SBA U.S. Small Business Administration

Small Business Week

May 10 - 16, 1992

SMALL BUSINESS: *Building America's Future*

[MS-0436.005.008.002]

Small Business Week 1992

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Message from the Administrator

Throughout our history, small businesses have played a key role in the vitality of our nation. Weathering the hard times and prospering in the good, they have, as a group, been the top employer and trainer of our work force and the mainstay of our economy. Today, their reach is global, with exports to every corner of the world.

A business is only as good as its people, and here again, small businesses lead the way. Because it is in small businesses that we find most of the innovators, the open, creative minds that are on the cutting edge of every field. Here are not only brilliant minds, but also men and women with a dream and the determination to make it a reality. Here are people achieving success by sheer will and hard work, often overcoming great odds and taking great risks. And here are leaders, inspiring those around them to go the extra mile, to reach for success.

Here are also generous people, who give back to their communities far more than they receive. Small business people give, per capita, more than large corporations. And they are the ones actively involved, giving freely of goods and services, time and talent to everything from boards of education to Little League, from fund-raisers to environmental action groups. They are the backbone of our society, and their caring, their involvement and their generosity are an inspiration to us all.

You, the small business people of America, are our constituency at SBA. We are privileged to serve you as an advocate, investor and counselor, helping you build America's future. Faced with tough economic times, we are doing our best to loosen credit, to make much-needed money available to small businesses. And how it is needed – since September, the demand on our loan guarantee program has soared 30 percent. In hardest-hit New England, our economic recovery program is helping viable companies stay alive, and the demand is tremendous. But we are determined to find a way to meet these needs, to face the challenge and win the fight. Together, the SBA and small business have weathered economic crises before, and we will again.

This week, we take time to pay tribute to some of the brightest and best small business people from across the nation. You, our winners, come from every walk of life, but you are bound by a common thread: you are making your dream come true, and in doing so, are providing job opportunities and stimulating the economy. We are proud to honor your achievements and we thank you for your immeasurable contributions to the nation and the world.

As Administrator of the Small Business Administration, I want to personally congratulate each of you — I am proud of you, I support you and I salute you.

Pat Saiki

Patricia Saiki
Administrator

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Small Business Administration is a small, independent agency of the federal government. As enacted by Congress in 1953, the SBA's purpose is to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business. Today, SBA offers financing, training and advocacy for small firms and works with lending, educational and training institutions nationwide. SBA's programs are delivered at agency offices throughout every state, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam.

The American economy is affected greatly by its 20 million small businesses. They produce 40 percent of the gross national product and provide jobs, technological innovations and opportunity for entrepreneurial self-determination.

The SBA provides *procurement and technology assistance* to insure that small businesses get a fair share of government purchases and contracts for property, services, and government-sponsored research and development.

To help improve the management skills of small business owners, potential owners and managers, SBA offers *management assistance*, providing technical and product assistance as well as management training and counseling.

SBA *financial assistance* provides better access to capital through a variety of loan programs, surety bond guarantees and small business investment companies. Financial assistance is provided to start-up and existing small business concerns, to victims of natural disasters and economic injury, and to state and local economic development companies.

To protect the interests of small businesses, SBA *advocates* their cause before Congress, the executive branch and state governments as well as with financial, educational, professional and trade organizations.

The SBA puts *special emphasis* on its assistance to veterans, socially and economically disadvantaged minorities, women and the handicapped.

Each year, the President of the United States designates a week in May as National Small Business Week, leading the nation in a salute to the small business men and women who contribute so much to America's economy and society. The SBA presents awards to small business owners or managers in each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands and Guam, whose achievements best exemplify the American entrepreneurial spirit. These prestigious awards are presented during special ceremonies at the state, regional and national levels, culminating with a White House announcement of the National Small Business Person of the Year.

The awards presented are:

- Small Business Person of the Year
- Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year
- Women in Business Advocate of the Year
- Veteran Small Business Advocate of the Year
- Accountant Advocate of the Year
- Financial Services Advocate of the Year
- Media Advocate of the Year
- Small Business Exporter of the Year
- Young Entrepreneur of the Year
- Entrepreneurial Success Award
- Federal Government Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year
- Federal Government Small Business Subcontractor of the Year.

James N. Myers, President
James Myers Drug, Inc.
3604 University Boulevard
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404
(205) 556-3800

After 23 years of working for someone else, Jim Myers opened his own drug store in 1975. His philosophy of providing as much service as he could to his customers has served him well — and gained the attention of major drug chains.

The first "extra" Myers offered was free blood pressure checks. If he found a problem, he sent the customer to a doctor. Then Myers recognized that sick people don't want to go out if they can have prescriptions phoned in. Home delivery was added, and Myers began looking for other ways to help.

The next service took an SBA loan to accomplish, a loan that was granted, according to the loan officer, "on a wing and a prayer." Myers expanded his inventory and added durable medical equipment — hospital beds, braces, crutches, portable stools, etc. — that could be leased to ease a transition from hospital to home.

He established a close association with a nearby hospital to supply drugs they didn't stock, and was able to further increase his inventory. With another SBA loan in 1983 — this one granted in just a week — Myers added to his delivery fleet and durable equipment.

Today, Myers Drug can immediately fill 95 percent of all prescriptions at any of three locations. Registered nurses on the staff provide in-home intravenous services, allowing patients to go home much earlier. There is even cholesterol screening.

Myers has withstood competition from large chains by seeking and meeting customers' needs. He has served his community well by allowing many, especially the elderly, the dignity of living at home instead of a hospital or nursing home.

Joseph R. Clark, President (right)
Alfred L. Mills, Secretary/Treasurer
Pioneer Door, Inc.
6514 Greenwood St.
Anchorage, AK 99518
(907) 344-2212

In 1984, Joe Clark and Al Mills decided that the time was right for them to start their own business. So, with two other partners, they left the door-manufacturing company they were working for to form Pioneer Door, Inc. An equity investment of $50,000 and an SBA direct loan of $150,000 financed the fledgling manufacturing and service company. "We would not have been able to start the company without the SBA loan," says Al Mills. "SBA provided the capital to get us off to a good start." SBA also provided bonding assistance through the Bond Guaranty Program.

The company prospered and Clark and Mills eventually bought out the other two stockholders. Then, in the late 1980s, a deep recession hit Alaska. By diversifying its markets and careful management, the company not only survived the recession, it managed steady growth.

Today, Pioneer Door maintains the largest inventory of door parts in the state, and is the major supplier of commercial and residential overhead doors in Alaska. The company employs 20 people, has expanded into wholesale and retail sales and recently opened a new outlet in Prudhoe Bay. Sales have risen from $362,000 in 1985 to more than $3.4 million in 1990.

Joe Clark and Al Mills are both very involved in community service. Joe is on the board of the company-sponsored Little League team amd Al is a Boy Scout den leader. The company also helps support a local food bank and a shelter for battered women.

William G. Orinski, President
Vanguard Automation, Inc.
10900 N. Stallard Place
Oro Valley, AZ 85737
(602) 297-2621

Bill Orinski started Vanguard Automation in 1984, initially consulting on techniques of automation and the design of integrated manufacturing equipment. Originally operating out of his home in San Bernardino, Calif., he rented a small space in 1985, hired his first employee and began manufacturing as well as designing custom robotics and hard automated assembly systems. In 1986 the business was incorporated with Orinski as the sole shareholder.

By the end of 1989 Vanguard employed 15 and had annual sales of $1.5 million. Because of dramatic growth, the company and seven key employees moved last year to Tucson, Arizona, Orinski's home town, where costs were lower. Today Vanguard is a $7 million, 75-employee company with more than $5 million in orders for delivery in 1992. Orinski recently put together a new management team to take Vanguard well beyond its present size.

Vanguard's hallmark is the creation of flexible and reliable customized equipment to meet companies' needs, often designing and building the equipment while the customers are still designing their products. Customers include Hewlett Packard, IBM, TRW, AT&T, General Dynamics, and Hughes Aircraft.

Orinski's interest and generosity to others has always been rewarded by the loyalty of all who know him. Active in forming Oro Valley's first chamber of commerce, he also encourages employees to be civic-minded and supports their efforts. Vanguard has established a fund to support employee involvement in charity events.

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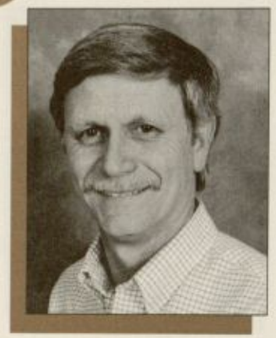

Julian C. McKinney, President
American Cedar, Inc.
190 Extension Place
Hot Springs National Park, AR 71901
(501) 262-1303

The story of Julian McKinney and American Cedar is, quite simply, miraculous. After working for Mid-America Products, Inc. since 1980, McKinney took over in March 1986, just after a fire had destroyed much of the equipment and inventory in its 10,000 sq. ft. facility.

An SBA loan helped repair the fire damage, replace equipment and buy new cedar inventory. McKinney renamed the firm and refocused it to produce finished cedar lumber for manufacturers and closet accessories (rather than closet lining, as it had before). He designed new products and began aggressive marketing both here and abroad. To better control both finances and pricing, he avoided large retailers who can be slow to pay and often set pricing.

Since then, American Cedar has, like a phoenix, risen out of the ashes and flown, realizing a nearly 600 percent increase in sales in just four years. In 1987, sales were $188,425, reaching $1.3 million in 1990 with a projected $3 million for 1991. In 1990, employees numbered 10; today more than 60 employees earn wages well above the average in the state. They are offered cross-training and are encouraged to submit ideas to management.

In 1988, the company moved into a 40,000 sq. ft. facility, which was later improved and bought with another SBA-guaranteed loan. A third loan recently helped add new equipment.

McKinney has also steered American Cedar into community service, including a state Adopt a Highway program and donating seconds to a firm which employs individuals with disabilities.

Rachel Perry, President
Rachel Perry, Inc.
9111 Mason Ave.
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818) 888-5881

What do actresses Teri Garr, Charlene Tilton, and Kelly McGillis all have in common? Rachel Perry natural skin care & make-up.

Back in 1972, Rachel Perry was cooking up natural cosmetics in her kitchen. By 1986, Rachel Perry, Inc. had grown to fill 95,000 square feet of lab, warehouse and office space.

While pursuing a career as a talented singer and songwriter (she has a gold record for a song she wrote), Perry began doing facials in Beverly Hills salons. She developed her own techniques of skin care and rejuvenation and began teaching them to a small class of women. Unable to find a facial scrub made with natural ingredients, she went to a health food store for sea kelp, sea salt, corn meal, almond meal, rye flour, honey and herbs, combined them in her kitchen sink, put them into little jars and gave them to her students. They raved.

One woman's husband owned a health food store and insisted she sell the scrub there. So, armed with $1,200 which she borrowed, Perry formulated three products, used a garage as a warehouse and her kitchen as a lab.

From the start, Perry bucked traditional wisdom and did things her own way. It worked — today, Rachel Perry, Inc. is the number one natural skin-care and cosmetics company in the world, with a sales staff of 400 that generates $5.4 million in sales.

In 1979, she put her techniques into a book, *Reverse the Aging Process of Your Face*, and now she teaches how to start a business. Hers was the cover story for the first issue of *Entrepreneurial Woman* magazine. She continues to write music, is dedicated to environmental issues and her cosmetics are made without animal testing.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

Edward W. Morton, President
The Denver Salad Company
102 Inverness Terrace East
Englewood, CO 80112
(303) 790-7706

In September 1987, when Ed Morton opened the first Denver Salad Company restaurant, there was only one competitor in town. Since then, six have opened, but from its first restaurant with 10 employees the Denver Salad Company has grown to 4 locations with 75 full-time and more than 400 part-time employees. This expanded soup and salad bar made just under $311,000 the first year, but today has $1.4 million in annual sales per store, grossing more than $5 million.

Morton's concept is to keep it simple, although simple here is a relative term: the restaurants offer 70-item salad bars plus homemade soups, potato, tostada and pasta bars, fresh fruit, hot breads, signature deli sandwiches, desserts and drinks. His key is offering the freshest food at an excellent price.

Morton allows his general managers to run their own stores, describing his own role as guiding, monitoring and cheerleading. But according to his employees, it is his unique management style that makes it all work. Management meetings are apt to be a brown-bag lunch in the park and a walk, a book discussion, seminar or field trip. The Denver Salad Company seeks out "can do" people and then trains them – there are 10 to 15 trainers per store. Employees are encouraged to be self-motivated and are offered an instant reward if they create a "Moment of Magic" for a guest or fellow employee. And a fresh, hot chocolate chip cookie is passed out to each customer.

Morton's company supports the community generously, from donating surplus food to a food bank and muffins for a bike race to fund drives and donations to a number of charities.

Mervyn D. Lentz, President
The Brescome Distributors Corp.
85 South Satellite Road
P.O. Box 4
South Windsor, CT 06074
(203) 289-6081

Mervyn Lentz and his father founded Brescome Distributors in 1949. That first year, the company's 30 employees supplied 10 lines of wines and spirits and had sales of $2 million. Today, Brescome employs 135, supplies 107 lines and has sales of $40.5 million. Of the six major wholesalers in Connecticut, it is one of four statewide distributors and one of two independents.

Since Lentz became president of the company in 1968, the firm has experienced rapid growth, and won a reputation throughout the country as an aggressive and innovative wholesaler. The level of sales activity has frequently exceeded the industry average, and the firm has won several national awards.

Although an aggressive participant in the alcohol beverage industry, Lentz devotes a lot of time and energy to promoting responsible drinking programs. His 20-year effort includes being appointed twice to the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. He has also been honored with Time Magazine's Distinguished Wholesalers Award for his business performance and his community service.

Lentz is very involved with civic activities on the local, state and national levels. He serves on the boards of directors for several organizations, including the University of Hartford Associates and the Homeward Bound Foundation, and has served on numerous other boards. He was president of the Mt. Sinai Hospital Assoc. and is a life officer of the Greater Hartford Jewish Community Center. In 1982, four scholarships were awarded by the National Distillers Scholarship Foundation in his name.

Sally J. Mayhue, CEO
Wings to Go, Inc.
1256 S. Little Creek Rd.
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 734-5512

In 1985, Sally Mayhue's husband was transferred from Buffalo, N.Y., to Dover AFB in Delaware. Mayhue and her two sons quickly found to their dismay that the spicy chicken wings famous in Buffalo were unavailable in Delaware. Knowing what a sensation the wings had been in Buffalo, Sally started Wings to Go, a simple carry-out specializing only in "Buffalo Wings." She set up shop across from the Air Force base, advertised in the base paper and offered free samples. Her idea quickly took wing.

Mayhue's success has been extraordinary. Wings to Go now employs 32 and has sold 18 franchises in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Florida, Washington, D.C., and North Carolina. From $120,000 in 1985, the company's gross sales are up to $1.2 million.

From the onset, Mayhue knew that her concept could be franchised and that was the way to open more restaurants quickly and increase buying power. The franchise fees and royalties would increase the cash flow and net worth.

