

The CG Schmidt Ovation Awards are designed to encourage philanthropy and volunteerism by honoring those making the community a better place. The Awards recognize and raise awareness of the community support efforts of small to medium-sized businesses and their employees that serve the underserved. The Awards also raise awareness of non-profit organizations serving underserved that may not be as well known in the community. The Awards strive to mobilize additional community support by encouraging similarly-sized companies and their employees to increase their philanthropic and volunteer involvement. The message we hope to convey with the Award program is that it does not take a big company to make a big difference in the lives of others.

The Ovation Award for Corporate Support (fall) honors small to medium-sized companies that have created long-term partnerships with non-profit organizations that serve the underserved. These efforts can come in the form of financial or in-kind support, board involvement or encouragement of employee volunteerism. Two awards are offered - one for the Capital Region and one for the rest of the state. 2007 marked the first year for the Capital Region Ovation Award for Corporate Support and we are happy to report that it was both well received and embraced by Dane and the surrounding counties.

The Ovation Award for Volunteerism (spring) honors the employees of small to medium-sized businesses who generously give the gift of time and talent to organizations that serve the underserved. The Award recognizes those who have shown consistent dedication to causes through involvement on boards and committees, in projects, at events and in other creative ways.

Ovation Awards taken over by C.G. Schmidt

The Business Journal of Milwaukee
October 29, 2004
by Mark Sabljak

You might have noticed a new name atop the advertisements for the Ovation Awards in The Business Journal recently.

What started out as a community partnership, supported by several businesses, has now become the C.G. Schmidt Ovation Awards.

And the story of how it happened is one that every business with a philanthropic program of any kind -- or a business that may want to start one -- could find of interest.

When the Ovation Awards were created more than a year ago, C.G. Schmidt Inc., one of the largest construction firms in the Milwaukee area, signed on as one of a handful of sponsors.

After participating in the first three of the quarterly awards program, the company came forward with a request to take over the program.

"We saw it as a tremendous way to focus our efforts in the community and hopefully, make an even greater impact," said Dan Davis, the company's senior vice president.

The Ovation Awards program has a simple goal -- to honor individuals and companies in the community that give.

By supporting the awards program, Davis sees the company as multiplying the benefits of his philanthropy by recognizing other individuals and companies with that attitude.

"We've always had a company that has been committed to the community," he said.

In fact, the company's Web site lists charitable donations of nearly \$1 million over the last 10 years. And it lists numerous volunteer activities participated in by its employees.

"We really see getting involved in the Ovation Awards as another employee benefit," Davis said.

That's one thing Davis and others whose companies are involved in giving emphasis: Encouraging volunteerism actually is a benefit to employees, not an imposition.

Davis said he hopes the Ovation Award winners' stories can show how smaller businesses and individuals can play a role in the community.

Fall 2008

Ovation Award for Corporate Support - Capital Region

The Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream Company

Nominated by Common Wealth Development

The Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream Company was chosen as this year's CG Schmidt Ovation Award winner for their support of Common Wealth Development's Youth-Business Mentoring Program. This program provides employment and financial education, job placements, and mentoring to low-income and at-risk teens, ages 14 to 16.

The Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream Company and owner, Dave Deadman, have supported the Youth-Business Mentoring Program for over four years. The Chocolate Shoppe first got involved with the program through mock interviews, which received a great response. Then, they became more involved with the program and offered to provide customer service classes to the students as part of the program.

After seeing the benefit of the program, The Chocolate Shoppe began hiring participants of the Youth-Business Mentoring Program as employees at their retail locations three years ago. To date, The Chocolate Shoppe has hired six students.

Along with The Chocolate Shoppe's support of the Youth-Business Mentoring Program, the company also is a major sponsor of the Willy Street Fair fundraiser. Each year Common Wealth Development, along with Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, put on the Willy Street Fair as a fundraiser in support of each organization's youth programs. The Chocolate Shoppe has also generously donated a grand prize for their raffle the last two years.

The Chocolate Shoppe's commitment to the Youth-Business Mentoring Program has helped Madison youth and the entire community. They have also helped Common Wealth Development fulfill its mission: to continue to build and sustain a vibrant, diverse, engaged, inclusive and safe community.

Honorable Mention: Mid-West Family Broadcasting

Nominated by Independent Living

Honorable Mention: Custer Financial Services

Nominated by Lussier Community Education Center



Fall 2008

Ovation Award for Corporate Support - Statewide

Incentive Gallery, L.T.D.

