



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SMALL BUSINESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA
30TH 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 8, 2013) – 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 30th annual Public Affairs Day and Congressional Awards Reception on May 8, 2013.

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 Congressional staff members from both sides of the aisle.

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



Senator Mary Landrieu received the SBCA's Special Congressional Appreciation Award in recognition of her continued understanding and commitment to small businesses. Senator Landrieu is also a previous recipient of SBCA's Congressional Award. As Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Senator Landrieu has a deep understanding and concern for the issues facing small businesses and their owners. The SBCA applauds Senator Landrieu for her willingness to take on the difficult issues and provide leadership on small business issues in the Senate.

Senator Rob Portman received the SBCA's Special Congressional Appreciation Award in recognition of his willingness to understand and tackle difficult and technical tax and employee benefit issues. Senator Portman demonstrated his commitment to small business tax issues during his tenure in the House of Representatives when he and then-Congressman (now also Senator) Ben Cardin led the Ways and Means Committee in shoring up the qualified retirement plan system so that it could work in the small



business context. The SBCA is hopeful that, as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Portman will once again be able to work across the aisle on vital tax and employee benefit issues.



Congressman Dave Camp received the Congressional Award for his commitment to comprehensive tax reform with a focus on making the tax code work for America's small businesses. As Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, Congressman Camp has helped to bring tax reform to the forefront of the legislative dialogue. In establishing eleven tax reform working groups within the Committee, Congressman Camp gave stakeholders like the SBCA the opportunity to share their opinions and expertise.

Congressman Ron Kind received the Congressional Award for his commitment to tackling the complex issues of pension and retirement as they relate to tax reform. As co-chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means Pension/Retirement Working Group, Congressman Kind has been committed to achieving common sense solutions to tax reforms that help small businesses grow and expand the benefits that they provide to their employees.

The SBCA's Humanitarian of the Year Award was presented to **Jordan Wagner** of Los Angeles, California, in recognition of his work as Executive Director of Generosity Water. Generosity Water is a non-profit organization that was founded by Jordan and his father, Phillip Wagner, in 2008. Generosity Water works to fund and oversee the establishment of clean and renewable water sources in developing countries. Mr. Wagner was introduced by SBCA Director and founder of the Humanitarian Award, Neil Carrey. "What makes Jordan special is that at such a young age, he has learned the importance of helping others in need" said Carrey. Thanks to the generous contributions of the Chris Carrey Charitable Foundation, the SBCA and SBCA's members, the SBCA was able to present to Mr. Wagner a significant contribution for Generosity Water.



This year's SBCA Small Business Person of the Year Award was presented to **Anthony Sblendorio** of Basking Ridge, New Jersey, in recognition of the remarkable success of his company Back to Nature Home and Garden as a leader in ecologically and economically sustainable landscape architecture. Anthony first founded Back to Nature in 1994 as a high-end, eco-friendly landscape architecture company. Since its founding, Back to Nature has grown into a multi-faceted company that is behind some of the most innovative projects in the state. Back to Nature was the lead site designer for the first LEED Gold certified building in New Jersey and recently opened a retail location offering organic plants and landscaping supplies and educational classes on a wide range of eco-friendly topics.

"What I find unique about Anthony is his steadfast desire



to educate society about the importance of ecology” wrote Governor David Patterson in his letter recommending Mr. Sblendorio for the award.



The Connie Murdoch award was presented to **George Buffington, Esq.** of San Francisco, California, in recognition of his outstanding dedication and efforts on behalf of the SBCA, particularly on the issue of 409A. 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. Mr. Buffington was acknowledged with this award

for having taken the lead on SBCA’s efforts to achieve legislation limiting the reach of 409A to large companies and alleviate the onerous penalties and excessive compliance costs that 409A bring to small businesses.

SBCA President, **Alson Martin, Esq.** of Overland Park, Kansas, one of the nation’s leading tax lawyers and author of the new book *Healthcare Reform Facts*, was awarded the SBCA Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Martin was recognized for his more than thirty years of commitment to the SBCA and his tireless efforts to represent and promote small business interests as President of the SBCA.



SBCA’s first CEO, **Peter Shanley** of Wilmington, Deleware, was also presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his more than thirty years of dedication and service to the SBCA. Mr. Shanley was acknowledged for exemplifying the ideals of serving and representing America’s small businesses with a knowledge and enthusiasm which he brought to the SBCA in his role as CEO. Mr. Shanley is also very active in trying to make healthcare work for small businesses at both the state and federal level.

The SBCA offers congratulations to all of its 2013 award winners.

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