

News Release

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2010 Wisconsin Family Business of the Year Award Nominations Open

The seventh annual Wisconsin Family Business of the Year Award is accepting nominations from businesses throughout the state. The award celebrates companies that exemplify the family spirit of doing business together for everyone's success.

Since the beginning of the program, 44 family-owned companies have been recognized for their contributions to their communities, their industries, and the economy. The winners have come from all parts of the state, from La Crosse to Green Bay, and from Madison to Peshtigo.

One family business will be selected for **Grand Awards** in each category of **small** (under 50 employees), **medium** (50-99), and **large** (100 or more) companies. **Special awards** will also be given to companies excelling in a particular area. Self-nominations are encouraged, or nominations can be made on behalf of the company by consultants, vendors, clients, or friends. An independent panel of judges will select the award recipients. The deadline for nominations is March 26, 2010. Awards will be presented at a banquet to be held in Madison on May 13, 2010.

In the United States, there are more than 10 million family businesses, from "mom and pop" stores to Fortune 500 companies. Their economic influence is enormous, producing an estimated 50 percent of the nation's gross domestic product and paying 65 percent of all wages. The success of family businesses is also demonstrated in the stock market. A stock analysis of publicly held, family-owned businesses reveals that they significantly outperform the rest of the stock market. Economic growth in Wisconsin clearly is influenced by the health of family-run businesses.

Smith & Gesteland, a Madison based CPA firm, Associated Bank, a large regional bank, and DeWitt Ross & Stevens, a Madison and Milwaukee law firm, are co-sponsoring the statewide award. The three firms are also founding sponsors of the UW-Madison Family Business Center.

Additional information about the program, including a list of past winners, and Nomination forms can be found at www.familybusinessaward.com, or by calling 608-836-7500.