Nominated by Sojourner Truth House

Incentive Gallery and its owner, Linda McCabe, were nominated by Sojourner Truth House, for donating time, money and talent. Incentive Gallery offers Sojourner Truth House company resources including corporate contacts and staff to recruit donors and organize fundraisers. Sojourner Truth House operates Milwaukee's oldest and largest shelter for abused women and children. It provides shelter, safety, support, education and advocacy services for thousands of Milwaukee families. Its aim is to break the cycle of domestic violence.

Linda McCabe and her Incentive Gallery staff have made significant contributions to Sojourner Truth House. McCabe organizes two annual fundraising events: the Fashion Show Auction and the Brewers Wives Tailgate Auction. Not only does she organize the events and recruit volunteers for them, but she personally donates, as well. The events are major sources of income for the Sojourner Truth House and their success is due largely to the dedication and caring of Incentive Gallery.

Honorable Mention: **Scheibel Halaska**

Nominated by Centro Legal

Spring 2008

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

John Haydon, Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek S.C.

Nominated by Milwaukee Rescue Mission

For the past eight years, John Haydon of Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek has volunteered countless hours to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission, working with the homeless and impoverished men that come through the doors, often with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

John believes that for these men to be successful in securing employment and housing and becoming healthy providers for their families once again, they need resources and opportunities. He draws on his legal expertise to offer one-one-one assistance with tax preparation, criminal cases, child custody issues, debt reduction, credit reports and mentorship to men who are in desperate need of those resources. John also teaches classes on budgeting, job readiness, work ethics and basic financial management. He has an acute ability to take complicated legal terms and subject matter and relay them in a simpler form, without losing any of the potency or value of what he is teaching.

Each week, John comes to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission and shows homeless men in this city that there is hope, and while they may not be able to change their pasts, they certainly have options for the future. He demonstrates what moral values are, teaches practical life skills, and provides legal assistance on many levels. Most importantly, John is a consistent, confident, caring mentor, and proves to the men he helps that someone does care for them and their futures.

Honorable Mention: **Gary Dalton, Gruff Goat Information Services**

Nominated by Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services



Fall 2007

Ovation Award for Corporate Support Statewide

Directions, Inc., John Giesfeldt, Public Relations Manager

Nominated by Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services

The philanthropic efforts of Directions, Inc. are guided by the statement "Supporting the Community that Sustains Us". They have found that the marketing and public relations services they provide are of extreme value to non-profit organizations. However, these services are often a luxury that most non-profits cannot afford. To bring these valuable services to the community, each year, Directions selects a non-profit from the Fox Valley community for which they provide pro-bono services. This year's non-profit, and the organization that nominated Directions, is Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services of Neenah.

The staff at Directions created a true partnership with the staff at Christine Ann from the very beginning. The leadership and services Directions has provided to Christine Ann helps them to further their mission to prevent domestic abuse and violence and provide intervention and safety to those affected by it.

Honorable Mention: Magnum Products

Nominated by Community Health Network

Honorable Mention: Mitchell Street Development Opportunities Corp.

Nominated by Modjeska Youth Theatre

Ovation Award for Corporate Support Capital Region

MCD, Inc., Joan McNulty and David Boyer, Co-Owners

Nominated by YWCA Madison

The YWCA Madison nominated Madison Cutting Die (MCD) not only for their generous donation of products and services, but for the true partnership the two have created. MCD's leadership, which includes owners Joan McNulty and David Boyer, provides the YWCA with creative support and leadership while the YWCA's Racial Justice workshop's in turn provide MCD with new insights to improve their business culture through racial justice and gender equity.

MCD has also helped the YWCA create a new training program to prepare women and minorities to work in the printing and manufacturing industry. Participants are paired with an MCD mentor and work within a six to 12-month internship experience. Above all, the YWCA recognizes MCD for embracing and advancing their mission, and as a leader in the business community, encouraging other businesses to follow.

Honorable Mention: Insty Prints on Park Street

Nominated by Interfaith Hospitality Network



CG Schmidt Ovation Award Recipients

Spring 2007

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Jennifer Bartolotta, Bartolotta Restaurant Group

Nominated by Meta House

Bartolotta supports a number of area nonprofits and causes. She is President-elect of Meta House, which provides alcohol and drug abuse treatment services to women. In addition to her board leadership role, she has organized several clothing drives, recruited volunteers and provided food and funding to the organization. Bartolotta has also personally raised more than \$50,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation by pedaling miles of challenging hills in Death Valley, CA. Additionally, the Bartolotta organization donates approximately \$500,000 annually in talent, goods and gift certificates to hundreds of local organizations.

