

Kentucky Celebrates Small Business Ceremony highlights the great work of entrepreneurs

By Natalie Cunningham

Frankfort, Ky., (May 8, 2019) – Fifteen small businesses from across the Commonwealth received recognition for their exceptional business practices and success at the 11th annual Kentucky Celebrates Small Business Awards Ceremony.

Lt. Governor Jenean Hampton, Kentucky SBDC State Director, Kristina Joyce, SBA Acting District Director, Robert Coffey, and small business supporters from across the state gathered Wednesday, May 8 in the Capitol rotunda to honor the small business owners who help our economy and communities grow.

The ceremony is a joint celebration of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) award winners and the Kentucky Small Business Development Center's (Kentucky SBDC) Pacesetter award winners. Both awards celebrate the accomplishments, hard work, and courage of Kentucky entrepreneurs. For the first time, the Pacesetter Awards honored startup businesses alongside the traditional second-stage companies commonly showcased at the event.

The Kentucky Celebrates Small Business honorees are leaders in their fields. You may recognize Kentucky Pacesetter, Sara Bradley as the runner-up in the latest season of the Bravo television show Top Chef. American Metal Works has grown their own reputation as leaders in the post-coal world of Eastern Kentucky, as they create new job opportunities for former coal miners. Two of the Kentucky Pacesetters were double recipients this year. Both J-Mack BBQ co-owners Jay and Michelle Tapscott and Running Soles owner Will Rivera also won SBA awards. Every Pacesetter awardees are Kentucky SBDC clients.

“The small businesses we are celebrating today are the backbone of Kentucky’s economy. We are happy for the opportunity to honor them for their commitment to the best business practices, our economy, and their communities,” Kristina Joyce, Kentucky SBDC, State Director said.

As part of their Pacesetter award, winners received a promotional video. View all Pacesetter winner promotional videos on the Kentucky SBDC Youtube page, www.youtube.com/kysmallbiz.

2019 Pacesetter honorees include:

Startup Business Pacesetters

Achievements Through Actions, Somerset, KY

Fedders Construction, Newport, KY

Nymbbl Systems, Lexington, KY

Paws Town, LLC, Owensboro, KY

Tree Of The Field, Paint Lick, KY

Traditional Business Pacesetters

American Metal Works, Paintsville, KY

freight house, Paducah, KY

J-Mack BBQ, LLC, Gilbertsville, KY

Running Soles, LLC, Elizabethtown, KY

Straight Cut Tree Services, LLC, Corbin, KY

U.S. SBA award winners include:

Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year: Paul Isenberg, Bowling Green, KY

Kentucky Financial Services Advocate of the Year – SBA Bank Lender: Barry Frazier, Mount Sterling, KY

Kentucky Financial Services Advocate of the Year – SBA Microlender: Regina Becknell, Paintsville, KY

Rural Small Business Person of the Year: Michelle Tapscott, Gilbertsville, KY

Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year: Will Rivera, Elizabethtown, KY

The Kentucky Small Business Development Center, part of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, is a network of 12 offices located throughout the state. The center helps existing and startup businesses succeed by offering high quality, in-depth, and hands-on services. Kentucky SBDC is a partner program with the U.S. Small Business Administration. For more information on Kentucky SBDC services visit <http://www.ksbdc.org/>.

-30-

Writer: Natalie Cunningham, 859-257-0104

UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, through its land-grant mission, reaches across the Commonwealth with teaching, research, and extension to enhance the lives of Kentuckians.