In order to keep costs down, company executives worked for small wages, with an eye on the future. Mayhue integrated computers into the operations, offered employees health insurance and a chance to grow with the company and kept the franchise prices low, allowing owners an excellent rate of return. The formula worked; Wings to Go is two years ahead of its planned growth.

Mayhue was recently honored with the Blue Chip Enterprise Initiative award by Connecticut Mutual, but despite her success, she keeps a low profile. Her sons Chris (company president) and Jim Tisack, both active in the business, serve as spokesmen.

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K. David Boyer Jr., President & CEO
TROY Systems, Inc.
1199 North Fairfax St.
Suite 900
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 683-2100

TROY Systems, Inc. was founded by David Boyer and Felicity Belford in 1984. At first, they worked out of a home office as subcontractors and consultants, but in 1988, they got their first 8(a) prime contract with the Navy, and the business took off. Sales that year were $600,000. Today, TROY is a multi-million dollar company recognized by both government and industry for its technical competence, quality service, and fairness in pricing.

TROY specializes in strategic systems planning, information engineering, full life cycle support, network engineering, and telecommunications management. It is a minority-owned and operated small business with revenues of $6 million per year, and now has 130 employees.

During the period between TROY's obtaining its 8(a) certification in 1986 and the award of its first contract, Boyer and Belford identified and recruited most of the current management team. As the firm began to acquire more contracts, TROY was able to hire each of these individuals on a full-time basis.

Boyer is keenly aware of the difficulties encountered by many firms on leaving the SBA's 8(a) Program, and is already aggressively pursuing other competitive and non-8(a) work. Last year the company won its first non-8(a) contract with the Virginia State Lottery.

Boyer provides guidance and mentorship to young minority entrepreneurs and students in the community, participates in the DC Works minority internship program, and supports a local minority youth group.

Richard M. Turkel, CEO
Master Packaging, Inc.
6932 South Manhattan Avenue
Tampa, FL 33681
(813) 837-1575

Master Packaging and Richard Turkel go back, way back, to 1958. Turkel got his first job after college there, when it was a division of National Linen Corp. Eventually, he became manager, then bought the company, sold it, worked as president and finally resigned and dabbled in other businesses.

Eight years later, he was back. After passing through several hands, the plastic packaging firm was in financial trouble, and Turkel was able to buy it for less than a third of its assessment. Since then, he has turned the faltering company around and made it the 67th-ranked business in the industry.

The company was making about $800,000 in sales when Turkel and five other employee-stockholders bought it in 1986. By 1988, gross sales were $11.5 million. With a more than 180 percent sales growth since 1987, sales reached $15 million in 1991.

Master Packaging now supplies such companies as J.C. Penney, Arrow Shirts, Krispy Kreme, Winn Dixie, Fruit of the Loom and Dole. They also make the packages for Little Debbie snack cakes and Moon Pies.

When he bought it, Turkel committed Master Packaging to reemploying and supplying benefits to many of the skilled workers who had lost their jobs under the previous management. In six years the employment rolls have swelled to 137.

Master Packaging also recognizes its responsibility to the community, recycling its plastic waste and incinerating waste solvents. Turkel, the company and its employees fund and participate in a wide range of community projects and organizations such as the Tampa Children's Home and the Paint-Your-Heart-Out project in which employees paint a sponsored home.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

D. Ray Sosebee, Chairman of the Board
Sosebee Auto Supply Co., Inc.
190 South Clayton Street
Lawrenceville, GA 30245
(404) 963-2408

When Ray Sosebee opened his auto supply store in Lawrenceville, Ga. in July 1958, it was a one-man operation. A month later, Sosebee Auto Supply Company, Inc. became a family business with the birth of Ray and Jimmie Mae's first son, Daniel. The store made sales of $777 that first month, and $9,381 the first year. Then Sosebee hired his first employee.

Today, there are two more businesses in addition to the auto supply store: Sosebee Distributors, Inc., an AC-Delco wholesaler, and Sosebee Investment Co., which finances automotive and lawn and garden equipment. Sales last year were about $2 million.

Dan and his brother Jim have joined the business, which has more than doubled in size to 18,000 sq. ft. with a staff of 18 full and part-time employees. Most have been there for more than 10 years, many for 20 or 30 years.

As a Diamond Distributor for AC-Delco (having the largest percentage of increase over quota), Sosebee and his wife have traveled to New York, Florida and Paris, with all expenses paid. Sosebee earned a degree in business administration from the University of Georgia on the GI Bill after four years in Korea. Then he went on to fulfill his childhood dream of owning his own business. Both loved and respected in the community, he gives credit for his success to his family, his employees and his customers. Sosebee is a past president of the local Lions Club, is a Mason and a Shriner, has served as church treasurer, chairman of his church's deacons, Sunday school director and teacher, and music director.

P. June Terlaje
Executive Director
Island Wedding Service
275-H Farenholt Avenue
Ocean Pacific Plaza
Tamuning, Territory of Guam 96911
(671) 646-8057

In 1985, with a background in cosmetology and small business operations, June Terlaje opened Island Wedding Service. The firm makes complete wedding arrangements for Guamanians, U.S. military personnel and Japanese tourists, who go to Guam for "Western" or American-style weddings.

Averaging only two weddings a month at first, Terlaje struggled to break into a very tight market dominated by three other firms, all owned by men. Facing bankruptcy, she added services, eventually providing everything from complete attire for the bride and groom and coordinating the chapel ceremony to transportation, decor, reception, and photography. Even her children helped — as ring bearer, flower girl and usher.

By 1988, the business began to show a profit with an average 40 weddings a month — and as many as 60 during peak periods. Terlaje's warm, personal care has helped make her Island Wedding Service number one on Guam, with annual gross sales exceeding $250,000. She has nine full-time and several part-time employees plus many subcontracts with florists, caterers, photographers, bakeries, tailors and musicians. Terlaje graciously acknowledges SBA's SCORE-ACE program volunteers as partners in her business management.

She is also active in local civic and international business affiliations, speaking on behalf of women in business and her beloved Guam. She is a foster parent and helps with the elderly and the handicapped.

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Leonard S. Tanaka, President
T&T Electric, Inc.
456-A Kekuanaoa Street
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 935-9029

Suellen M. Tanaka, Vice President
T&T Electric, Inc.
456-A Kekuanaoa Street
Hilo, HI

Leonard Tanaka had worked as lead electrician at Volcano Electric for eight years when, in 1983, the owner decided to close and relocate. Leonard and his wife Suellen decided to start an electrical company of their own, T&T Electric, Inc. With Leonard and two employees working full-time at T&T and Suellen doing the bookkeeping at night after her full-time day job, the company started to grow.

By 1988, they employed 25 full-time workers. That number more than doubled in three years, with a total of 57 full-time, part-time and temporary employees in 1990. Many of these jobs are skilled labor positions that require various levels of training and a commitment to the electrical profession. T&T encourages training and development of its employees, and is licensed in seven different areas of construction. The company has gained an important advantage by being able to offer a variety of electrical and related services.

Among T&T customers are the state and county of Hawaii, Hawaiian Tel, and several observatories atop Mauna Kea. Revenues have increased from about $274,000 in 1984 to $6.5 million in 1990, with T&T averaging a 75 percent growth rate between 1987 and 1990, while maintaining respectable net profits.

The Tanakas are very civic-minded, regularly donating equipment, supplies and services generously to a variety of community functions and charities. They work with students at the local schools and support many community service activities.

Bob D. Jensen, President
Jensen Lumber Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 6
Ovid, ID 83260
(208) 847-0889

Jensen Lumber Company, Inc. was started in 1972 by Bob Jensen and his late father. The company milled oversized timbers used mostly in the mining industry, something most larger mills were unwilling to do. Today, under Jensen's guidance, the company is also expanding into other niche markets.

In 1983, Jenson Lumber began making wood fuel pellets as a way to use waste. Traditionally, sawmills burned sawdust, sold slab wood for firewood, and lost a lot to waste. Now, Jensen buys sawdust from other mills to keep up with demand. Bark is sold to nurseries and landscapers for mulch.

A small-diameter lumber and laminating plant, being developed with the U.S. Forest Service, will use small, "waste" timber to produce laminated boards for export to Japan. The new plant, which employs 15, is part of a three-phase expansion that will add as many as 100 jobs to the area. I[illegible] one of many novel ideas at Jensen Lumber.

Jensen manages [illegible] ny with innovation, ecologically sound [illegible] ources, knowledge of the markets he serv[illegible] vision for the future. He and his father started with three other employees; today the company employs 40 and in 10 years only one has ever been fired. Sales are up to just under $2 million, with a goal of $10 million by 1997.

Now owned and operated by Jensen and his three sons, the company has contributed substantially toward the stability and growth of the economically troubled community. Jensen is a member of the chamber of commerce, and a member of the board of directors of Fiber First Institute.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

Cheryl A. Cwiklinski, President/Owner
Comprehensive Computerized Business
dba CCB Services, Inc.
1701 Golf Road
Tower 2, Suite 109
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
(708) 228-1801

Since age 17, Cheryl Cwiklinski has wanted to have her own business. After 21 years of computer experience, which encompassed all aspects of the personal computer/word processing industry, Cwiklinski saw an opportunity to couple her high-tech skills with the industry's need for ongoing, customized training for personnel. With only $16,000 in savings and five accounts, Cwiklinski started CCB Services, Inc., in 1982. A year later, she offered all her major assets as collateral for a modest $20,000 expansion loan, and the risk paid off. By 1989, revenues exceeded $2 million and today, CCB is a multi-dimensional corporation which offers a myriad of high-tech services to Fortune 500 clients.

CCB offers full-service personnel placements, PC/WP training, complete office automation consulting, secretarial support and desktop publishing expertise. The company's client list reads like a *Who's Who* in corporate America — Ameritech, AT&T, First Card, IBM, Quaker Oats, and Xerox to name a few.

Cwiklinski is one of the most highly respected experts in the information systems industry. She has won numerous awards, appeared on major television and radio broadcasts, written articles for various business publications, and is an accomplished speaker and lecturer. She also serves on numerous business and community boards. Cwiklinski and her staff reflect the company's motto and philosophy "Different by Design," with a commitment to excellence.

James W. Fleming, President
Aero Metals, Inc.
402 Darlington Street
LaPorte, IN 46350
(219) 326-1976

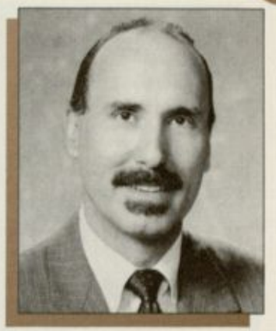
James Fleming is the quintessential entrepreneur. His investment casting business has evolved from a start-up operation in his basement to an international $15 million company with 250 employees. Aero Metals, Inc. provides quality components for a variety of industries including aerospace and defense, automotive, agriculture, military, computer and many others. Among its better-known customers are Sears and Snap-on.

Much of Fleming's success stems from a sincere desire to develop a rapport with all of his employees. He is both willing and able to roll up his sleeves and provide hands-on assistance for any task. A humble man who credits his employees with his success, he has cultivated a real team atmosphere. Unions have tried and failed to organize his shop.

One of Fleming's first major accomplishments was the design of the equipment line to produce Jiffy Pop popcorn. He worked with MIT professors and top surgeons to design innovative medical equipment used in hip replacements and has several patents on the market for medical equipment. He also designs his own equipment.

Aero responds rapidly to technological advances by investing in equipment and employees. Fleming strongly emphasizes education, and the company pays for work-related tuition. Fleming also teaches a variety of classes to improve skills and half of his employees are involved in training.

He devotes valuable time and money to various community and educational projects and serves on the executive committees of numerous civic boards. He is chairman of the Partners in Education committee of the chamber of commerce.



Richard W. Stewart, CEO
Frontier Cooperative Herbs
Box 299
Norway, IA 52318
(319) 227-7996

Richard Stewart was supposed to become a diesel mechanic. At least, that was his ambition when he decided to sell natural herbs and spices as a hobby in 1976. By the fall of 1977, Frontier Cooperative Herbs had so many customers, Stewart went to work full time in the business.

In 1981, with sales over $1 million, he attended an SBA cash-flow seminar, prepared his first cash-flow statement and finally got his first bank loan. In 1983, he started night school and over the next eight years earned a degree in business administration (with a 4.0) and numerous awards. He has done just as well at Frontier. The company has become America's largest supplier of bulk herbs, spices, natural oils and extracts, and gourmet coffees and teas to the natural foods industry, dominating this market niche with an estimated 80 percent market share.

Sales grew from $18,000 in 1976 to over $2 million by 1983, when the company was named by *Inc.* as one of the 100 fastest-growing small companies in the U.S. After 15 consecutive years of sales growth, with 1992 sales estimated at $16 million, Frontier soon expects to be one of the top five manufacturers in the industry.

Frontier is the largest private employer in Benton County; 165 people work at its plant, which offers a national model child care facility, gymnasium, weight room and full-service cafeteria. It has developed its own unique machinery and processing and, with improved productivity, has increased benefits to its employees. The firm also supports development projects in Peru and Mexico. Stewart is on the boards of several cooperatives and the Cedar Rapids chamber of commerce.

Frank A. Meyer, President
Custom Metal Fabricators, Inc.
Vacu-Blast International
Highway 77 North
P.O. Box 286
Herrington, KS 67449-0286
(913) 258-3744

From humble beginnings in 1977, Frank Meyer had the foresight to see opportunity, capitalize on it and put together an organization that is well-funded, skillfully managed, and on the leading edge of technology in its fields. Custom Metal Fabricators, Inc. (CMF) has grown from a two-employee operation to a substantial custom manufacturer, marketer and exporter of heavy industrial machinery and fabricated metal parts for handling equipment.

Acquired in 1991, Vacu-Blast International (VBI) manufactures a closed circuit pollution-free blast system used in naval shipyards as well as mobile blasting systems, blasting cabinets, and blasting rooms.

While Meyers' company has been growing in sales, number of employees, and physical facilities, it has also grown in reputation worldwide and is sought out by others to research and design new and different technologies and products.

The company has survived tough economic times which brought significant financial losses and employee layoffs. However, CMF managed to increase its customer base in proprietary products and custom built machines, bringing more sales, jobs and the need for expanded production facilities. Custom Metal Fabricators/Vacu-Blast International now employs 61 people and has sales of over $4 million and is still growing.

Frank Meyers contributes his time and talents to a number of community and civic organizations, and continues to be a positive force for growth. He is currently president of the Board of Education.

G. Alan Bernard, President
Mid-Park, Inc.
1021 Salt River Road
Leitchfield, KY 42754
(502) 259-3152

Two decades ago, Nelson Bernard started Rough River Metal Products in his barn. He had one part-time helper and $20,000 in sales, but the recession in 1972-73 was too much for the tiny business and he shut it down. Four years later, when he and his son Alan considered going into business together, a friend said that if they'd make hardware for farm gates, he'd buy from them. The friend happened to head a top farm-gate manufacturer, and soon Rough River was back in business, making farm gate hinge pins. By 1977, they had outgrown the barn, and a move to Mid-Park Industrial Park sparked a name change to Mid-Park Metal Products, later Mid-Park, Inc.