Honorable Mention: Frank Pavc, Con-Way Freight

Nominated by Family Life Center

Honorable Mention: John Rupena, Rupena's Fine Foods

Nominated by West Allis Chamber of Commerce

Fall 2006

Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Gossen Corporation, President Jef Butterfield

Nominated by Milwaukee Rescue Mission

Unbeknownst to CG Schmidt, Gossen President Jef Butterfield pledged that if his company won the award, he would match the \$1,500 contribution CG Schmidt would make to the Mission. Butterfield did more than that - he donated \$3,500 and increased the total contribution to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission to \$5,000.

The Gossen Corporation has been a supporter of the Milwaukee Rescue Mission for more than 15 years. For the Butterfield family, it became a family tradition to serve Thanksgiving meals at the Mission and for the company it became a practice to hire graduates from the Mission's programs. The Milwaukee Rescue Mission is the state's largest homeless shelter, serves over 200,000 meals per year, boards as many as 400 adults and children on any given day, and teaches them skills needed to get their lives back on track.

Honorable Mention: Capitol Bank

Nominated by the Wexford Ridge Neighborhood Center



Spring 2006

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Lynne Woehrle, Ph. D., Mount Mary College associate professor of sociology

Nominated by Growing Power

Dr. Woehrle was honored for her service at Growing Power, an organization supporting people from diverse backgrounds through the development of Community Food Systems that provide safe, healthy affordable food and are based upon the principles of environmentally sustainable agriculture. In honor of Dr. Woehrle's service, the CG Schmidt Foundation made a \$1500 donation to Growing Power. Dr. Woehrle, a Growing Power volunteer for nearly three years, develops materials and presentations, contacts funding agencies, assists with strategic planning and at events.



Fall 2005

Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Park Bank

Nominated by Ritz, Holman, Butala, Fine LLP

While their reputation for customer service over their 90-year history is a source of pride at Park Bank, their commitment to community service is equally as important, and just as rewarding. Financial participation towards the betterment of our community is only one way they make a difference. Their employees participate in other ways, through active service in the many projects and agencies that exist to make us all part of a caring community. The tone is set at the highest levels of leadership in the bank and every employee is challenged to make a difference however and wherever their passion takes them. Mike Mahoney, President and CEO sums it up in this way, "In an increasingly busier and sometimes impersonal world, service is a core value that continues to be a touchstone for how we work, how we live and how we give."



Honorable Mention: Citizens Bank of Mukwonago

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Joyce Henry, The Open Gate

Nominated by The Open Gate

Twenty years ago, touched by the lack of services for the homeless of Milwaukee, Joyce Henry took it upon herself to open a house for them. Developing relationships with those who were homeless gave Joyce an insider's look at the plight of those who could not provide for themselves. Since then, Joyce has dedicated her life to ending homelessness in Milwaukee. The Open Gate works exclusively with the disadvantaged and is Milwaukee's first Transitional Living Center for the homeless. The Open Gate only accepts clients without an income. According to Joyce's daughter Jennifer, "She has been a role model for so many people. She has a lifetime connection with many clients that have passed through The Open Gate that lasts for years beyond their need for service."

Honorable Mention: Beverly Weeden, Literacy Services of Milwaukee



Ovation Award for Leadership

Bill Douglas

Nominated by Habitat for Humanity

Bill Douglas first learned about Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity thru his church, Plymouth Church. A small article was in the bulletin indicating that Habitat was looking for volunteers. The year was 1989. Habitat in Milwaukee was 5 years old. Bill was still working full time as an engineer for Oilgear and decided to try volunteering with Habitat. He volunteered on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. He also got his wife Fran involved. They would spend vacations from Oilgear working during the Build Weeks at Habitat. Bill became addicted to Habitat.

Bill retired from Oilgear a few years later and Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity became a full time volunteer job! Bill quickly became a House leader. The rest is history. Bill and his wife Fran have continued to make Habitat their charity of choice and volunteer literally hundreds of hours a year with Habitat. Bill also provides an orientation for all the new homeowners explaining how all their appliances work, including hot water heater, pilot lights, thermostat etc. Bill continues to lead crews and is always available when projects come up. Bill has recently become involved with pickups for Habitat's Restore.

