



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**SMALL BUSINESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA  
31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS DAY AND CONGRESSIONAL AWARDS RECEPTION HONORS  
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AND  
FEATURES DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS ON SMALL BUSINESS ISSUES**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 13, 2014)** – The Small Business Council of America (SBCA), a national nonprofit organization which represents the interests of more than 20,000 privately-held and family-owned organizations on Federal tax, employee benefit and health care matters, held its 31<sup>st</sup> annual Public Affairs Day and Congressional Awards Reception on May 7, 2014.

The Public Affairs Day, which took place at D.C.'s historic Willard Hotel, focused on a wide range of issues facing small business owners and featured presentations by a bi-partisan lineup of Congressional staff members and administrative agency officials.

Following the conclusion of Public Affairs Day, the SBCA presented the following awards during its Congressional Awards Reception on Capitol Hill:



**Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)** received the SBCA's highest award, the Outstanding Congressional Achievement Award, in recognition of her effective leadership and unwavering commitment to small businesses. This award has been given out less than five times in the last 30 years. As ranking member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Senator Collins has a deep understanding and concern for the challenges facing our retirement system and the critical role that small businesses play in securing America's retirement future. The SBCA applauds Senator Collins for her willingness to work across the aisle, take on the difficult issues and find common sense solutions to challenging problems.

"The thing that stands out most about the men and women who run small businesses is their optimism and 'can-do' spirit. They are passionate about their work, and their boundless energy is always directed at creating solutions and overcoming roadblocks," Senator Collins said in a speech after receiving the award. "Here in Washington, we need to feel the same passion about creating a vibrant, just, and prosperous America," she continued. "To achieve that, we need legislators who not only work hard, but work together." Senator Collins spoke about how growing up in a fifth-generation family business has had a profound impact on her appreciation of small business and her understanding of the issues they face today.

Presenting the award to Senator Collins were Bruce Johnson, SBCA member from Maine and the Chair of the SBCA, Paula Calimafde of Bethesda, Maryland.

**Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR)** received the SBCA's Special Congressional Achievement Award in recognition of his commitment to ensuring that small businesses have the opportunity to grow and continue to be the heart of America's economy. As a member of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, Senator Pryor has shown himself to be a strong voice for small business and willing to take on difficult issues. The SBCA thanks Senator Pryor for his dedication and commitment. The Senator remained in Arkansas this week to assist in coordinating the federal response to the tornado and thus, was unable to be at the Capitol to receive his Award.



**Congressman Richard Neal** received the Congressional Award in recognition of his knowledge of critical tax issues and his dedication to small businesses across the country. In his roles as a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures, Congressman Neal has demonstrated his ability and willingness to tackle the most complex of tax issues. In particular, the SBCA appreciates Congressman Neal's commitment to pursuing common sense tax reform while ensuring that America's tax laws are not unduly burdensome on small businesses. The SBCA applauds Congressman Neal's understanding of the particular tax issues that face most small business entities and the need for them to be treated fairly with future tax legislation.

Presenting the award to Congressman Neal was SBCA member Thomas Nichols who shared his experience of testifying before the Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures in 2013 where he witnessed Congressman Neal's impressive knowledge and insightfulness on the issues.

**Congressman Sam Graves (R-MO)** received the Congressional Award for his dedicated leadership on small business issues. As the current Chair of the House Committee on Small Business, Chairman Graves has helped to give voice and attention to many important small business issues. Chairman Graves has held many productive hearings on small business issues, engaging stakeholders like the SBCA, to educate members about the real world issues facing small businesses, including complicated but vital tax and employee benefit issues.



“The SBCA would like to thank Chairman Graves very much for his leadership on the House Small Business Committee and bringing his practical experience in running a family farm to the issues at hand.” said SBCA President, Alson Martin, who presented the award to Chairman Graves.