In 1984, Alan bought out his father and, with the help of an SBA-guaranteed loan, moved the business into a 41,500 square foot facility in 1986. By then there were two spin-offs, Leitchfield Machining, Inc. and Highway Specialty Steel, and 20 full-time employees.

Today, the company has grown to 50 full-time employees. That first order for 10,000 farm gate pins has rocketed to a production of 7.5 million pieces of gate hardware and 1 million feet of concrete joints last year. There is also a third company, KY Fabricating, Ltd., founded in 1990 to make highway guardrail products. Gross sales have grown from $311,000 in 1978 to more than $4.5 million in 1991.

Bernard has been a significant force in the civic affairs of Grayson County. His involvement includes Little League, the chamber of commerce, Lion's Club, and various boards.

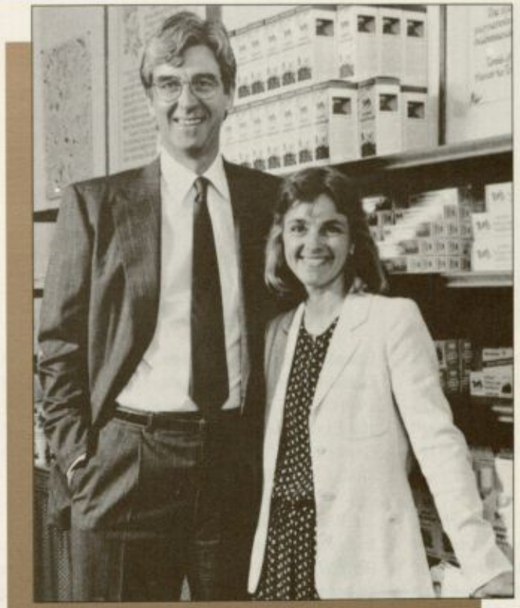
Randolph McCormick Sr., President
Dixie Glass Manufacturing, Inc.
730 West Landry St.
Opelousas, LA 70570
(318) 942-6536

Dixie Glass Manufacturing, Inc., traces its roots back to 1946 when Randolph McCormick Sr. opened a two-man glass shop in Opelousas, La. It was in that little shop with dirt floors that McCormick's dedication to quality and service began. Today, Dixie Glass offers a full range of automobile, residential and commercial glass services to the consumer, and is planning an expansion that will soon double its operating space to 265,000 square feet. Sales in 1990 were nearly $11.5 million.

Just as quality and service have been the Dixie Glass motto, being on the leading edge in the glass industry has been its goal. The Opelousas facility, which incorporates manufacturing, wholesale and retail sales, specializes in high-tech insulating, silkscreening, beveling, computerized robot cutting and tempering.

Dixie Glass has grown to include locations in five states with over 300 employees. This was the result of a slow, calculated business plan put into motion by McCormick to build a network of businesses in the Southeast. Today, the Glass Master Network, Inc., encompasses 30 locations — all owned or partly owned by McCormick — with Dixie Glass as their manufacturer and supplier. And in 1988, the Dixie No-Glare Corp. was created, one of only three makers of non-reflective glass for the picture-framing industry.

McCormick has been instrumental in saving hundreds of local jobs and spurring new growth. He also helped establish a college scholarship for a local child whose father died prematurely.



Thomas M. Chappell, President
Katherine C. Chappell, Vice President, Research and Development
Tom's of Maine
P.O. Box 710
Kennebunk, ME 04043
(207) 985-2944

In 1970, Tom and Kate Chappell began making personal care and health products derived from natural ingredients. Today Tom's of Maine is known nationwide. At first marketed through health food stores, sales to supermarkets and drugstores have recently helped put Tom's in "an enviable financial condition," with sales over $17 million.

Much of their success is the result of inclusive, interactive problem-solving with their 50 employees. Company-wide retreats and gatherings, and family social events foster a sense of teamwork and give rise to innovation and creativity. But while the Chappells' product line is successful, their ultimate focus is the common good. Employees are encouraged to donate 5 percent of their work time to non-profit groups. For more than 10 years, Tom's has contracted work to a local non-profit organization that integrates disabled people into the workplace, and recently hired a client. In addition to other donations, Tom's contributed more than 10 percent of its gross profits in 1990 to local non-profit groups and made some 80 grants to local Native American projects. Tom's radically reduced its own waste, uses 96 percent recycled paper, contributed $25,000 to Kennebunk to support a curbside recycling program and funded recycling training in the elementary school.

Tom's family benefit policies are rated among the best-suited to the needs of working mothers and the firm has won national recognition for "putting ethics first." The Chappells believe in treating people with respect, acting in their interests, improving community life, building up the human spirit, and acting to protect and sustain our environment.

Robert J. Cirincione, M.D., Founder
Mid-Atlantic Orthopaedic Specialists, P.A.
1120 Professional Court
Hagerstown, MD 21740
(301) 739-7900

It would have been easy for Dr. Robert J. Cirincione to open a solo orthopaedic surgery practice in 1984, but he had a vision of a specialized practice, including physical therapy, with a focus on sports injuries, treatments and prevention. With that in mind, he founded Robert J. Cirincione, M.D., P.A., as a medical and surgical service, and the Sports Injuries Clinic, Inc. to provide physical therapy treatments, with an emphasis on the care and treatment of injured athletes.

Since then, both the medical practice and the physical therapy practice have survived adversity and undergone tremendous change. A badly fractured wrist kept Cirincione from operating for four months in 1986. With 90 percent of revenues suddenly not coming in, the practice struggled to survive — but it did, and without losing any employees.

Cirincione took on the first of three partners in 1988, and the name was changed to Mid-Atlantic Orthopaedic Specialists, P.A. At the same time, The Sports Injuries Clinic, Inc. developed into a full-range physical therapy practice and was renamed Mid-Atlantic Physical Therapy Center, Inc. Employees have increased from 6 in 1984 to 27, and revenues from $85,500 to more than $2 million.

The unique aspect of this practice — a kind usually seen in large, metropolitan areas — is that it was founded in, and expanded to, more rural settings in Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Dr. Cirincione feels that a patient is patient, and that what is good health care in the city should be available in the rest of the country.

Donald E. Benoit, President (right)
Donald R. Irving, Treasurer
Data Guide Cable Corporation
104 East Broadway
Gardner, MA 01440
(508) 632-6805

With initial financing from SBA, Benoit and Irving started Data Guide Cable Corporation (DGCC) in 1983. DGCC, which manufactures coated wire and cable products, capitalized on its unique capacity to provide highly engineered prototype cable for new items to become a leader in the industry. This capacity enabled the firm to manufacture cables in four days for use during Desert Storm.

In the beginning, Benoit and Irving leased space in an old furniture mill. Most of their start-up costs went to purchasing state-of-the-art equipment. Instead of hiring skilled workers from outside the area, employees were hired from the local labor pool and trained. When they decided to purchase and improve the building, SBA again provided financial assistance. There now are 42 employees — 70 percent of whom are displaced workers from the furniture industry. Sixteen percent are single mothers.

Diversifying into other products, DGCC is exporting cable to Ireland and negotiating to send cable to the Baltic nations. Sales have grown from $646,000 in 1984 to $5.7 million in fiscal 1991.

DGCC is committed to saving the environment and has reduced generation of hazardous waste by 80 percent and recycles cooling water which reduced city water usage by 75 percent.

Rising health care costs prompted the company to implement a self-insured program. First year savings enabled DGCC to provide paid prescriptions, $15,000 of life insurance and disability insurance to their employees free of charge.

Benoit and Irving are active in the community. The company sponsors a youth ice hockey team and annually donates to the Special Olympics and various local charities.

Boyd Berends, Chairman/CEO
Progressive Technology in Lighting
dba ProLight, Inc.
581 Ottawa Avenue
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 396-6722

Just eight years ago Boyd Berends was employed by a major lighting company, developing applications for their lighting systems. A company acquisition resulted in the dismantling of his division, but what could have been a great misfortune for some turned out to be a lucky break for Berends. Rather than transfer to another position, he asked for permission to leave the company to develop, manufacture and market the product he had been developing, and ProLight was formed. The company manufactures and markets highly efficient fluorescent lighting products designed to replace incandescent bulbs (just one 60-watt equivalent bulb can save, over its lifetime, 528 lbs. of coal, a ton of carbon dioxide air pollution, 21 lbs. of sulfur dioxide — and more than $30).

Since 1983, ProLight has mushroomed into a $10 million corporation that is recognized throughout the world as one of the leaders in energy-efficient lighting systems. It is the largest producer of these bulbs in the U.S. and expects to double its sales during 1992 for the sixth consecutive year. ProLight plans to expand into more U.S., Canadian and Mexican markets and is already operating a joint venture in Shanghai. While its current market is aimed at commercial and industrial use, the company is also structuring to enter the residential market this year.

Berends serves on the local zoning appeals board, has served on various civic and church boards, and is a director for the Holland Youth for Christ.

Dennis J. Tursso, CEO
Tursso Companies, Inc.
223 Plato Boulevard East
St. Paul, MN 55107
(612) 222-8445

When Dennis Tursso hears those beeps at the supermarket checkout, it's music to his ears. His Tursso Companies, Inc. has established itself as a leader in the booming market of bar code labeling.

Actually, Tursso Companies is a holding company for six subsidiaries, including a state-of-the-art printing plant. Other companies sell computers, software packages, ribbons, printers, typesetting and design, labels and scanners, all primarily geared to the same niche market.

The company started in 1971 when Tursso bought an unprofitable printing business. He financed the deal with personal assets and by selling a couple of antique cars and some insurance policies. Considering he had four young children, this was risky, but the risk paid off handsomely. Tursso bought several more unprofitable companies and turned those into a profitable venture within four years with only five employees. As the company grew, Tursso targeted niche markets, such as the field of pharmaceuticals, which involves stringent FDA requirements. An emphasis on quality, service and fast turn-around soon built the firm's reputation and today Tursso Companies, Inc. provides jobs, training, pension plans, profit sharing and incentives for 125 employees.

In 1986, Tursso recognized the need for a management team to oversee the continued growth of the business. He now serves as CEO and also commits time to the community, serving in a number of civic, business and charitable organizations. He is chairman of the $3 million St. Paul Seed Fund, that assists in start-ups and growth of local businesses.

David T. McMillen, General Manager
Hall-McMillen Company, Inc.
1112 Wesson Tate Drive
New Albany, MS 38652
(601) 534-2181

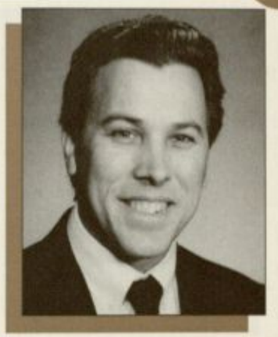
In 1980 David McMillen and Charles Hall opened the doors of their "dream," a custom machine shop that would provide a local alternative for the development of custom automated machinery for the manufacturing industry. Starting with only basic equipment, Hall-McMillen has become a state-of-the-art machine shop, with a computer-assisted engineering department and a sales force covering the southeastern United States.

McMillen bought out Hall in late 1987. Since then, he has turned the company around from a net loss of over $73,000 in 1987 to a net profit of more than $129,000 last year. Gross sales in 1980 were $153,000; today, sales top $2.5 million.

Contracts for the company's custom machinery, automation systems, industrial controls and information systems, range from $50,000 to $750,000, and each is designed and built specifically for the customer's individual needs.

Started "on a shoestring," the firm has often faced problems of under-capitalization. But eight SBA-guaranteed loans have provided the working capital to fulfill contracts of increasing size and complexity and have financed an expansion. With investment in the best equipment and technology available, the Hall-McMillen Co. now finds itself on the leading edge of industrial technology.

Starting with just three employees in 1980, the company now employs 40 highly-skilled workers. Its annual payroll is more than $1 million and per employee, Hall-McMillen is the highest-paying company in the county. In a small, rural town of 7,000 (and a county of just 22,000), the firm has had a major, positive economic impact.



Robert J. Carter, President
WEBCO Engineering Co.
711 N. Prince Lane
Springfield, MO 65802
(417) 866-7231

Since 1977, Robert Carter's WEBCO Engineering Company has successfully designed and manufactured custom air handling equipment, air conditioning and energy recovery equipment for the food and drug processing industry, medical laboratories, power plants, research facilities, hospitals, military installations and others. Part of the company's success is due to its ability to produce custom environmental equipment for its customers while its major competitors mainly provide a standard product.

This, coupled with a highly motivated and well-trained technical staff, has helped WEBCO Engineering grow from a company with four employees and sales of a few hundred thousand dollars to one with 61 employees and $9.5 million in sales in fiscal year 1990. And, despite a 10-12 percent downturn in construction spending, WEBCO did $6.14 million in business by September 1991. Gross profits have increased from 25.2 percent in 1988 to 32.9 in 1990. WEBCO's customers include St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Anheuser Busch, IBM, Goodyear, Goodrich, Quaker, Bristol-Meyers, Toyota and The Limited.

SBA has twice helped WEBCO with loans and lines of credit that enabled Carter to become sole owner of the company in 1988 and to finance its rapid growth in 1990.

Carter contributes time and money to community and school projects and is very interested in the well being of his employees. He received the Missouri Merchants and Manufacturers Association's 1988 Sweet Success Award for achievements in sales growth, employment opportunities, company stability and community involvement.

Small Business Week 1992

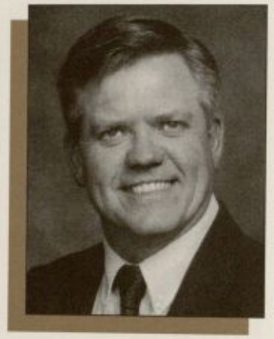
Douglas B. Richardson, PhD, President
GeoResearch, Inc.
2815 Montana Avenue
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 248-6771

Doug Richardson started GeoResearch (GRI) in 1980, with himself as the sole employee. Shortly thereafter, he and his wife decided to move the business from Washington, D.C., to Billings, an area they liked and which offered a number of natural resource-based industries that would complement the new firm's work.

In spite of a severe economic downturn in Montana in the late 1980s, GRI, an environmental science and computer mapping firm, has grown to number 38, expanded into the historic Electric Building in downtown Billings and opened a branch in Helena. Employees include computer scientists, geographers, environmental hydrogeologists and meteorologists who have developed advanced programs in environmental monitoring, hazardous waste management and computer mapping. Among their many customers are a number of government agencies, universities, Indian tribes, Gulf, major oil companies and the governments of Italy and Morocco. Revenues in 1990 were over $1 million, and reached $2.4 million last year.

Richardson's careful planning and vision have paid off with the development of GeoLink and GRI's new computer mapping and cartographic production center. GeoLink is a new computer mapping software that combines two advanced mapping technologies — Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) — and has won the firm international attention.

