



New York District Office

News Release

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Long Islander Wins New York State Small Business Person of the Year

Now in Competition for National Small Business Person of the Year

New York, NY— At a Manhattan ceremony in celebration of presidentially declared *National Small Business Week 2009*, the New York District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration today presented Teresa M. Ward, owner of Teresa's Family Cleaning, Inc., with the award for New York State's top small business. Ward also won for Small Business Person of the Year in the SBA's Region II, which includes New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Ward founded her residential cleaning company, Teresa's Family Cleaning, Inc., in 1992, providing the traditional cleaning services one expects for this type of business. Along the way she added non-traditional services such as organizing and management services for senior-living facilities throughout Long Island.

That ability to adapt and grow enabled Family Cleaning to weather the current economic downturn. And rather than submit to the crisis, Ward ensures that her core group of customers is always satisfied with her company's service. In fact, she still has her pre-crisis 12 to 14 crews out on any given day. "With the traditional spring cleaning time upon us, I feel as though we have gotten through the worst," said Ward.

Ward started her business— not in the infamous entrepreneur's garage— but she did start as a one-woman business in her basement. The company now owns its own building in Rocky Point, NY, employs upward of 40 cleaners, office staff and sales personnel, has a fleet of 15 vehicles and grosses well over a million in sales. Also environmentally conscious, the company now uses only "green" and eco-friendly products in its cleaning arsenal to help ensure the safety of its customers, employees and the environment.

Family Cleaning was helped through its growth stages with a loan from Community National Bank which was partially guaranteed by the SBA, as well as business management counseling from the SBA's Stony Brook Small Business Development Center.

When her sister passed away from cancer in 2003, Ward embarked upon another mission and

helped launch the Cleaning for a Reason Foundation in New York in 2006. The non-profit, along with 500 cleaning companies across the nation provides free or at-cost cleaning services for women undergoing chemotherapy. Last year she began donating company services to Habitat for Humanity, to prep the homes for their new inhabitants.

Ms. Ward's awards prove you do not have to be some sort of exotic, high-tech business owner to win this honor," said SBA Spokesman John J. Miller. "You just need to be good at what you do."

The recipient of the country's most prestigious small business award--- *National Small Business Person of the Year*--- will be selected from among 50 state winners and announced at the *National Small Business Week 2009* ceremony in Washington, DC, May 18-22, 2009.

Other SBA New York District award winners at the SBA event today included:

Family-Owned Business of the Year

Peter Negri, President & CEO
Jamaica Bearings Co.
New Hyde Park, NY

Financial Services Champion of the Year

Patrick Mackrell, President & CEO
New York Business Development Corp.
Albany, NY

Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year

Benjamin B. Hunt, Director
Department of Defense Procurement Technical Assistance Center, LaGuardia Comm. College
Long Island City, NY

Minority Small Business Champion of the Year

Rev. Carmen Hernandez, Founder & President
New York City Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender Chamber of Commerce
Bronx, NY

Women in Business Champion of the Year

Deborah Brenner, Founder & CEO
Women of the Vine Cellars, LLC
Piermont, NY

Small Business Journalist of the Year

Joan Hamburg and Liz Hamburg, Co-hosts
WOR News/Talk Radio 710
New York, NY

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