**, which was formed in 2004 when Gary Balfour and Alan Fuierer left **CeramTec North America Corp.** to start their own high-tech manufacturing company in the Watervliet Arsenal.

A year later, CeramTec shut down its Capital Region plant and consolidated in South Carolina.

But Solid Sealing is doing business here and has bright prospects, targeting the fuel-cell, homeland security and nanotechnology industries.

- The Nonprofit of the Year is Northeast Parent & Child Society, which is closing in on its 120th anniversary.

Northeast's services include a guidance center, family preservation and career development programs, a children's shelter, a foster care program and a school.

Northeast serves people living in 31 counties. It generates revenue from 2,000 donors and has been "protecting children, preserving families, and strengthening communities" for 119 years.

- Joseph Milot is the Small Business Person of the Year. Milot has picked up where the region's historic glove-making industry left off by making the economic forces of globalization work for him.

Milot's business--**Protective Industrial Products Inc.** (PIP)--began in the 1980s when Milot was selling Chinese-made work gloves from the trunk of his car.

That business has grown.

Today PIP has inventory that runs into tens of millions of dollars' worth of specialty work gloves in its Guilderland Center warehouse, and in distribution centers in Tennessee, California, Mexico, Panama and Hong Kong.

Recently, Milot's company expanded its business by purchasing the rights to market Mud Glove, a brand-name gardening glove, and the acquisition of a retail work glove company called **Brahma Glove**.

- The Small Company of the Year is **Ross Valve Manufacturing Co. Inc.**

Ross Valve is one of the most storied manufacturing companies in the Capital Region, with a history that goes back to the heyday of the Industrial Age. And the company continues to compete successfully in today's global economy.

Ross Valve, a family-owned business, has been making valves for water systems and hydroelectric projects since 1879.

Under the fifth-generation leadership of brothers Bill and Andy Ross, the nation's oldest valve manufacturing company has been successful in today's global marketplace. Nearly a third of its business comes from overseas.

The Ross family recent turned the old **Garden Way** complex into a technology park.

The Achievement Awards will be presented at The Business Review's annual banquet Thursday, Nov. 1 at The **Crowne Plaza Hotel** in downtown Albany.

These businesses and business leaders truly have done their part to make the region a great place to do business.