GeoResearch has also established itself in the community through its involvement in employing interns, funding graduate research assistantships and contributing to college research programs. Richardson has also been active in supporting the revitalization of the old town area.



James M. Blackburn, President
Blackburn Manufacturing Company
P.O. Box 86
Neligh, NE 68756
(402) 887-4161

In 1953, Blackburn Manufacturing Company was started in the basement of a farm homestead with one flag machine made by James Blackburn's father, E.A. "Bud" Blackburn. In 1973, his son Jim took over management and today, the company is the leader in the field of marker flag production, with 39 employees and over $4 million in sales throughout the U.S., Canada, South America, Belgium, Spain, Turkey and other countries.

The original Blackburn flag made of vinyl, wire and adhesive was introduced to replace the lath and rag markings used by road crews and surveyors for markers. The current version is lightweight, less cumbersome and is available in three sizes, nine colors and four staff lengths.

Blackburn's primary customers are utility companies, the Soil Conservation Services and highway and county road departments. In recent years the company has opened new markets with lawn irrigation systems installers, lawn care providers, gardeners and farmers. In 1974, the Blackburn Printing Co. was added to silk-screen names, logos, warning messages and other information on flags. The company has also recently bought Neligh Plastics and opened a California plant to handle business west of the Rockies.

Blackburn credits his success to the top-quality labor of a loyal work force, and says that most who leave either retire or die. The company never has to advertise for help.

Blackburn has served Neligh with both money and time. A member of the volunteer fire department, he was also director of the chamber of commerce and active in economic development projects.

Robert C. Dickinson, President
Construction Notebook, Inc.
Polaris Printing & Publishing
dba Dickinson Printers
3131 Meade Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 876-8660

In 1978, after 20 years in the college textbook publishing field with Houghton Mifflin and McGraw-Hill, Bob Dickinson bought Construction Notebook, Inc., and became the publisher of *Construction Notebook News*, the industry "bible" for construction information in Southern Nevada.

Dickinson has co-owned (with his wife, Sheila) Construction Notebook, Inc. and Dickinson Printers for over 13 years. Dickinson Printers prints the *Notebook* and is a full-service commercial printing company, printing everything from forms to full color work. Dickinson has kept the *Notebook* the predominant construction information and news service, fending off competition that included former employer McGraw-Hill. He boosted *Notebook* subscriber circulation from 840 to 1,500, and the combined staff grew from 6 to 19 employees. Gross revenues increased from $165,000 in 1978 to more than $1 million annually today.

A spokesman for Nevada small business, Dickinson received a 1991 Best Editorial Award from the Nevada State Press Association for his editorials explaining and promoting small business issues and positions. Among his civic and professional services, Dickinson is president of the Nevada Association of Independent Businesses, is active in the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, the Nevada Development Authority, the Nevada Council for Economic Education, the Rotary Club, and fundraising for the American Heart Association. He is a past member of the SBA National Advisory Committee.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year

Clarke C. Nickerson, President
Nickerson Assembly Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 276, Route 132
Tilton, NH 03276
(603) 286-4366

"Casey" Nickerson started Nickerson Assembly Company just out of college, and made an early decision to find a niche for the company. Nickerson Assembly is noted for producing wiring harnesses and cable assemblies for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in the fields of medical technology and mechanical, testing and welding equipment manufacturing. This year the firm expanded into assembling printed circuit boards.

Nickerson Assembly was one of the first in its industry to computerize, and it constantly innovates and upgrades. The company also credits an SBA loan for a new plant and SCORE counseling as being instrumental in its success.

From one employee in 1976 (she's still there) to 37 in 1991, the company has had extremely low turnover in a high-turnover field. In 1991, Nickerson established a new division which resulted in 11 new jobs. Sales in 1977 were $18,000, and 10 times that in 1991, with projected sales in 1992 at $3 million.

In the 1980's, contracts from Wang Laboratories constituted 80 percent of the company's sales. Nickerson diversified and was able to survive after Wang cancelled their contracts with just two weeks notice. Six competitors went under.

Casey Nickerson is active in a number of civic and business organizations, but his biggest involvement is as a supporter of youth programs. He not only helped with fund-raising for a community-built playground, but worked six days to see the project completed. A sailing enthusiast, Nickerson was a crew member of the Courageous in the 1974 America's Cup race, and pays for children to attend a youth sailing program.

Edward J. Quinn, President
Worldwide Educational Services, Inc.
374 Clifton Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07011
(201) 340-3705

Worldwide Educational Services, Inc. (WES), provides training and employment services to the unemployed and skill improvement services and workshops for executives, managers and support staff in business and industry. Edward Quinn started the company in 1971, offering reading improvement classes for youth. In 1973, he adapted his methods for adult education. Today, the company provides diversified services at its headquarters and 15 branches in six states and the Virgin Islands and serves as a marketing agent for a number of training and consulting agencies.

WES has grown from one full-time and one part-time employee to 90 people. In 1990 the company made nearly $2.5 million, trained nearly 2,000 for employment and improved the organizational skills of more than 200 executives. Over the past seven years, it has placed 75 percent of its graduates, increased their earning power by $220 million and reduced their welfare payments by $48 million.

WES has changed its curriculum to reflect the changes in technology and the employment market. Its skill training courses range from typist and data entry to food service, cable television installation and copy machine repair. Among its clients are the Travelers Insurance Company, Exxon, the New York/New Jersey Port Authority, and American Cyanamid.

Quinn has served as town chairman of the United Fund, chairman of the citizens' advisory committee, vice chair of the North Jersey Chamber of Commerce, a Foster Parent Plan sponsor and a contributor to scholarship funds. He is also the author of a book, *The Techniques of Effective Reading*.

Dale H. Fox, President
Fox Manufacturing Company, Inc.
dba Autumn Wood Furniture
5105 Williams, SE
Albuquerque, NM 87105
(505) 873-1432

The call came at 4:30 in the morning; the factory was on fire. By the time Dale and Luana Fox got there, it was clear there was no hope of saving anything of the furniture manufacturing business they had started in their garage in 1973. All that was left were a few singed and soggy files and the backup computer disk that Luana took home every night with the accounts, payroll and a master customer list on it.

For many, that would have been the end. But the Foxes were meeting with bankers and realtors by day's end and the next day were looking for a new location. Four days after they found it, their bankers had pushed through an SBA-backed loan and employees were cleaning and painting. Dale Fox bought machinery at auctions while workers reconstructed paperwork and master blueprints. A computer and phones were set up in their Las Cruces store (Fox's southwestern, contemporary furniture is retailed through their Autumn Wood Furniture stores in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Las Cruces) and letters were sent to customers promising to fill the $1.3 million in orders. Almost all the customers were willing to wait and one even sent her balance.

In two months, Fox was back in business; the company's fiscal 1991 sales volume was $2.5 million, almost even with 1990 revenues, and a 10,000 sq. ft. expansion is planned. All 100 employees are back on the job, and 25 more were hired to catch up. Today, the company, a recent Blue Chip Award winner, continues to be one of Albuquerque's most successful businesses and make significant economic contributions to the area.

Arthur J. Crandall, President
Standard Copy Products
18 Avis Drive
Latham, NY 12110
(518) 785-6616

At Standard Copy Products, each year is "The Year of the Customer." Art Crandall initiated the slogan for Savin copiers one year and has made it a standard for his company. Standard, a Savin dealer, sells, rents and services photocopier and facsimile equipment and supplies. It has grown from three employees in 1968 to 116 today, and, at an average rate of 16 percent a year, sales have increased to nearly $15 million in the last decade.

Much of the success stems from the fact that people love to work for the company, and with good reason. It offers a tremendous benefits package rarely seen in small businesses as well as generous incentives, and holds numerous annual family and community events. The goodwill generated among staff and the community is tremendous, and the firm was named one of the 10 best places to work in the Albany, N.Y., area by the Capital District Personnel Association. Standard treats its customers with the same enthusiasm, with an automatic supply shipment program, flexible payment structures, an annual business show and charity golf tournament, and invitations to view events from the company suite at the Knickerbocker Arena.

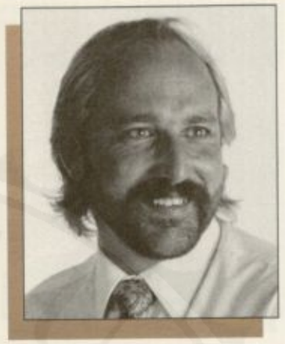
Although pinched by the recession, Crandall made a decision to purchase 60 truckloads of inventory in 1990. This allowed the company to offer savings to the customers which paid off in increased orders. This kind of good business has led to Standard winning the Savin Presidential Award in 1989 and 1990 as the top dealer in the U.S. The firm, noted for its commitment to the community, contributes to over 100 charities, provides jerseys for local Little League teams, and is a major sponsor of the Empire State Games. And on request, Crandall will even give free haircuts.

Bryan Grimes Jr.
Mildred Anne Briley Grimes, Owners
Harvest Time Foods
Route 2, Box 76
P.O. Box 98
Ayden, NC 28513
(919) 746-6675

With a conviction that her destiny lay with a rolling pin and dough, Anne Grimes quit her job as a deli manager for a grocery chain and opened a pastry shop in 1981. Beset with problems (most notably a leaky laundromat next door that continually flooded the shop), the business didn't flourish until a customer persuaded Anne to make pastry — a kind of wide noodle or "flat dumpling" traditional to Southern cooking — to use in her chicken dishes.

In no time, frozen pastry was all the shop was making. The Grimeses bought a machine to make the dough, then they moved the operation to their garage and Bryan quit his job. His many years as an entrepreneur paid off and soon they were supplying supermarkets and then warehouses with Anne's Old Fashioned Flat Dumplings and rolling in the dough. Second year sales of $79,000 more than doubled the first year's, and by 1991, sales in 15 states were $1.5 million. Harvest Time Foods now occupies an 11,000 sq. ft. plant, built with an SBA-guaranteed loan. The company employs 45, many of them undereducated minorities.

Providing work for the disadvantaged is part of the Grimeses' philosophy. Deeply religious, they are extremely generous in their outreach efforts, and successfully mix good works with good business. The company includes a scripture verse with each package, and a telephone number for their prayer line. Bryan and Anne Grimes are both respected community and business leaders in Ayden, N.C. They have served in a number of civic, business, religious and charitable organizations.



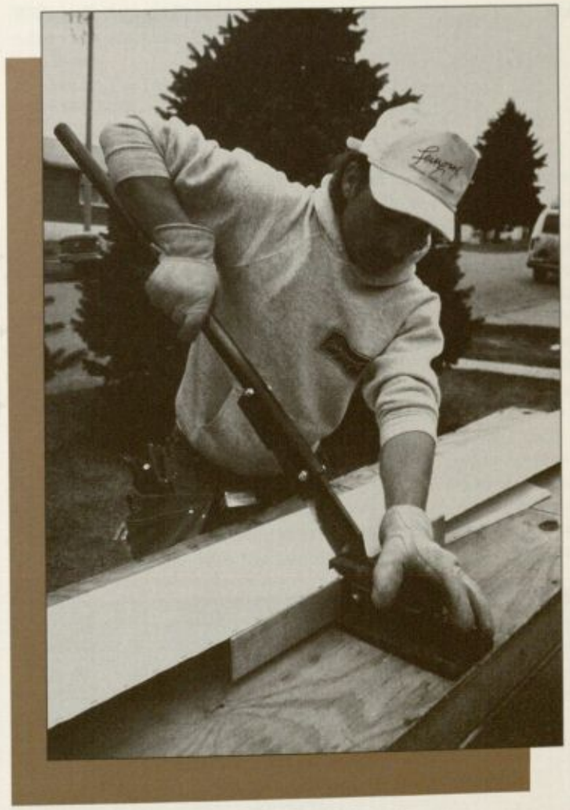
Alvin W. Leingang, President
Leingang Siding and Window
North Country Thermal Line Windows
Homeworks Supply
Twin City Continuous Gutter
2605 Twin City Drive
Mandan, ND 58554
(701) 663-1832

Al Leingang was just 18 when he answered an ad to install steel siding in 1976. He soon became aware of how overpriced siding was and how shoddy most of the installation was. Leingang knew he could do it better for less and opened his own business in 1977, making sales of $22,000. The next year, sales were $250,000, and he had his own building. Soon he added Homeworks Supply to wholesale. Other contractors still buy from him, their competition, because his products are good and because he does all he can to help make them successful.

In 1984, Leingang added vinyl replacement windows — and built a market for them. Soon he was manufacturing them and North Country Thermal Line Windows was profitable the first year. The equipment to make specially shaped windows was costly, so Leingang and his team invented their own. They also patented a device to reduce tendinitis among some of the workers that is now being marketed internationally.

Today, a gutter company has been added and, with the help of three SBA-backed loans, Leingang's products are sold in seven states and Canada to the tune of $6 million annually. The company employs 100 during the busy season, including the first three employees Leingang hired. He believes they are his co-workers, not employees and are the reason he is here. He's right, in more ways than one — they nominated him for this honor.

Generous to his employees, Leingang also has deep pockets when it comes to the community. A former chamber of commerce president, he employs the handicapped and supports and is involved with a number of civic, business and charitable groups.



Cameron D. James, President
Mills•James Productions
3545 Fishinger Boulevard
Hilliard, OH 43026
(614) 777-9933

Kenneth P. Mills, Vice President/Treasurer
Mills•James Productions
3545 Fishinger Boulevard
Hilliard, OH 43026
(614) 777-9933

The video industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the United States, and Kenneth Mills and Cameron James are taking full advantage of all the opportunities that this growth affords.

Started in 1984 with a few thousand dollars in personal funds, a small bank loan and no employees, Mills•James Productions has become the largest video production company in central Ohio. The company specializes in electronic media production, including corporate videotapes, television and radio commercials, and business theater presentations.

Mills•James has experienced steady growth from the beginning and has always shown a profit. By its second year, the company was billing more than $1 million annually. After acquiring video production facilities from another company in 1988, it experienced rapid growth. Revenues were approximately $4 million in 1990, with $5 million projected for 1991. A recent SBA-backed loan helped build a 22,000 sq. ft. expansion housing two sound stages. The firm has won scores of honors, including an Emmy and an award from the New York Film Festival.

Mills•James currently employs about 50 people, including writers, directors, video editors, videographers, computer graphics designers and support personnel. It also provides internships for high school and college students studying communications, advertising and film.

James and Mills have frequently donated thousands of dollars worth of services and facilities to area non-profit groups. Both are involved in a number of professional and civic organizations.

Amelia B. McCoy, CEO
Handmade Rainbows and Halos by Amelia, Inc.
Route 1, Box 12
Lamar, OK 74850
(405) 379-7272

In 1978, Amelia McCoy made some hair bows for her infant granddaughters and some friends. Before long, she was making them for participants in pageants, dances and other special events. In 1983, the business had eight employees and a new building, and by 1985, demand was so great that McCoy organized the cottage industry. Today, what started as a hobby with a $7.78 investment and one simple bow design has grown into a successful multimillion-dollar business. Now local women assemble bows and other items in their homes and sell them to Rainbows and Halos, which in turn markets them to department stores, supermarkets and children's stores.

