

StatesmanJournal.com

OREGON'S MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Chamber awards honor Salem's spirit

'Can-do' attitude helps city survive in tough economy



September 26, 2010

The Salem Area Chamber of Commerce's annual Business of the Year Awards ceremony has become more than a photo opportunity. In this uncertain economic climate, the awards have turned into a testimonial for Salem's entrepreneurial spirit and the value of our community.

There may not be a better example than Don Pancho Authentic Mexican Foods, Inc., winner of the chamber's top Business of the Year award. The Salem-based company has continued to grow, becoming an established Northwest brand familiar to grocery shoppers and many restaurants.

Yet, it's more than the bottom line that has made Don Pancho Authentic Mexican Foods stand out. The company, led by president and co-founder George Puentes, has an impressive record of community involvement and civic giving. Puentes' keen business sense also has made him a mentor for many entrepreneurs, who in turn have helped grow the Salem area economy.

Visioning. Investing. Giving. Those are the qualities that have distinguished chamber winners — such as Don Pancho Authentic Mexican Foods and this year's award recipients — through the years.

The chamber itself stands out for aggressively advocating for a community that embraces entrepreneurialism and actively invests in Salem's quality of life. It's understandable, and not so surprising, that Salem's CEOs also provide significant support and resources for our nonprofits and schools.

Salem's community resume is significant because of the synergies that blend business and community interests. It explains why the Kroc Center is flourishing here. It explains how Rich Duncan can bring together business competitors and well-meaning volunteers for the "Extreme Makeover" build at the Oregon School for the Deaf.

Salem understands what it takes to succeed. It's appropriate that Mayor Janet Taylor also was recognized at the chamber's luncheon Monday. The President's Choice Award to the outgoing mayor recognizes what she has done to develop Salem's synergies well into the future.

Visioning. Investing. Giving. Indeed, those are Salem's can-do traits.

Award winners

President's Choice Award: Salem Mayor Janet Taylor

New Business of the Year: Opt-e-Web

Small Business of the Year: ABC Window Cleaners and Building Maintenance

Agri-Business of the Year: Willamette Valley Fruit Company

Regional/National Business of the Year: Fidelity National Title

Business of the Year: Don Pancho Authentic Mexican Foods

Employer of the Year: Bookbyte.com

SOURCE: Salem Area Chamber of Commerce

We focus on automating Marriott® Hotels' global invoice process. So they don't have to.

Learn more at RealBusiness.com

xerox Ready For Real Business

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™