



NEWS RELEASE

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For more information, please contact:

Anne Woods
Asst. Dir. Marketing & Training
Kansas Small Business
Development Center
785-296-6514

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Small business award recipients offered tips on surviving the recession

Topeka, KS –The Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) presented its sixth annual Emerging and Existing Businesses of the Year Awards Ceremony at the Dillon House on Tuesday. Prior to the ceremony, the award recipients were recognized on the floor of the Kansas House and the Kansas Senate. Representative Don Hill sponsored the resolution in the House and Senator Karin Brownlee sponsored the resolution in the Senate. Both legislators are KSBDC Advisory board members.

Lori Keegan, CEO/president of Transition by Design, Inc, presented the keynote address. She congratulated the sixteen businesses that received the awards and asked them to remember what it took to get them where they are today.

“As business entrepreneurs, we have experienced things universally,” Keegan said. “As we reminisce on becoming a business owner we remember that we were willing to follow our passion and take a risk. You were passionate enough to know where your talent is and clever enough to know how it matches up with the market.”

Keegan, who works with business owners to help them strategize and work through transitions, described several things business owners could do to get through the recession.

“It is because you believed that you literally created thoughts in your head that programmed your thinking to recognize where the opportunities were,” she explained. “You have to believe that you will survive the recession. You do this by recognizing your core business. You need to know what is important to people during these times.”

Keegan said business owners should look at their core business and think of ways they could attract customers who may not have initially been interested in their business.

“Look at that little kernel of your core business and determine what is so great about it that even during this recession people will flock to you.”

Keegan also explained that tough economic times can lead to positive results. “It allows us to look at what to let go of, what to promote and to ask strategic questions. We learn to discern wisely what to let go of and what to shift. Once you have that clarity, go for it. Your energy will flow where your attention goes.”

Keegan recently celebrated ten years in business. Prior to opening her business, she contacted the KSBDC and has worked with a KSBDC consultant as her business has grown. Dr. Edward H. Hammond, president of Fort Hays State University, introduced Keegan and described her as a “business doctor.” Fort Hays State University is the statewide host for the KSBDC.

The ceremony concluded with comments from Wally Kearns, KSBDC state director.

“You are vitally important to Kansas. Few factors have as great an impact as entrepreneurs in producing innovation, creating jobs or contributing to a dynamic and competitive economy that provides Americans with a quality of life unparalleled in the world. For that, we thank the owners and families of the emerging and existing businesses of the year.” Kearns said.

The success stories for each of the business that were honored can be found at www.kansas.gov/ksbdc.

The KSBDC has been an integral player in economic development in Kansas since its inception in October of 1983. KSBDC clients create new wealth in Kansas by starting and growing businesses, creating and saving jobs, and accessing capital. Since its inception, KSBDC has consulted with over 84,000 Kansas entrepreneurs. In addition, over 87,000 Kansans have participated in 5,555 KSBDC workshops.

Additional information about Transition by Design can be found at www.transitionbydesign.com

2008 award recipients and their businesses are:

Existing

Pet Sitting Pal
Reneé Flott, owner
Emporia

The Furniture Look, Inc.
Karen Dreiling, owner
Hays

EmbroidMe
Gavin and Kim Unruh, owners
Dodge City

AVON Beauty Center
Elizabeth and George Demas, owners
Overland Park

Howard Pine’s Garden Center & Green Houses
Gerald Pine, owner
Lawrence

Acorn Valley Custom Cabinetry
Jim Houston and Bob Greif, owners
Thayer

Morrill Collision Repair, Inc.
Lonnie and Melanie Teeter, owners
Morrill

Service Master by Clean In a Wink
Jerry E. Winkley, owner

Wichita

Emerging

Eagle Creek Vineyards
Jo Ann Kuhlmann, owner
Olpe

Flower Cottage
Kathy and Robert Kuntz, owners
Quinter

Appraisals of Garden City / Oswalt Appraisals
Alan Oswalt, owner
Garden City

MUSIC HOUSE
school of music
Aaron Sizemore and Katrinka Riggs, owners
Overland Park

Local Burger
Hilary Brown, owner
Lawrence

Oakview Estates Assisted Living
Mark Scales & Jason Lahr, owners
Frontenac

New Boston Creative Group, LLC
Kristin Brighton, Susan Religa, Lisa Sisley, partners
Manhattan

Longford Water Company, LLC
Wava and Kim Kramer, owners/managers
Longford

About KSBDC

The Kansas Small Business Development Center Network is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Kansas Department of Commerce. KSBDC is nationally accredited through the Association of Small Business Development Centers by Congressional mandate. KSBDC receives funding from and partners with higher education and economic development organizations to provide Kansas entrepreneurs with no-cost business consulting and resources for starting, maintaining and growing their businesses. The statewide host for the KSBDC is Fort Hays State University. For more information about the KSBDC Network visit www.kansas.gov/ksbdc or call 1.877.625.7232