Rainbows and Halos provides jobs — in an area with high unemployment — for nearly 450 cottage industry workers, who earn approximately $100,000 for production work each month. The firm also employs eight full-time workers, 30 sales representatives and 120 merchandisers.

Major success began when McCoy convinced local Wal-Mart stores to carry her bows. By 1985, Rainbows and Halos was selling to 100 Wal-Marts. The company is now a mandatory vendor and is in the 1,275 largest Wal-Mart stores in the U.S.

Today, the Rainbows and Halos product line includes nearly 500 designs created or supervised by McCoy, with a line of compatible products in development. Sales in 1991 were projected at $5 million.

In addition to economic growth and employment opportunities, McCoy participates in and generously supports numerous other civic, community and charitable activities.

Isabel L. Hendricks
President/Owner
H&H Electric, Inc.
P.O. Box 30868
Portland, OR 97230
(503) 253-0425

Isabel L. Hendricks started an electrical contracting firm with a partner in 1982 in Bend, Ore. In 1986 she bought out her partner and relocated H&H Electric, Inc., to Portland. By 1988, she had 13 employees and by 1990 had added three more.

As with any business, Hendricks had to prove that H&H could do the job, and do it well. Construction has traditionally been a "man's business" and it has been a real struggle to prove to the trade that H&H Electric is a viable electrical contracting company. A non-union shop (she prefers to call H&H an American shop), she has also been up against union pressure. But Isabel Hendricks has earned the respect of the contractors in the business by handling each project in a professional and competent manner. Today, H&H is a growing electric company with 1990 revenues of $2 million.

Hendricks is a board member of the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee through Associated General Contractors. She has been a speaker for Project Independence and the B-Fit Program, (Building Futures in Industry and Trades), two programs supporting women's alternate career choices in the construction field. Two young women from the B-Fit program completed their course by spending two weeks working at H&H Electric for their cooperative education credit.

Hendricks is also the president of Women Construction Owners & Executives (WCOE), Oregon chapter, and the Northwest senior director for WCOE, national chapter. This is a network for women in the construction industry to share their experiences, and to provide a source through which women can be heard in the political arena.

William E. Adams, President
Adams Manufacturing Corporation
P.O. Box 1
Portersville, PA 16051
(412) 368-8838

Bill Adams was on the verge of financial collapse in 1976 when he pulled into a gas station and noticed a station attendant scraping tape from a window that was full of signs, all taped in place. Adams had quit his job as a librarian and was trying — unsuccessfully — to market window insulation secured by suction cups. As he pulled up to the pump that day, inspiration struck. Suction cups with a few thumbtacks would do the job a lot better. Adams traded two boxes of suction cups for his tank of gas that day, and sold more on the way home. Before long, he and his family were attaching hooks to purchased suction cups while they watched TV. Soon, they were making suction cups in the garage. Then, customers discovered the suction cups were great for hanging Christmas lights on their houses, and the business really took off. Major retailers like Wal-Mart and Ames further boosted sales and today Adams heads a $6 million business that makes suction cups, clamps and magnetic and adhesive-backed fasteners and hooks. To beat cheap foreign competition, he makes sure his products are the best quality, and to overcome a seasonal cash-flow problem, a line of plastic outdoor folding tables was recently added to the line. The business employs between 102 and 150 people, plus 85 temporaries who work six to eight months a year on Christmas merchandise — a third of the business. Adams credits much of his success to his employees, and he shares the rewards; one-third of the profits are split among them.

Adams is involved in civic and professional organizations, is on the boards of the school district and the chamber of commerce and is an announcer for the local Midget Football team.

Hector M. Reyes, President and CEO
H.R. & Associates
P.O. Box 3968
Guaynabo, PR 00970-3968
(809) 782-0200

In 1963, after a 20-year career in the Army and two years as a civil servant, Hector Reyes founded Caribbean Wholesales and Services Corp. (WSC), the first division of H.R. & Associates. A $15,000 SBA loan helped him start the automobile radio and accessory business, and at the time, he was the firm's only employee. Today there are 45 in three divisions and sales have grown from $150,000 in 1963 to $10 million.

That first year, the WSC also became the representative and distributor for a manufacturer of radios which, in two years, became a leading brand in Puerto Rico.

By 1976, the business turned from retail to wholesale and continued to expand to new lines. In 1980, JVC, a world leader in electronic equipment, was added, requiring a larger warehouse, and in 1985 Litton microwave ovens became the firm's top-selling line. In 1986, Reyes started Supreme Electronic Distributors, Inc., to market Magnavox brands and later added Fedders air conditioners.

By 1990, the company had to move to new, larger quarters to accommodate their growth, and a network of service centers was established. That same year, the third division, H&H Sales, Inc., came into being to introduce Hitachi large screen projection systems to the Puerto Rican market.

Coming from humble beginnings, Reyes is generous to those less privileged, especially children. He contributes to a number of sports activities, especially Little League, and for several years has sponsored the "Liga Jibara José Mercado." He is also a sponsor of the Symphonic Choir of Puerto Rico, Teatro del Sesenta and many other organizations.

Robin M. Dolan, Director of Rehabilitation
Kim M. Havunen, Administrator
D&H Therapy Associates
100 Smithfield Ave.
Pawtucket, RI 02860
(401) 725-9666

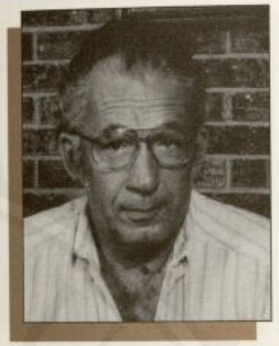
Robin Dolan and Kim Havunen started D&H Therapy as a partnership in April 1985. Starting with four contracts to provide physical therapy at long-term care facilities and an arrangement with a local group health association, they operated out of Dolan's basement. By August, five new contracts and an arrangement to provide on-site therapy at a local industry meant hiring additional personnel. D&H also contracted with a management firm to provide general office, bookkeeping and accounting services.

By the end of the year, D&H had four employees and $63,153 in sales. A year later, that figure had nearly tripled, and in 1990, billings were for nearly $1.5 million.

As the number of contracts grew, so did the variety of services D&H offered and by 1987, growth was significant enough to require hiring a business staff. At the same time, it was discovered that Rhode Island requires stockholders and directors of a professional corporation to be licensed, but the state did not license physical therapists with associate degrees. This disqualified Havunen, so a separate corporation was set up to handle business services for D&H, and Havunen began devoting more of her time to administration.

In 1988, D&H moved to a leased space, but outgrew it in just six months. Then, after a careful assessment, D&H decided to expand outpatient services, which meant buying a building and equipment. Persuading the bank to invest in a three-year-old company was a challenge, but with SBA backing, it came through.

Today, in spite of a tough economy, D&H maintains a steady flow of business and provides jobs to 35 employees and a broad range of services to the community.



Lawrence F. Yuda, President
Compact Air Products of South Carolina, Inc.
2424 Sandifer Boulevard
Westminster, SC 29693
(803) 647-9521

Larry Yuda got laid off from his job as manager of research and development at a large, international corporation in 1974. In his work, he had often needed a compact and easy-to-mount air cylinder (a piston-type device that is used in vises, hospital beds, animated figures, manufacturing, etc. to push or pull an object back and forth). He had an idea of how to make one and the time had come to develop his idea.

The next two years were spent designing the original cylinder (which is actually square on the outside, a major innovation and one of seven patents), marketing, setting up shop and building five of each product in his catalogue. To keep food on the table, the Yudas — including wife Sandy, her father Raymond Card, and the three kids, Lance, Lois and Tracie, aged seven to 14 — designed machines and made parts. In 1976, the first cylinder was sold, and by 1978, with 11 employees (counting the kids), it was time to move to a larger location. A customer in South Carolina invited Yuda to visit. The warm welcome, beauty and economics of the area persuaded the Yudas to leave Cleveland and head south.

That was in July 1979. Today, Compact is a state-of-the-art, 52,000 sq. ft. plant and employs almost 100 people, including the entire family and their spouses. Over a third of the staff has been with the company five or more years, and most of the managers have come up through the ranks.

Compact gives generously to community and school projects, and to a children's home and sponsors two books for grade school children. Yuda is also involved in several professional and civic organizations.

Leroy R. Knuths, President
Shelly A. Knuths, Director of Administration
Rosco Manufacturing Company
1001 Southwest First Street
Madison, SD 57042
(605) 256-6942

In 1979, Leroy Knuths left the Minnesota office of Arthur Andersen & Co., the accounting firm where he had become a partner. He and Robert Englestad purchased Rosco, then a family-owned construction equipment business located in Minneapolis. The construction industry had boomed during the '70s, so a 90 percent leveraged buyout was easy. But in 1980, the bottom began to fall out of construction, and by April, $2.5 million in back orders had been canceled. This required significant negotiations with the lender, and a total restructuring of the debt.

With the help of an SBA loan, Rosco relocated to larger facilities in Madison, S.D., in 1983. Products and engineering were improved and new products developed. Five years later, Leroy and Shelly Knuths bought out Englestad and Shelly became more active in management. Computerization, improved management techniques and excellent relations with the employees have continued to build Rosco's efficiency, quality and reputation. The company, which specializes in the manufacturing and distribution of highway construction equipment, now has 33 dealerships across the U.S. and two in Canada, and their products are in use on six of the seven continents. Exports make up a quarter of sales. Sales volume has risen 32 percent since 1988 while sales for the industry have steadily declined. In 1991, Rosco had sales in excess of $11 million.

Matching the donations of its employees makes Rosco the largest United Way donor in the area. The Knuths are both widely involved in their community, serving in a variety of civic, business and charitable organizations.

Small Business Week 1992

Ronald T. Cooper, President
Southern Machinery Repair, Inc.
1545 Airport Circle
Union City, TN 38261
(901) 885-8052

Ten years ago, Jim Cooper and his sons Don and Ron started Southern Machinery Repair (SMR), in a tractor repair garage. The company repairs heavy metal-forming machinery and rebuilds and reconditions presses used to form parts for goods such as cars, cookware and furniture.

They made $50,000 in sales that first year, and hoped to be able to draw full paychecks in five years. By then, they were doing $3 million in work, and in 1989, the figure was more than $6 million. Today the multimillion-dollar business occupies a 68,000 square-foot facility, has 68 employees and clientele that include Goodyear, Tupperware, McDonnell Douglas, Stanley Tools, Whirlpool and a host of others. Two years ago, Jim decided to retire and Don, a minister, left to further his religious education and devote more time to his ministry and his ranch. Ron is now sole owner of the business.

With the help of two SBA-guaranteed loans (one in 1983 and one in 1986 totaling over $375,000), SMR has grown to be one of the largest machine shops in the mid-south, and will take on any job, regardless of size. Known for efficiency, a "can-do" attitude and quick turnaround time, teams are scheduled around the clock when necessary to meet customers' needs. The company has also developed an innovative tracking system to monitor each job and control costs.

Cooper is involved with several civic, professional and service organizations, and SMR supports numerous high schools, charities, public television and local scholarship funds.

Elizabeth R. Coker, CEO
Minco Technology Labs, Inc.
1805 Rutherford Lane
Austin, TX 78754
(512) 834-2022

Liz Coker found working on a production line at Texas Instruments (TI) a lot easier than milking cows and picking cotton in her native Tennessee. With a ninth-grade education, she started taking electronics courses offered by TI and became the first female engineering technician there in 1963. In 1976, as co-founder and general manager of a new semiconductor firm, she helped build a $14 million business in just six years.

Coker started Minco Technology Labs, Inc. in August of 1981 with $100,000 and four employees. Within three months, Minco was profitable and sales were $1.8 million in 1982. Today it is a $16 million operation with 130 team members, providing more than a million semiconductor devices to medical, space and military programs each month.

Minco has also produced three spin-offs: Austin Semiconductor, Inc. with 74 team members and $7 million in sales, Technalysis, which develops and sells medical equipment, and LRC, a sales and representative organization. Minco has received four "Administrator's Award of Excellence" from the SBA and a nomination for "Subcontractor of the Year" in 1991. It has twice applied for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and finished high in the ranking. Coker plans to win it.

Part of this success can be attributed to Coker's belief that team members are the most valuable asset of any company. In 1986, she offered one dollar to any team member who heard her call them "an employee." Her philosophy is expressed in the company slogan: "Quality People – Quality Products – Quality Future." Coker is active in several organizations and is often called on as a speaker.

Richard L. Shipley, President and CEO
Shipley Associates
390 North Main
Bountiful, UT 84010
(801) 295-2386

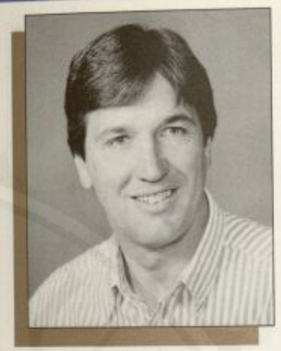
Effective communication is critical in business, yet most business people don't know how to write business and technical documents. To overcome that, 42 of the top 50 *Fortune* 500 companies rely on Shipley Associates, the world leader in writing training. Started in 1972, the company had just 13 employees and $298,000 in sales in 1978, the year the firm established its focus on writing training. Sales the next year nearly doubled. Today, Shipley Associates is the largest writing-training firm in the country, earning more than $9 million in 1991. It employs 147 at the Bountiful headquarters (built with the help of an SBA-backed loan) and eight at its Bethesda, Md., branch.

Roughly 23,000 people attend Shipley programs annually, and the firm tailors each writing and presentation training session to fit the unique needs of each client, integrating the training with actual work. The company also developed an award-winning interactive videodisc version of their business writing course to meet the demand for self-paced, instructorless training.

The firm started in Richard Shipley's basement — and in his car, on which he put 100,000 miles a year. Today, travel is still a major part of the work the firm does; many employees — a large number of them PhDs — travel more than half their time. When they are home, there are company picnics on Fridays, a park and even a vegetable garden for their use.

Shipley Associates offers financial rewards to scholars from local universities and offers its expertise and materials free to teachers. It is a major participant in the Utah Writing Project, a program of summer institutes for language arts teachers.

The State Small Business Persons of the Year



Edward W. Castle, President
Rhino Foods, Inc.
73 Troy Avenue
Colchester, VT 05446
(802) 655-7436

In 1984, while he was assistant hockey coach at the University of Vermont, Ted and Anne Castle opened an ice cream stand for extra income. But the custard ice cream popular back home in Rochester, N.Y., didn't sell well in Vermont, so they invented The Chesster, custard ice cream sandwiched between two homemade chocolate chip cookies (and named after their dog).

When Castle was passed over for head hockey coach, he made the painful decision to become a full-time businessman and Rhino Foods was born. Not wanting to be dependent on a single product, Castle persuaded Brueggers Bagel Bakeries, a 45-store chain, to create a section of cookies and bars from Rhino. A success, it led to Ben & Jerry's asking Rhino to provide cookie and brownie batters to the ice cream maker. That, plus contracts to make Vermont Velvet Cheesecake and other products resulted in expansion, in 1990, with the help of an SBA loan. That year, Rhino passed the million dollar mark in sales.