Honorable Mention: **Everett Stone**, Waukesha Symphony Orchestra

Fall 2004

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Greg Myers

Nominated by Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

Since his son's diagnosis with cystic fibrosis ten years ago, Greg Myers has become one of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's (CFF) most active volunteers. He has assumed many leadership positions in CFF's Wisconsin Chapter, setting an example for everyone who feels passionately about CFF's mission, especially other parents coping with the disease. "It doesn't do anybody any good to sit on the sidelines and watch," Myers said, "If you don't get involved, nobody benefits." Myers has served as Chairperson of the CFF-Wisconsin's Volunteer Leadership Initiative Program; he is a member of the National CFF Leadership Council and the CFF-Wisconsin Advisor Board. He also served as Co-Chair of the CFF black tie gala, which raises around \$125,000. "I've always believed that if you possess the skills and abilities, it's important to give back to the community," Myers said, "Especially if there's a cause you feel strong about. You'll find that you really get out what you put in."



Ovation Award for Leadership

Cynthia Stoll, Lake Hill House

Nominated by IndependenceFirst

Cynthia Stoll has been actively involved with several organizations in the Milwaukee area - including the Arthritis Foundation, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Youth Orchestra, the Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, and the Crescent City Stompers, a division of the Boys & Girls Club and Boy Scouts that introduces young musicians to New Orleans-style Jazz. After attending a 2002 luncheon for IndependenceFirst, she was asked to Co-Chair the 2003 event; she accepted and even took up the responsibilities of her Co-Chair, who couldn't assist because of health-related problems. Because of Stoll's leadership and 615commitment, the event set a standard of success for future luncheons, with over 900 people in attendance. "I have many people in my life who face the same challenges IndependenceFirst helps people to overcome, so that struck a personal chord," said Stoll, "But no matter where I volunteer, I meet fabulous people who I otherwise never would have met."



Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Steinhafels, Gary & Joyce Steinhafel

Nominated by Milwaukee Women's Center

For 65 years, Steinhafels has been as committed to philanthropy as it has to success in the retail furniture business. Each year, Steinhafels supports more than 100 local charities, including the MACC Fund, the YMCA, the Ronald McDonald House, the Meta House, and the Milwaukee Women's Center, to name a few. "We have over 550 employees, and we try to support all of their causes -- church raffles, bands, Girl Scout clubs," said Gary Steinhafel, president of the company, "We try not to say no to anybody that asks." Steinhafels lends its support in various ways, donating furniture to more than 50 needy charities each year, and thousands of dollars more in the form of gift certificates and money. The company's employees have also shown an incredible amount of dedication to giving back to their communities. "We don't strong-arm employees to get involved," said Steinhafel, "We have many long-term employees working for us, and they really lead by example, setting a standard for the rest of the company."



Spring 2004

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Alan Strekow, Strekow & Associates

Nominated by Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum

When the future of the Villa Terra museum was looking bleak in 1989, Alan Strekow, president of Strekow & Associates, and several others stepped up and formed the Friends of Villa Terrace. Since then, the budget of the Friends of Villa Terrace has grown 800%. This unprecedented growth is attributed to Strekow's leadership, who has served as treasurer and president of the board. "If you're lucky enough to be able to make a comfortable living," says Strekow, "I think you should give something back to the community. Villa Terrace was the perfect organization for me to get involved with, a cause that is close to my heart."



Ovation Award for Leadership

Joe Kresl, Hawks Nursery

Nominated by Ernst & Young

Joe Kresl, registered landscape architect and owner/president of the Hawks Nursery Co., Inc. is a tireless civic leader, active on many boards and charitable organizations, including Brookfield Rotary, West Suburban YMCA Board of Managers, and West Suburban Chamber of Commerce. Kresl's efforts have been recognized by organizations like the Milwaukee Art Museum Friends of Art, which named him Corporate Friend of the Year. "It's always been my goal to improve not only my own business but the entire community," says Kresl, "It makes me proud to look back and recognize the changes we've made...see the good that has come about."



Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Coakley Tech, Peggy Coakley

Nominated by Task Force on Family Violence

"With our business located in downtown Milwaukee, I believe it is our responsibility to give back to the community," says Peggy Coakley, C.E.O. of Coakley Bros. and Coakley Tech. Giving back is exactly what they have done. As the economy struggled in 2002, the Task Force on Family Violence faced harsh budget cuts. To help the task force continue to produce its informational literature, Coakley donated more than \$20,000 in printing and design work in that year alone. "You really get back what you put in," Coakley said. "It's another way of enriching the fabric of our lives."



Winter 2004

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Dino Flores, Shorewest Realty

Nominated by United Community Center

Besides helping South Side residents purchase homes as a bilingual Shorewest realtor, Dino Flores is an active member of the Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee. Most important to him are the hours he commits to the United Community Center athletic department - his way of giving back to his community. "Growing up [here]," he says, "and going to Journey House and the Christian Center, I recognize the importance of a place where kids can get off the street... have real role models." Flores says he never expected an award for his efforts. "The real reward is being involved, relating to these kids directly and seeing them grow up."