**Congresswoman Julia Brownley** received the Congressional Rising Star Award in recognition of the strong leadership that she has demonstrated in her first two years in Congress and her efforts on behalf of small businesses. The SBCA looks forward to working with Congresswoman Julia Brownley who has already distinguished herself so early on.

“I am honored to receive this award from the Small Business Council of America,” said Congresswoman Brownley. “Small businesses are the engines of our economy, critical to building a strong middle class, and essential to achieving the American Dream for tens of millions of Americans.”

“During her first term in Congress, Congresswoman Brownley has already demonstrated herself to be a strong leader who is committed to America's small businesses and not afraid to take on the difficult issues,” said SBCA's Chair, Paula Calimafde.

The SBCA's Humanitarian of the Year Award was presented to **Rev. Becca Stevens** of Nashville, Tennessee, in recognition of her work as the founder of Thistle Farms and Magdalene. Rev. Stevens founded Magdalene in 1997 as a residential program for women who have survived prostitution, trafficking, addiction and homelessness. Thereafter, Rev. Stevens founded Thistle Farms as the social enterprise run by the women of Magdalene. Thistle Farms employs the women to produce bath and body products to help them develop marketable career skills and to raise funds to support the Magdalene program.



The award was presented by SBCA CEO, Matt Kadish, and the 2013 SBCA Humanitarian of the Year award winner, Jordan Wagner, of Generosity Water. “Becca Stevens and Thistle Farms inspire us all. The work and housing provided by this successful small business and social enterprise has rescued many human trafficking victims from a return to the life of prostitution, addiction and crime on the streets,” said Matt Kadish, while presenting the award. “She is a hero and guide for all of us, showing us that no matter how hard some people's lives can be, love and hope can prevail.”

“It's great that there's increasing attention being paid to human trafficking, but there needs to be more focus on how to help these women once they've been liberated, said Becca Stevens. “Without housing and job training, they'll just turn back to the only life they've ever known, back on the streets to a life of exploitation and addiction.” Thanks to the generous contributions of the Chris Carrey Charitable Foundation, SBCA Director, Neil Carrey, the SBCA and SBCA's members, the SBCA was able to present to Rev. Stevens a significant contribution for Thistle Farms and Magdalene.



This year's SBCA Small Business Person of the Year Award was presented to **Susan Preston** of Seattle, WA, in recognition of her work as General Partner of CalCEF Clean Energy Angel Fund. She was also honored for her work in the advancement of angel investors and women entrepreneurs, for writing two major books on angel investing, and for her active role in advancing a bill which would provide an income tax credit for private equity investments. Ms. Preston and her company work to help small business ideas become a reality by providing promising entrepreneurs with early-stage investments.

“Susan Preston was a founder of the first all-women’s angel investment organization, and has been investing in, coaching, training and mentoring small business owners and non-profits for over two decades.” said SBCA Director, Brad Knox, said when recognizing Ms. Preston. **Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA)**, the Chair of the Senate Small Business Committee, and a successful businesswoman in Washington’s hi-tech industry, joined SBCA Vice President Gary Kushner in presenting the award to Ms. Preston.



The Connie Murdoch Award was presented to **Linda Parker**, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, in recognition of her outstanding dedication and efforts on behalf of the SBCA. Created in honor of one of the founders of the SBCA – highly acclaimed Delaware tax attorney, Connie Murdoch – this award is presented in his memory and in acknowledgement of his willingness to get involved in the democratic process in order to help small businesses. This is SBCA’s most important award given to a SBCA member. Ms. Parker was given this award by last year’s Connie Murdoch Award winner, George Buffington, of San Francisco, CA. Linda Parker is a successful small business person as well as someone dedicated to improving her own community. The SBCA has benefitted from her expertise and dedication to improving the laws affecting small businesses throughout the country. Her husband, Jim Parker, is also a Director of the SBCA and a well known attorney in Albuquerque.

The SBCA offers congratulations to all of its 2014 award winners.

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