Then Ben & Jerry's and Rhino developed Cookie Dough Ice Cream — in an often comedic process. The new flavor was a sensation and suddenly the demand more than doubled. Rhino decided, as a company, to accept the challenge. They expanded, almost overnight, and sales tripled, but the company has managed the growth extremely well.

Castle has built a company where people can work hard, have fun and get what they want from their work. His 50 employees have a say in decisions and a share in profits. Castle is working to start Camp Cookie Dough for disadvantaged children, getting other local businesses to help – not just give money. He and his company support a number of organizations, especially those involving children.

Hans de Koning, President
Blueprint Automation, Inc.
5723 S. Laburnum Avenue
Richmond, VA 23231-4431
(804) 226-1100

Hans de Koning is president of one of the few firms in the world that manufactures machines that automatically pack flexible bagged products, such as potato chips, frozen french fries, candy, rice or cookies into shipping cases. The concept is a new one; 95 percent of food producers use manual labor.

Blueprint BV of the Netherlands wanted to set up a sister company in the U.S. to better serve their American and Canadian customers, and de Koning and his wife Monik were sent to Richmond to establish the firm. It was difficult with no credit history. De Koning also found that to successfully market here, the imported machines had to be altered to inches rather than millimeters. He decided to make them here, but machine parts arrived from a subcontractor so badly made that de Koning set up the facilities to build the machines himself on a very tight budget. This change allowed Blueprint to make a profit in 1988 and to pay back the $250,000 startup loan to Blueprint BV. The next year, all employees received substantial profit-sharing bonuses. Sales in 1990 were nearly $4 million.

At first, de Koning was engineer, sales manager and vice president, and Monik was bookkeeper. In 1988, the first of eight engineers was hired. Another 30 employees work in other departments and there is no staff turnover at all. Customers include Quaker, McCain, Keebler, Herr's, Snyder's and Heinz.

De Koning and Blueprint play an active role in the community, working with schools, apprenticeship programs and charities, promoting business development and donating computers to schools.

Edmund O. Schweitzer III, President
Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc.
N.E. 2350 Hopkins Court
Pullman, WA 99163
(509) 332-1890

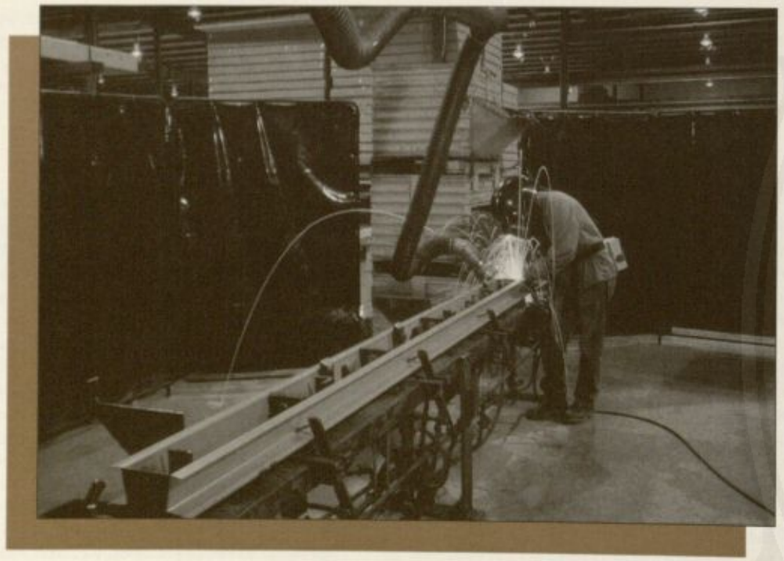
Ed Schweitzer, a professor at Washington State University, began designing digital protective relays in 1976 while completing his doctoral studies. By 1982, the first prototypes were in trial use and two years later, Schweitzer left the university to devote his efforts to Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. and to the safe, reliable and economical operation of electric power systems.

Since introducing the industry's first microprocessor-based digital distance relay in 1984, Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. has become the leader in its field, setting the standard by which the industry measures digital relaying function, performance and cost.

Started in Schweitzer's basement, SEL has grown to fill a 24,000 square foot facility in Pullman, Wash., and is currently adding 16,000 square feet for training, manufacturing and engineering. SEL has grown from a staff of seven in 1984 to employ 84 people from Pullman and surrounding communities. Sales in 1984 were $170,000 and approximately $16 million in 1991.

SEL recognizes the contribution of satisfied employees in fulfilling its goals. The company provides a generous benefit package that includes profit sharing and an education allowance. Many positions are filled from within, as employees learn new skills and seek new challenges. In an effort to keep all personnel involved in company performance and activities, the entire staff meets during lunch each Friday.

Schweitzer has been honored several times for his work and is active in civic and educational organizations. He and SEL support a number of educational and charitable endeavors.



David G. Hofstetter, CEO
Parkline, Inc.
P.O. Box 65
Winfield, WV 25213
(304) 586-2113

In 1973, the decision by a large, billion-dollar conglomerate to eliminate its metal building division provided an opportunity for David Hofstetter and a group of investors to establish Parkline, Inc. Today, the company is a major manufacturer of pre-engineered metal building systems for non-residential applications, ranging from 4 to 32 feet wide. The company also manufactures metal canopies and natural gas-flow metering equipment.

Parkline was the first company in the United States to design and produce metal self-storage buildings for rentals. They have developed state-of-the-art hazardous material storage buildings, including the mechanical systems to protect and control the stored materials designed exclusively for each customer's needs.

Recognizing a need for flexibility in educational facilities, Parkline designed and manufactures mobile classroom units that can be utilized at permanent sites and then relocated intact to other locations when necessary. They can also substitute as housing units and municipal facilities.

From an original employee base of 25, Parkline now employs a work force of 112, including engineers, salesmen, draftsmen, skilled tradesmen and office staff. They occupy, at two plants, nearly 100,000 sq. ft. and have revenues of more than $8 million.

Hofstetter is quick to credit the talent, loyalty and strong work ethics of his closely knit group of co-workers for the company's success. The company is committed to its employees' growth, offering responsibility, bonuses and even scholarships. Hofstetter is recognized as a community leader, and serves in a number of civic and business organizations.

Otto J. Rusch, President
Washburn Iron Works, Inc.
112 E. Bayfield Street
Washburn, WI 54891
(715) 373-2661

Otto Rusch's parents taught their children to be positive and to believe they could do or become anything they wanted. Otto learned his lesson well. A born entrepreneur, he trapped frogs as a boy, selling them to educational labs for as much as $100 a day and paid for his own needs so as not to burden his parents. At 15, he sold his champion steer to buy the 40-acre farm across from his parents' and stocked it with dairy calves he bought from them. He also bought a marsh where he trapped mink and muskrat.

Rusch began his foundry career in 1949 with Brillion Iron Works. Later, he joined two co-workers in founding the Waupaca Foundry. Finally, in 1976, Rusch acquired his own foundry, a long-time goal. He bought it in a foreclosure with an SBA loan and renamed it the Washburn Iron Works, Inc.

Continual modernization and improved efficiencies produce quality products at a reasonable price. Washburn Iron Works produces both ductile iron (a type that bends before it breaks) and gray iron. The ductile iron demand has provided a nationwide customer base. And the firm, already exporting to Canada, will soon be producing castings for a Belgian company. Washburn also played a part in building the new M9 Armored Combat Earthmover which played an essential role in Operation Desert Storm.

Employees and tonnage of iron poured have steadily increased over the years. Today, Washburn employs 41 people with sales of $2.3 million in 1990. The company has also helped three related businesses get started.

Rusch has contributed much to his community, working with many professional, civic, educational and church organizations. He was also named to the Wisconsin Rural Development Board in 1990.

Virginia Mathieson, Owner
VM, Inc.
1575 South Highway 150, Suite J
Evanston, WY 82930
(307) 789-6317

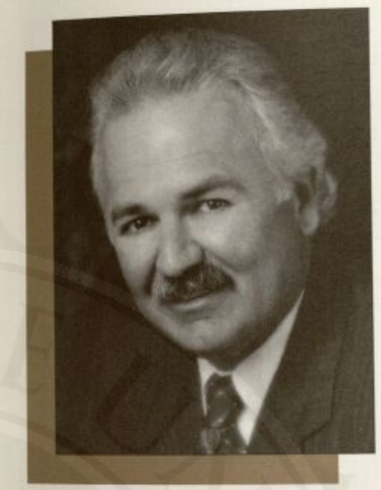
Virginia Mathieson's love of helping people has helped build her 7-year-old employment agency from a one-person operation to a firm with an average of 25 employees. VM, Inc. deals in both direct and temporary placements, specializing in clerical, technical and professional employees. From first-year sales of $13,000, the company has grown to sales of $431,000 in 1991.

Mathieson offers services previously unavailable in Evanston, and does so with a style all her own. She doesn't just provide warm bodies for jobs; she carefully matches each employee to the assignment, a philosophy that makes for happy clients and happy employees.

Mathieson also operates Paragon Properties, a shared office suite that offers individual offices, a shared receptionist, copier, fax, central phone system and other amenities for local small business owners. This environment allows them to run a full-fledged office without the capital expense and overhead it would take to do it on their own.

Mathieson is committed to serving her clients, sometimes on sheer willpower and determination alone. She has occasionally had to fill a large number of temporary assignments at one time and make the payroll while waiting 30 days or longer for payment from her clients, causing a real cash-flow crunch. But she has survived extremely well, and continues to grow.

Mathieson is actively involved in the community and is currently a member of over a half dozen boards and committees in the Evanston area, including the board of directors of the chamber of commerce.



The Entrepreneurial Success Award

Frederick R. Ruiz, President/CEO
Ruiz Food Products, Inc.
501 South Alta
Dinuba, CA 93618
(209) 591-5510

In 1964, Louis Ruiz and his son Fred started their Mexican frozen food business in a 400-square-foot warehouse. They had an ancient refrigerator and upright freezer, a simple kitchen stove, and a food mixer. An old family recipe for enchiladas combined with fresh ideas, determination and a lot of hard work formed the backbone of today's multimillion-dollar Ruiz Food Products, Inc. In the early days, shortage of cash was a never-ending problem, with each week bringing new worries. Yet every problem was solved with creative solutions. It was not unusual to find Fred and Louis cooking and preparing products in the morning, and selling and delivering them in the afternoon. Indeed, much of the amazing success of Ruiz Food Products comes from their innovative production and marketing techniques.

The nature of their product required a great deal of specialized equipment for mass production. Because this equipment was not available commercially, Louis designed and built much of it himself. The company was also the first to develop "see-through" packaging for frozen foods, in 1964.

As business increased, so did the Ruizes' desire for more sales. But greater sales meant increased production and expansion of their territory into other states, and the company had no capital with which to expand.

In 1977, Ruiz Food Products received help. An SBA loan enabled the company to purchase land adjacent to the plant and build a 5,000-square-foot warehouse. In 1979, the company obtained another SBA-guaranteed loan of $125,000 to purchase additional inventory. Meanwhile, Fred and Louis continued to develop their business skills with help from SCORE and other SBA technical-assistance programs.

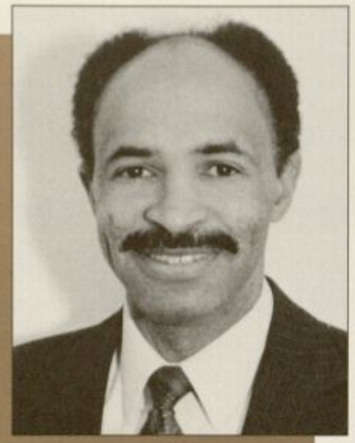
By 1983, Ruiz Food Products was really cooking, with 250 employees and sales of $10 million. In 1990, the company moved its 1,050 employee operation to a 200,000-square-foot facility. Annual sales were more than $78 million.

President and CEO Fred Ruiz has received many awards in recognition of the extraordinary growth of his company, including SBA's 1983 award for National Small Business Person of the Year, the 1989 Latin American Business Man of the Year, and *Inc.* magazine's 1990 Master Entrepreneur of the Year. Last year, *Hispanic Business* magazine ranked Ruiz Food the 24th largest Latino-owned firm in the country.

Ruiz Food Products is also highly respected for its work with community groups. "Ruiz 4 Kids" is a group of employees that volunteers time to raise money for more than 35 Children's Hospitals throughout the United States, and an annual Ruiz Invitational Golf Tournament has raised approximately $48,500 during the past five years for college scholarships in the San Joaquin Valley area.

Ruiz donates much of his own time to the community. He is on the board of several community organizations such as the College of the Sequoias, the Business Advisory Council of the California State Univ. at Fresno, Valley Children's Hospital and the steering committee of the Tulare County Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program.

Ruiz took a favorite family recipe, blended it with the right combination of hard work, creativity and determination and created a major supplier of frozen Mexican foods serving markets from Texas to Canada. In doing so, he also served his community and its people.



Accountant Advocate of the Year

Lester Coffey, CPA, President
Coffey and Associates
611 Rockville Pike, Suite 205
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 670-6337

Lester Coffey is president of Coffey and Associates, a full-service management consulting firm located in Rockville, Md. Clients, primarily large businesses, learn how to maintain control of their financial destinies through Coffey's emphasis on strategic focus, streamlining operations, improving cash flow and obtaining funding.

Coffey makes sure that the company's motto, "We help you implement success," is applied to small-firm entrepreneurs as well. This often means providing services to those unable to pay for the expertise.

Coffey and Associates offers an array of seminars that help participants understand and anticipate the effects of transactions, events and actions on the cash flow and value of their firms. "Maximizing Your Firm's Cash Flow and Value" is a particularly unique presentation developed by Coffey that may become a national standard.

Coffey is a recognized and much sought-after speaker. He's not out to impress the audience with what he knows about cash flow management; he's interested in "cutting through the fog" to help the audience follow and understand the processes and principles that are so important to their businesses' success. His recent presentations have included a March 1991 keynote speech on current economic conditions and a June 1991 presentation entitled "Win-Win Examinations and Followup: An Industry Perspective." Maryland Congresswoman Constance A. Morella was so impressed with the "Win-Win" presentation that she requested permission to distribute it to attendees at her 1991 congressional forum on the "credit crunch."

Between counseling sessions, conference presentations, and keynote addresses, Coffey authors articles on business management. "Cash Flow Management in Hard Times" was published in the Greater Washington Board of Trade's prestigious *Board of Trade News*.

Coffey's commitment to advancing the interests of business and the community at large is also evident in his service on key planning and ad hoc committees formed by and in conjunction with the Montgomery County government. While serving on the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board, he was effective in articulating business's agenda and showing that it was consistent with community needs. As president of the Greater Gaithersburg Chamber of Commerce, Coffey led the effort that repositioned the chamber to serve as an aggressive advocate for small businesses, including accountants. He serves on boards of several not-for-profit organizations, such as the Maryland Small Business Development Advisory Board, and is an active member of Suburban Maryland Fair Housing, Inc.