Ovation Award for Leadership

Deidra Edwards

Nominated by Girl Scouts of Milwaukee

Since joining the Girl Scouts of Milwaukee Board of Directors in 1994, Deidra Edwards has been described as a “tireless champion of Girl Scouting who provides extraordinary vision and leadership.” Currently serving in her second term as president, Edwards’ leadership has aided the development of several large-scale projects, including the Girls of Summer Softball program, the Blueprint for Strong Girls strategic plan and Step Into Action programs. Her efforts also include significant accomplishments in reaching girls of color and those living in underprivileged neighborhoods.



Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Harry W. Schwartz Bookstores, David Schwartz

Nominated by Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee

Having an impact on the community is important to Harry W. Schwartz Bookstores. And by engaging its customers, Schwartz has been able to donate more than \$250,000 to local nonprofits. Customers who sign up for the program help direct the stores’ one percent donation. Among the big winners: Hunger Task Force, Books for Kids and Milwaukee Women’s Center. Founded in 1927, Schwartz Bookstores “have always been part of the community. And this program, because customers are involved, is fun for all of us” says a Schwartz spokesperson.



Fall 2003

Ovation Award for Leadership

Jan Lennon

Nominated by Medical College of Wisconsin

Described by a friend as “a behind-the-scenes tour de force,” Jan Lennon is an active volunteer and aggressive fund-raiser for several medical research organizations, serving on the boards of the MACC Fund, the MS Society and as chair of the Wisconsin Breast Cancer Showhouse. She is currently president of the Medical College’s Digestive Disease Advisory Board. “The MACC Fund and the Medical College have provided me with so many significant opportunities,” says Jan. “I feel it’s important to be a spokesperson for people who can’t speak up for themselves. Material things fade away, but making the world a better place leaves a legacy.”



Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Bonnie Birk and Dave Helling

Nominated by The Women's Center Inc.

The husband and wife team of Dave Helling and Bonnie Birk has been the driving force behind a successful capital campaign that has raised \$3.2 million for the Women's Center Inc. in Waukesha to build a new multipurpose building. Dave is a retired radiologist, and Bonnie is currently working on her doctoral dissertation at Marquette University. But nothing has stopped them from contributing forty-plus-hour workweeks for the past two years on top of generous monetary contributions. "In their unassuming and determined way," says a colleague, "they have made a much larger impact on the staff and clients of The Women's Center than they will ever know."



Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Badger Mutual Insurance, Roy Bubeck

Nominated by United Way of Greater Milwaukee

Badger Mutual Insurance has taken small-business philanthropy to a new level. Through fundraising efforts like bake sales and car washes, Roy Bubeck, president and CEO, and his 106 employees have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the United Way and other nonprofit organizations, especially ones in its community. "We have so many employees from this area," says Bubeck. "It makes it special when you can see the effects right in your own neighborhood. It brings the various parts of our company together, working for one goal."



Summer 2003

Ovation Award for Volunteerism

Donald Jackson

Nominated by Boys and Girls Clubs

A recently retired Milwaukee firefighter, Jackson has been an 11-year volunteer at the LaVarway Boys & Girls Club. A former alumnus of the clubs, who goes by the nickname "chief", Jackson mentors youth between the ages of 11 and 15 because "kids need to give back in some way, even if they don't have much to give. They have to learn to give back, not just take."



Honorable Mention: Scott Reithel, Metropolitan Associates

Nominated by Grand Avenue Club

Reithel has helped the Grand Avenue Club, a community for adults who have experienced mental illness, working "tirelessly." A vice president at Metropolitan Associates, a property management company, he helped secure a grant for building renovations, then acted as project manager and laborer.



Ovation Award for Leadership

Linda Davis

Nominated by: Leading Transitions

Davis began her career in a hands-on fashion, cuddling crack babies at Children's Hospital. Soon after, Davis founded her first of several organizations, the Child Protection Center - the first foster care health program in the city of Milwaukee - where for the next seven years she would devote innumerable hours to helping as many children as possible. "Little victories is what it's all about," says Davis.

Ovation Award for Corporate Support

Foley and Lardner

Nominated by: Curative Care Network

The law firm of Foley and Lardner has been supporting the Curative Care Network, one of the nation's oldest, largest and most comprehensive rehabilitation and human service organizations, since 1941, when Leon Foley, a firm founder, served on the organization's board.



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