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Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce Announces Winners of the 2008 Excellence Awards Honoring the Region's Small Businesses

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Philadelphia, PA - September 12, 2007 – This year marks the 25th Annual Excellence Awards celebration by the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the most esteemed honor bestowed on small businesses in the Greater Philadelphia region.

The prestigious awards acknowledge the accomplishments of small businesses and the contributions they make to our regional economy. Small business leaders are nominated by their regional business peers based on their demonstrated commitment to the advancement of the business community.

The Chamber is proud to announce the winners of the 2008 Excellence Awards Honoring the Region's Small Businesses:

Small Business Person of the Year: **Gustavo Perea, Adams-Bickel Associates, Inc.;**

Customer Service Excellence of the Year: **Sterling Limousine & Transportation Services;**

Emerging Business of the Year: **The Borden Agency;**

Innovative Business of the Year: **Connexus Technology;**

Manufacturer of the Year: **Pressure Products Industries, Inc.;**

Non-Profit Organization of the Year: **PhillyCarShare;**

Retailer of the Year: **Capogiro Gelato Artisans;**

Technological Excellence of the Year: **New Way Air Bearings;**

Family Business of the Year: **Steen Outdoor Advertising;**

Young Entrepreneur of the Year: **Steve Grandizio, Friendly Mortgage**

The Excellence Awards' silver anniversary celebration will also feature the inaugural presentation of the Chamber's **Visionary Award** to **QVC**, headquartered in Chester County. According to Chamber President & CEO Mark Schweiker, "The award was created to establish a tribute for significant leadership and to honor outstanding regional organizations such as QVC that have grown from a small to a large company, and continue to thrive and support the small business backbone of the Greater Philadelphia economy."

The Excellence Awards will be presented to the area's finest small business leaders at a dinner-dance on Thursday, November 1, 2007, from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m. at the Hyatt

Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing. For more information or ticket pricing, call 215-790-3700 or visit <http://www.greaterphilachamber.com/ea2007>.

About the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

As the premier advocate for the region's business community, the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce embraces a mission to promote regional economic growth, advance business-friendly public policy, and provide effective programs and services for its approximately 5,000 member companies. A private, not-for-profit organization, the Chamber unites members in 11 counties across three states with one vision. Visit greaterphilachamber.com.

SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Gustavo Perea, President, Adams-Bickel Associates, Inc.

3770 Ridge Pike, Colleville, PA 19426 ~ <http://www.adamsbickel.com/about.html>

Company: Adams-Bickel Associates, Inc., (ABA) has its roots in the 1950's and its vision in the 21st century. Incorporated in 1980, ABA is on a course of consistent growth, positioning itself as a leader in general contracting, construction services and ABA-style construction management.

Award Criteria: Founder, owner, CEO or president of the company; strong community involvement; with a positive and diverse social impact on the region.

Award Sponsor: PNC

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE OF THE YEAR

John A. Donohoe, Jr., President-CEO, **Sterling Limousine & Transportation Services**

2288 Second Street Pike, Ste. 2, Wrightstown, PA 18940 ~

<http://www.sterlinglimoservice.com>

Company: The entire Sterling staff has always focused their efforts on providing customers with the very best and most professional transportation services in the tri-state area.

Award Criteria: Numerous examples of going above and beyond in service to the customer; special program or initiative in service to the customer; community involvement.

Award Sponsor: Commerce Bank

EMERGING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Larry Borden, CEO, **The Borden Agency**

1975 Pioneer Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006 ~ <http://www.thebordenagency.com>

Company: The Borden Agency is an event and mobile marketing agency that's also a consultancy, providing expertise in grassroots, guerilla and mobile marketing strategy—from concept development and budget creation to contract negotiations and achieving measurable results.

Award Criteria: Three to five years in business (or recently merged company); extreme growth in five (5) years or less; promise due to quantifiable strides.

Award Sponsor: Verizon Wireless

FAMILY BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Terry Steen, President, **Steen Outdoor Advertising**

3201 S. 26th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19145-5297 ~ <http://www.steen.com>

Company: Steen Outdoor Advertising has been providing outdoor advertising services to the advertising agency community since 1930. It offers unique, high-traffic, premium billboard locations throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware.

Award Criteria: Family-owned company; significant contributions to both the community and industry; company story/history and plan for long-term business success and growth under family ownership are also important considerations.