Coffey's recent Maryland legislative activities have included his support of proposed health-care legislation and initiatives that provide cost-effective coverage for small businesses, a request that an economic development corporation be formed to financially assist very small firms, and support for creation of new SBDCs in Maryland.

Through continuing-education programs such as those offered by the Educational Foundation of the District of Columbia Institute of CPAs, Coffey has taught controllers, CFOs, and other accountants how to be total managers. He is also founder and chairman of Champions of the Future Foundation, Inc., which teaches junior and senior high school students business- and life - management skills.

Financial Services Advocate of the Year

William C. Enloe, President
Los Alamos National Bank
P.O. Box 60
Los Alamos, NM 87544
(505) 662-5171

Educated as an economist, Bill Enloe's professional career has been focused around banking. Beginning as a loan officer at the Los Alamos National Bank (LANB) in 1971, he advanced to president and chief executive officer by 1978. In that position, Enloe has made every effort to lend to businesses presenting reasonable business plans and market strategies.

Many of the loans made by Enloe's bank are to early-stage and start-up businesses, the so-called "risky" borrowers that many banks shy away from. As of October 1991, Enloe's bank held $54 million in loans to small businesses – about 26 percent of the bank's loan portfolio.

Enloe frequently meets with venture capitalists to encourage investments in local small firms. He has made key introductions between equity investors and local small companies that have led to millions of dollars of investment in those companies. One of Enloe's "matchmaker" efforts resulted in a multimillion dollar investment by a Dallas venture capitalist and other investors in a local high-technology company that now provides about 100 jobs for northern New Mexicans.

Enloe believes changes in the financial services industry are necessary if the industry is going to support small firms, and has been an advocate for such changes at the national, state and local levels. Nationally, he is an active member of the American Bankers Association's Community Bankers Council, through which he meets with members of Congress and banking regulators about legislation and regulations affecting, among other things, the cost of lending to small businesses. He is a member of the Full House Banking Committee and has presented testimony before Congress.

At the state level, he is president-elect of the New Mexico Bankers Association (NMBA) and helps carry the NMBA platform to support changes that would benefit small business.

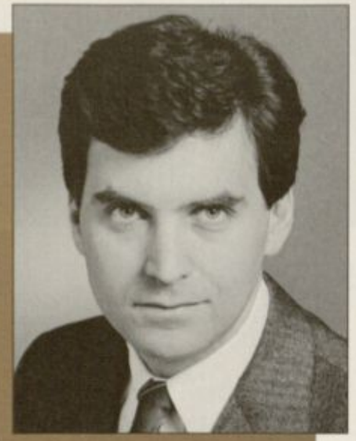
Locally, through the holding company of his bank, he is working to establish a Small Business Investment Company (SBIC).

Enloe has served as president of three business and economic development organizations in Los Alamos and continues to serve on the boards of directors of all three. He is a member of the Governor's Business Advisory Council and also serves on the advisory board for the Los Alamos branch of the University of New Mexico.

Thanks to Enloe, Los Alamos County received its first community development block grant (CDBG) from the federal government. Enloe identified a local small business that could benefit from a new factory. Because it would create primarily low and moderate income jobs, the factory qualified to be constructed with CDBG funds.

Another Enloe achievement is the Los Alamos Small Business Center. After the state of New Mexico and venture capitalists refused to consider investing in the center, Enloe provided real estate and operational loans that allowed the incubator facility to be constructed and operated. The Los Alamos Small Business Center remains one of relatively few incubators in the country financed largely with private debt capital.

Bill Enloe has nurtured the newest and most vulnerable companies and helped them achieve financial stability. The reward he values most for his efforts is the success of these businesses.



Media Services Advocate of the Year

Murray L. Feldman, Business Editor
WJBK TV - WWJ Radio
P.O. Box 2000
Southfield, MI 48037
(313) 552-5262

Murray Feldman's timely and in-depth reports on current and pertinent financial and economic topics have consistently proven helpful – and popular – to small business owners. His balanced reporting acknowledges small business's status as the foundation of the American economy.

By focusing on entrepreneurs and small businesses and the issues that face them, Feldman has significantly increased awareness of the importance of the small business community.

He began doing his business reports in 1980. As the business editor for WJBK-TV 2 and WWJ Newsradio 95, Feldman writes and produces the daily TV business reports that air during newscasts as well as the radio spots which are aired four times a day. Through his profiles on entrepreneurs in his special radio series "Quality in Business," Feldman displays his commitment to the entrepreneurial small business.

Feldman's 15 years at TV 2 are an indication of his exceptional qualities in a highly changeable field. In one recent series, "How to Survive a Recession," Feldman addressed cash management, avoidance of bank foreclosures and bankruptcies. His weekly TV show "Moneywise" is the only show that provides an in-depth, inside perspective on what's happening with local businesses.

How does the audience feel about Feldman? "Moneywise" used to be on twice a month; due to its popularity, it now airs every Sunday.

The SBA named Feldman its Media Advocate of the Year for Michigan in 1989. In 1988, he was honored with a first place UPI and AP award for his individual reporting excellence. In 1987, he received a first place UPI Individual Achievement Award for his coverage of the stock market crash. The Investment Company Institute presented him with the American University Television Award for the best economic coverage of any television station in the nation in 1987.

Feldman was one of a select group of journalists, business editors, and economic representatives invited to talk with President Ronald Reagan and Cabinet members about the economic state of the nation. He has covered all of the major candidates on the local, state and national levels and is known for his probing questions.

It has been said that Feldman's work ethic is second to none and that he produces his shows like someone who runs a business. Feldman does all of his own research, which usually means working weeknights and weekends. His contacts are some of the best in the business and include Wall Street analysts, local economists and chief executive officers of major corporations. They don't hesitate to answer the phone when they learn it's Murray Feldman.

"A good business editor must do his or her homework," he says. "Today, more people are interested in retirement, how to invest money, how to save and how to live well. Business reporters must do relevant reports. The secret is not only to keep up with the trends but to go below the surface for facts. Always be accurate and always be fair. Most important, remember that behind every statistic, there's a human being."

Minority Advocate of the Year

Harold K. Brown, Associate Dean
San Diego State University
College of Business Administration
Office for External Relations
San Diego, CA 92182
(619) 594-6437

Hal Brown's mission is to bring people together — especially minorities and women working on economic issues. He considers this unifying effort the most important part of his role as an advocate working to advance minority and small business development interests.

Brown's leadership as an advocate for minority businesses in San Diego is widely recognized. In 1968, he helped form McKissick Enterprises to provide venture capital to minority businesses, but his advocacy efforts really got underway in 1969 when, as a loan officer for a bank, he worked with minority business customers.

A tireless, dedicated leader, Brown recommended at a 1987 economic workshop that a task force on economic development be created; he then went on to create one. As a founder and president, Brown has helped mold the Black Economic Development Task Force into a dynamic and articulate voice for minority business.

Recognizing the need for research data on minority communities to assist in their economic development, Brown recommended that the task force form a center for economic development and research, then supervised and helped write the proposal for funding. He also developed the concept of a black economic summit, an annual event sponsored by the task force, that includes an "expo" for minority businesses to showcase products and services. Speakers and seminars on topics important to the success of these businesses are also a part of the summit.

Brown's efforts to integrate minority businesses into the San Diego airport — where there had only been a shoeshine stand before — led to a coalition of San Diego's minority groups and women to address economic and business development issues. Communities United for Economic Justice (CUEJ) now serves as an advocate for small minority- and women-owned businesses, with Brown as president.

For the past three years, Brown has also worked on a specialized Small Business Investment Company to provide expansion capital for minority-owned businesses. In 1990, he served on the boards of directors of three organizations and chaired their economic development committees. He also served on the City/County Reinvestment Task Force in San Diego, a group formed to enforce the Community Reinvestment Act. As a member of the Mayor's Black Advisory Board, he chairs the economic development committee, and was recently asked to be a principal organizer of a national program to assist minority business development.

With his banking experience and keen interest in business management, Brown volunteers his time to counsel many start-up and existing businesses in need of help, as well as minority students interested in business. He is often called on to participate in seminars providing information for minority small businesses. He has successfully raised the level of economic awareness among minorities and about minority business achievements and was responsible for the local proclamation of *Minority Business Day*. Brown has won the support of corporations in the city to assist the efforts of economic development for minority businesses.

Today, as Associate Dean for External Relations for the College of Business Administration of San Diego University, Brown develops and maintains relationships among the college and the business communities and other interested organizations.

He has received many awards and accolades. July 22, 1967 was declared *Harold Brown Day* in San Diego, and among his many awards for his community service is the Congressional Distinguished Service Award, presented in 1985.

Small Business Exporter of the Year

Paul C. Hsu, President
Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises, Inc.
T 6819 County Highway W, Box 509
Wausau, WI 54401
(715) 675-2325

For most people who think about it at all, ginseng conjures up images of the Orient – certainly not Wausau, Wisc. So it might surprise them to know that Marathon County, Wisc., produces 95 percent of the nation's ginseng and almost 20 percent of the global supply, and Paul Hsu grows more ginseng than anyone else in the U.S.

Hsu began mail-ordering American ginseng to Chinese Americans in 1974 and opened Hsu Ginseng Farms in 1978, growing on just half an acre. The company now has 33 full-time, four part-time and two seasonal employees. Four nationalities — American, Chinese, Hmong, and German — and five languages are represented on the staff. Many of Hsu's workers in the ginseng fields are Hmong tribesmen who have emigrated to the area from Laos, and Hsu is proud to provide social and economic stability for 11 Hmong families.

In 1990, they harvested 18 acres, with a total of 68 acres planted and more than 500 acres for future growth. That year the gross sales from the roots produced by the farm exceeded $1.5 million.

But according to Hsu, "Americans mainly buy Korean and Chinese ginseng. They think it is steeped in Asian mystique and so regard it as better than American ginseng." The herb, renowned for its ability to increase overall vitality, has been used in the Orient for centuries as a tonic to balance the body's physical and emotional systems. The American preference for Asian ginseng means that most of the domestically grown herb is exported.

Sensing an opportunity to sell aggressively overseas as well as market new products domestically, Hsu founded Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises, Inc. in 1981 to export directly to his native Taiwan and other Southeast Asian countries. He also developed products such as ginseng tea, extract, combinations of American ginseng and Chinese herbs and a non-alcoholic, carbonated apple drink spiced with ginseng called "ShangPagne."

The Asian market now imports about 90 percent of its American ginseng from the United States, and 65 percent of that comes directly from Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises. "Wisconsin ginseng will be the ginseng of the 21st century," Hsu says.

Concern about competition from countries with cheaper labor led Hsu to develop a harvester that saves four to five times the labor cost in harvesting ginseng root. His company also helped develop the first semi-automatic ginseng harvester. By using state-of-the-art technology to cultivate American ginseng for export, Hsu has enhanced his company's competitive edge to meet international competition.

Hsu is recognized as the representative and spokesperson for the American ginseng industry because of his efforts at advertising, trade shows, and consumer education. His promotion of American ginseng was recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which since 1987 has granted annual assistance of $30,000 to help pay for promotional costs of exporting value-added ginseng finished products.

Hsu is active in a variety of community efforts and advocacy activities. He volunteers his time to speak to students and civic groups about the Chinese culture and was nominated to serve on the Governor's Advisory Committee on International Trade.

Hsu worked successfully with legislators to engineer a change in tariff rates to the Taiwan government in 1985 and also proposed and participated in the development of a sister statehood relationship with Taiwan.

Because of Paul Hsu's hard work and dedication, Wisconsin ginseng has become well known, both domestically and internationally. His efforts provide an example of excellence for all businesses interested in exporting.

Veteran Advocate of the Year

William R. Carey Jr., President
Corporate Resources Development, Inc.
300 Galleria Parkway
Suite 850
Atlanta, GA 30339
(404) 953-8016

"Max" Carey was a golden boy: always a winner, he'd been an All-Ivy defensive halfback in college, graduated first in his class in Navy flight school and was the first in his class to qualify for high-risk missions. He came home from Vietnam a decorated hero, and started a business. When it didn't do well, Carey single-handedly saved the business from going under.

In the process, he buried a lot: the horrors of the war and the fear of not being able to provide for his family. His greatest fear, though, was being found out, that he was not the golden boy everyone thought he was. Failure was not something he knew how to deal with, and in his attempts to be perfect, he alienated those around him.

Eventually, it all caught up with Carey and forced him to take an unsparing look at who he was. With the support of family and the help of a friend who was a psychologist, Carey realized that it was okay not to be a superman. He also came to understand that didn't mean he was weak; it meant he was real.

Redefining weakness was a breakthrough and Carey was able to tap into the power that collegial support and friendship could provide. Almost overnight, his company underwent an amazing transition and took off. Today, it is the success he dreamed it would be.

Carey began writing about his personal experiences with war-related emotional difficulties as a means of helping other veterans identify their own distress. One story, "The Superman Complex," was published in *Inc.* magazine in 1988 and is still distributed to veterans as part of the confrontation and healing process. Carey believes that it's important for other veterans to know that the golden boy went down and came back up. "They can identify with someone like me. To know you're not alone is a great relief."

Carey's experiences made him the advocate he is today. "The large gray mass of vets who came back from Vietnam without my kind of credentials, who were branded 'losers' and 'druggies' — they're the ones I'm fighting for now."

Since 1983, Carey has served as a volunteer seminar leader for the small business training initiative of the Georgia Veterans Leadership Program (GVLP). During this time he has conducted 16 seminar presentations, recorded an audio- and videotape seminar presentation, and held private business consultations with nearly 100 veteran entrepreneurs. At least twice a year, Carey presents a "Sales Strategies" seminar for the GVLP at Georgia State University. This seminar has proven invaluable in helping veterans construct sound business plans and secure funding. Carey also serves as a volunteer sales and training consultant to veterans.

Although his commitment to veterans began with assistance to Vietnam vets, Carey's contributions reach the Persian Gulf returnees and, at times, even the World War II community.

In addition to his work with veteran entrepreneurs, Carey helps veterans who are searching for jobs, those needing help with appeal processes for benefits and displaced vets seeking interim financial assistance. For the veteran in need of hope, Carey is there.

Through his seminar work, individual counseling, and national public speaking, Carey not only supports veteran entrepreneurship, but enhances the public's image of the veteran as well.

President Bush named the volunteers of the Georgia Veterans Leadership Program of Marietta, Ga., a "Daily Point of Light" for the nation last year. Max Carey, one reason for that brilliance, continues to shine.

Women in Business Advocate of the Year

Thomasine M.Tarsell, President
Tomco Insurance Corporation and
Tomco Money Management Corporation
22 West Road, Suite 202
Towson, MD 21204-2304
(301) 821-5252

As founder and president of Tomco Insurance Corp. and Tomco Money Management Corp., Tommie Tarsell provides a full range of commercial and personal insurance services, including bonding, claims investigation, third party administration, pensions and investments. In addition, she runs marketing and finance for 7-Services, Inc., a retail firm that provides consumer services to the general public, and is chief financial officer of Cells America, Inc., distributors of steel modular buildings.

Tarsell is also a highly visible advocate for women and all small business owners. She served as a member of SBA's National Advisory Council and as committee chairperson for the 1986 White House Conference on Small Business. She is active in numerous other associations and boards as well.

Tarsell's hard work has increased business and financial opportunities for women. Through the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), she has provided advice on the availability of financing and free or inexpensive legal or accounting expertise. As NAWBO's Baltimore chapter president, Tarsell launched a campaign to identify women business owners, then published the first comprehensive statewide directory of women business owners. It drew national media attention and spurred similar efforts in other states. In 1981, Tarsell established the first "Woman of the Year Award." Now in its 11th year, the award was adopted nationally three years ago by NAWBO.

Tarsell lobbied hard to get women business owners included under the Baltimore City Resolution 610 (the MBE/WBE Program), requiring contracting agencies to ensure that women and minorities "have maximum opportunity to participate on city contracts." And, in 1984, the Maryland legislature passed House Bill 1336, designed by Tarsell, which waived the requirement to post a bond on any contract with the state of Maryland up to $50,000, affording more opportunities to women business owners.

As co-chair of an all-woman CEO trade mission to London, Frankfurt and Madrid in May 1985, Tarsell fostered an increased awareness of expanding international opportunities for women entrepreneurs and also helped change the federal government's attitude toward women in exporting.

Hoping to establish an international network, she traveled to Europe and met with presidents of women's business organizations in the United Kingdom and Germany. NAWBO, along with women business owners from 34 other countries, celebrated the first World Congress June 17, 1987, in Denver. Women from 45 countries now participate in the network.

For the past six years, Tarsell has spoken to an average of 100 women and minority business owners per month on how to access public sector funds. She has provided on-site counseling to existing and prospective women business owners, reviewing procedures, marketing and public relations.

Tarsell is an advisor to several projects, including a training program to help low-income women develop their business ideas into viable enterprises and a resource-sharing program that helps startup businesses lower overhead by pooling resources. Another project is a loan fund that helps beginning businesses meet their financial start-up and expansion needs.

Tarsell looks out for women business owners, whether on the legislative, financial or educational front. She has improved the environment for the creation and expansion of their businesses and her hard work has helped make them key participants in the national and international small business community.

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

Ted W. Waitt, President
Gateway 2000
601 Gateway Drive
North Sioux City, SD 57049
(605) 232-2000

Ted Waitt, president and founder of Gateway 2000, attributes his company's success to its value-oriented philosophy. Gateway 2000 manufactures and markets its own brand of IBM-compatible personal computers. The company has experienced extraordinary growth because Waitt continually strives to offer customers the best price-performance value, superior support and outstanding service.

Waitt sold computers for a short time after majoring in business at the University of Iowa and was only 22 years old when he started Gateway 2000 with Mike Hammond in 1985. Texas Instruments had marketed a well-regarded personal computer (PC) but stopped selling software for it. Owners became desperate for add-on devices that would allow their machines to run the many programs written for IBM PCs. Working out of a farmhouse owned by Waitt's father, Waitt and Hammond started a Texas Instruments user's club, charging a $20 membership fee.

The company no longer sells Texas Instruments products, but instead designs and manufactures eight models of fully configured, IBM-compatible PCs. Gateway 2000 currently sells more computers through direct marketing than any other PC manufacturer in the country. Sales and shipments have increased each quarter since the company's inception. Growth has been phenomenal: sales topped $1 million for the first time in 1986; 1991 sales were expected to exceed $600 million. In 1988, Gateway 2000 had 28 employees; there are now more than 1,200. Waitt plans to build a new 250,000 square foot manufacturing, distribution and customer support facility in 1992.

The company's sales figures mirror this growth: for the quarterly period ending September 30, 1991, the company shipped more than 70,000 systems for $174 million in revenue — a 121-percent increase from the $79 million posted for the same quarter in 1990, and a 38-percent increase over the $126 million revenues from second quarter 1991.

Gateway 2000 was named the fastest growing private company in the United States by *Inc.* magazine, and was rated number one on the *Inc.* 500 annual listing of the fastest growing privately held firms in the United States.

Gateway 2000 maintains low overhead and thin profit margins, partly by selling and servicing over the telephone. The company assembles its machines entirely from components made by suppliers and works on profit margins of 10 to 15 percent.

Creative advertising campaigns, low prices, quality systems and dependable service have made Gateway 2000 an industry leader. Waitt stays involved in his company's advertising campaigns, regularly brainstorming with his staff to create new ads. He considers this crucial because of the fast-paced, rapidly changing nature of the business. The ads aim to show Gateway's value — a combination of price and factors such as component quality and reliability, and service.

Waitt feels that dedication to customer service is one reason why 50 percent of Gateway's sales are from repeat purchasers and referrals. He has relied on his instincts to figure out what customers want. Essentially, he says, it comes down to this: "The PC business is not about price, it's about value, or what you can give the customer for his or her money." Waitt understands that it's wise to sell customers on his company as well as its products. Combined with low-prices, Gateway's low-key, heartland image, appeals to home office and small business customers. The company even packages its PCs in black-and-white spotted boxes resembling holsteins.

National SCORE Chapter of the Year

SCORE Chapter 40 of Omaha, Neb., has been named this year's SCORE Chapter of the Year by the National SCORE Office. SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, is composed of retired business owners from all walks of life who volunteer their services as counselors for small business people, especially those just starting a business. Last year, SCORE held more than 3,100 training events attended by nearly 100,000 people and individually counseled 173,000 business owners. Nearly 12,300 SCORE counselors at almost 390 chapters offer first-hand knowledge in a wide range of business matters.

The Omaha chapter sets itself apart by being especially responsive to the needs of its community and putting extra effort into innovative programs. It not only realizes it has a responsibility to its immediate locality, but also to smaller chapters in the state with fewer resources. Chapter 40 also recognizes that as an important hub in the nation's breadbasket, it has a responsibility to help small communities overcome serious economic problems that have been plaguing them for many years.

The Omaha chapter's workshops and outreach cover a wide base of needs from recruitment of women counselors to on-going contact with youth and veterans' organizations. The chapter developed a metric workshop, then put together a package based on the workshop and made it available to all chapters in Nebraska. Bringing together some of the nation's top experts in rural development, Chapter 40 produced its own training video called "Survival of the Small Town." Funds for the project were raised locally, and the tape was distributed to all Nebraska chapters and many small towns throughout the Midwest.

The Omaha SCORE chapter's on-going media campaign provides outstanding publicity for the chapter with the equally important aspect of informing the public of SCORE's services. The campaign uses billboards, radio and TV public service announcements, and articles in area newspapers to get the word out.

Receiving runner-up honors are SCORE chapters in Sioux City, Iowa, and Houston, Texas.

Small Business Institute Cases of the Year

Graduate Team Winner

California State University at Fullerton
Management Department
Small Business Institute
Director: Michael D. Ames, PhD.
Advisor: John T. Emery, PhD.
Team: Dena Heathman, Margaret Holden, Joseph Mayo, Evan Privett and Robert Tinkham

This student team counseled a small business that installs fences on commercial and residential properties. Despite being well established and somewhat profitable in their niche, the business owners asked for much-needed guidance in expanding their operations to accommodate their full market potential.

Undergraduate Team Winner

University of St. Thomas
St. Paul, MN
Division of Business Administration
Small Business Institute
Director: Dr. David Brennan
Team: Ude Kang, Daniel Jensen and Wolfram Nimmerrichter

This student team counseled a small business that provides payroll accounting services to other small businesses. The team helped this company develop a business plan aimed at increasing its customer base from 30 to 200 regular clients.

Prime Contractor of the Year

Morrison Construction Services, Inc.
1990 Saint St.
Richland, WA 99352-2102
John H. Chapman, President

Morrison Construction Services, Inc. is a full-service general contractor that emphasizes mechanical design and construction, service and maintenance of major equipment installation, and energy management and environmental services.

Morrison works with owners, contractors, architects and engineers on projects large or small. With complete in-house capabilities, Morrison provides its customers with competitive pricing, flexible scheduling and workmanship meeting individual expectations. Working to the customer's individual needs, the company designs, fabricates, assembles and delivers projects that are on-line, on schedule and within budget guidelines.

Nominated by:

Durie N. White, Operations Director
Office of Small and Disadvantaged
Business Utilization
Department of State
Washington, DC

and

Victoria M. Pederson
Division of Construction
Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy
Vancouver, WA

Subcontractor of the Year

Gordon-Piatt Energy Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 650
Winfield, KS 67156-0650
James P. Salomon, President and CEO

The Gordon-Piatt Energy Group, founded in 1949, enjoys worldwide prominence in the field of gas and oil combustion burners. But in 1979, a desire to diversify their product line and stabilize employment prompted them to pursue subcontract manufacturing for the aerospace industry. Today, Gordon-Piatt is the major subcontractor of aircraft chair frames for two major aerospace companies and has built over 120 different models to customer specifications.

The company has earned a reputation for excellence through its superior quality, delivery and competitive pricing. Product lead times are minimized through the electronic interchange of CAD/CAM drawings, and value engineering is a top priority. The Gordon-Piatt Energy Group has utilized its most important resource — 202 skilled and dedicated employees — to elevate it from a small local business into a global competitor.

Nominated by:

Barbara Reeves, Small Business Liaison Officer
Beech Aircraft Corp.
Wichita, KS

Congressional Committees on Small Business

U. S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee

John J. LaFalce, *New York (Chairman)*
Neal Smith, *Iowa*
Ike Skelton, *Missouri*
Romano L. Mazzoli, *Kentucky*
Nicholas Mavroules, *Massachusetts*
Charles Hatcher, *Georgia*
Ron Wyden, *Oregon*
Dennis E. Eckart, *Ohio*
Gus Savage, *Illinois*
Norman Sisisky, *Virginia*
Esteban Edward Torres, *California*
Jim Olin, *Virginia*
Richard Ray, *Georgia*
John Conyers, Jr., *Michigan*
James H. Bilbray, *Nevada*
Kweisi Mfume, *Maryland*
Floyd H. Flake, *New York*
H. Martin Lancaster, *North Carolina*
Bill Sarpalius, *Texas*
Richard E. Neal, *Massachusetts*
Glenn Poshard, *Illinois*
Eliot L. Engel, *New York*
Jose E. Serrano, *New York*
Thomas Andrews, *Maine*
Calvin Dooley, *California*
Robert Andrews, *New Jersey*
Bill Orton, *Utah*
Andy Ireland, *Florida (Ranking)*
Joseph M. McDade, *Pennsylvania*
William S. Broomfield, *Michigan*
D. French Slaughter, Jr., *Virginia*
Jan Meyers, *Kansas*
Larry Combest, *Texas*
Richard H. Baker, *Louisiana*
Joel Hefley, *Colorado*
Frederick S. Upton, *Michigan*
Melton D. Hancock, *Missouri*
Ronald K. Machtley, *Rhode Island*
Jim Ramstad, *Minnesota*
Dave Camp, *Michigan*
Gary Franks, *Connecticut*
Wayne Allard, *Colorado*
John Boehner, *Ohio*

U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business

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Sam Nunn, *Georgia*
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Carl Levin, *Michigan*
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Robert W. Kasten, Jr., *Wisconsin (Ranking)*
Larry Pressler, *South Dakota*
Malcolm Wallop, *Wyoming*
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Small Business Week Patrons

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Penguin U.S.A.
Small Business Foundation of America
Small Business Legislative Council
Sprint
The Coca-Cola Company
USA Today
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
US West Communications

Small Business Week Tentative Schedule

Sunday, May 10

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Registration
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Winners Exhibit Area Open Welcome Reception

Monday, May 11

8:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Registration Continental Breakfast and Winners' Exhibit Show *Presidential Ballroom, Capital Hilton*
10:00 -11:30 a.m.	Small Business Issues Forum *Capital Hilton*
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Luncheon Honoring the State Small Business Persons of the Year *Presidential Ballroom, Capital Hilton*
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Pictures of the Winners taken with the Administrator
2:45 - 4:00 p.m.	Small Business Issues Forum *U.S. Chamber of Commerce*
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.	Reception *USA Today, Gannett Building*

Tuesday, May 12

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Minority Small Business Awards Breakfast *Presidential Ballroom, Capital Hilton*
10:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Announcement of the Small Business Person of the Year
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.	Congressional Luncheon Honoring the Advocates of the Year and Special Award Winners *Dirksen Auditorium, Dirksen Senate Office Building*
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Reception for Winners and Invited Guests *Congressional Senate Rooms, Capital Hilton*
7:00 - 12:00 a.m.	Dinner-Dance *Presidential Ballroom, Capital Hilton*

Office of Procurement Assistance

Procurement Conference* Tentative Schedule

Wednesday, May 13

4:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Registration for the Procurement Assistance Conference *Crystal Gateway Marriott*

Thursday, May 14

7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Registration *Crystal Gateway Marriott*
8:30 - 9:30 a.m.	Breakfast, and Presentation of the Eisenhower Award *Crystal Gateway Marriott*
10:00 - 12:00 noon	Presentation of Administrator's Award for Excellence certificates *Crystal Gateway Marriott*
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.	Capitol Hill Luncheon Honoring Procurement Award Winners *U.S. Capitol, Mike Mansfield Room S-207*
12:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Procurement Fair *Crystal Gateway Marriott*
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Reception *Crystal Gateway Marriott*
7:30 - 10:00 p.m.	Banquet and Presentation of the National Prime Contractor of the Year and the National Subcontractor of the Year Awards

* Special events honoring small business Prime Contractors and Subcontractors of the Year

AT&T
Capital Corporation

Thomas Wajnert
President & Chief Executive Officer

Room 3150
44 Whippany Road
Morristown, NJ 07962-1983
201 397-3010

Dear Small Business Week Winner:

Congratulations! Your success serves as an example to millions of present and future small business owners throughout the nation. You are proof positive that an entrepreneurial spirit, paired with hard work and determination, can make the American Dream come true.

AT&T has been serving and meeting the needs of small businesses like yours for more than a hundred years, and we understand the importance of your business's continued success in a challenging economy.

Seven years ago, AT&T Capital Corporation was formed as an alternative source of financing to a host of businesses. Today, with more than 400,000 small business customers, AT&T Capital provides financing for telecommunications equipment, computers, office equipment and other general-purpose equipment to help small businesses grow and prosper.

Now, in a continuing effort to serve you better, we have become a licensed participant in the Small Business Administration's 7(a) Lending Program. We are extremely pleased about this opportunity to work directly with many of you in the near future.

We are especially proud to support Small Business Week 1992, honoring the entrepreneurial spirit that is so much a part of what makes this nation great.

Again, congratulations and best wishes on your road to success.

Sincerely,

Tom Wajnert

SBA

U.S. Small Business Administration

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