Award Sponsor: Firsttrust Bank

INNOVATIVE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Lawrence A. James, President & CEO, **Connexus Technology**

3225 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 ~ <http://www.connexustechnology.com>

Company: Since 2000, Connexus Technology has developed software solutions for companies' information management needs. Services include information management, Web content management, software application design, extranet development and enterprise information portal management.

Award Criteria: Groundbreaking/original product or service that sets the company apart from others; advanced or new use of technology; community involvement.

Award Sponsor: UPS

MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Tim Patterson, Vice President, **Pressure Products Industries, Inc.**

900 Louis Drive, Warminster, PA 18974 ~ <http://www.pressureproductsindustries.com>

Company: Since 1954, Pressure Products Industries, Inc. has been serving the chemical, petrochemical, fuel cell, hydrogen refueling, industrial gas, pharmaceutical, and related industries with expertly engineered equipment for gases and liquids under pressure.

Award Criteria: Strength in the area of employee training; exceptional growth; innovative manufacturing concepts; community involvement.

Award Sponsor: Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center (DVIRC)

TECHNOLOGICAL EXCELLENCE OF THE YEAR

Nick Hackett, President & CEO, and Drew Devitt, Founder & CTO, **New Way Air Bearings**

50 McDonald Boulevard, Aston, PA 19014 ~ <http://www.newwayairbearings.com/>

Company: Drew Devitt founded New Way Air Bearings in 1994 after developing a porous media air bearing technology to provide frictionless motion in precision machines. The technology replaces the use of ball-bearings and was quickly adopted across a diverse range of markets. Nick Hackett joined New Way in 2002 and has led the company's growth to its position today as the global market leader in the design and manufacture of porous media air bearings. A third of New Way's revenues are from export of their products to Asia.

Award Criteria: Technology to enhance their service or product; innovative use of technology; technology to provide a service or product that is beneficial to the community/region.

Award Sponsor: Ben Franklin Technology Partners

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

Tanya Seaman, Co-founder and Executive Director, **PhillyCarShare**

125 S. 9th St., 10th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107 ~ <http://www.phillycarshare.org>

Company: In 2002, five Philadelphians endeavored to reduce automobile dependence citywide by reducing the need for car ownership. By 2006, Philadelphia became the fastest-growing car sharing city and PhillyCarShare became free to join and the first and only car-sharing service in the nation to offer membership to any drivers aged 18-20; placed shared vehicles on virtually every block of Central Philadelphia; and deployed the lowest-emission fleet of any large car-sharing system in North America.

Award Criteria: Outstanding benefit and contributions to the community; original service; measurable outcome of results.

Award Sponsor: Bank of America

RETAILER OF THE YEAR

John Reitano, President, **Capogiro Gelato Artisans**

119 S. 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107 ~ <http://capogirogelato.com>

Company: Partners in marriage and business, John and Stephanie Reitano set out in 2002 to create a delectable gelato dessert the old-fashioned way, making every flavor by hand and relying on local agricultural sources for the best tasting ingredients. Since then they have been recognized throughout culinary and media circles as one of the finest and most innovative gelato producers in the US.

Award Criteria: Excel in one or more of the following – exemplary service; exceptional

product; substantial growth; community involvement.

Award Sponsor: Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC)

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Steve Grandizio, President, Friendly Mortgage
325 Chestnut St., Ste. 917, Phila., PA 19106 ~
<http://friendlymortgage.mortgagexsites.com>

Company: Friendly Mortgage Philadelphia opened in May 2003, a month before the mortgage industry hit its peak. Although not exactly perfect timing, gross sales have increased quarter over quarter every year since, and so has Steve Grandizio's commitment to the Greater Philadelphia region and its residents.

Award Criteria: Under 40 years of age; founder, owner, CEO or president of the company; positive and diverse social impact on the region; strong community involvement.

Award Sponsor: Susquehanna Patriot Bank

VISIONARY AWARD

Michael George, President & CEO, QVC
1200 Wilson Blvd, West Chester, PA 19380 ~ <http://www.qvc.com>

Company: QVC is the world's preeminent electronic retailer. Just over twenty years ago, Joseph Segel, who was also founder of The Franklin Mint, envisioned a way to provide "Quality, Value and Convenience" in the televised, home-shopping market. Now multinational, the corporation is headquartered in West Chester, Pennsylvania with 2,500 employees; broadcasts to 141 million consumers in four major countries; and generates \$20 million in annual revenue.

Award Criteria: This year marks the inaugural presentation of the Chamber's Visionary Award — honoring a large national or international corporation that began as a small company in Greater Philadelphia and continues to contribute to the growth and success of our regional small business community.

Award Sponsor: Stradley Ronon

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