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Owner of Lancaster-based Plastics Company Named SBA's Massachusetts Small Business Person of the Year

Craig A. Bovaird
President
Built-Rite Tool & Die, Inc. and the
Reliance Engineering Division
Lancaster, Massachusetts

Craig Bovaird, president of Lancaster-based Built-Rite Tool & Die, Inc. and the Reliance Engineering Division has been named the SBA's 2007 Massachusetts Small Business Person of the Year.



Built-Rite designs parts for molding, mold design, prototype and production tooling, and pre-production prototyping. The company engages in full-scale manufacturing of precision thermoplastic and thermoset plastic parts mainly for the aerospace, medical, defense and high-tech industries. Building on this core expertise, Reliance Engineering provides contract manufacturing services for original equipment manufacturers. This service includes adherence to rigid specifications and build-to-print assembly of low to moderate volume products.

Bovaird's path to success includes a long-term counseling relationship with John Rainey, senior management counselor at the Clark University Small Business Development Center. Rainey nominated Bovaird for this award. Initially, Rainey helped Bovaird with the organizational and financial aspects of the business, and took him through a full-blown business plan. Later Rainey helped with the acquisition of another company and the purchase of a building. In his nomination letter, Rainey stated, "the most impressive part of building this company is that management did it when the plastic molding industry was in a major decline and many plastics' companies were closing their doors." Built Rite is to be commended for increasing revenues and creating manufacturing jobs in Massachusetts.

TD Banknorth's Anne Cerami Named SBA's 2007 Massachusetts & New England Financial Service Champion

Ms. Cerami began her banking career in 1989 in the commercial lending field, working with a number of Massachusetts financial institutions and earning her Executive MBA at Suffolk University along the way.

She joined TD Banknorth in 2002 and was immediately tasked with lifting the bank's SBA standing from among those at the bottom of SBA's annual bank ranking to #3. She focused on SBA's simplified program - SBA*Express*, developed a process that worked and got the program up and running within one month after having been given the assignment. On September 30, 2004, SBA's year end, TD Banknorth had achieved its goal of being SBA's #3 lender in Massachusetts.



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During her career at TD Banknorth, Ms. Cerami has negotiated Referral Agreements with technical service providers throughout the bank's footprint as part of the launch of the SBA Community Express program. This program specifically targets a number of under-served areas and requires business owners to obtain technical assistance as a condition of the loan to help reduce the number of start-up businesses that fail.

She is also a dedicated member of her community, having served on ACCION, USA's Advisory Board for many years. ACCION is an organization that is committed to bringing affordable microfinance solutions to small business owners who may not yet be able to qualify for bank financing. As a volunteer with Lawrence Community Works, she has taught business plan writing classes to women in the IDA program that are considering becoming business owners.

Ms. Cerami has been rewarded for her extraordinary efforts by being named senior vice president and manager of agency guaranty programs at TD Banknorth. She and her staff, located in three states, have the responsibility of insuring compliance with state and federal guaranty programs spanning the bank's entire footprint in New England and the Mid-Atlantic regions.

Eddie's Wheels for Pets, Inc. Wins 2007 Massachusetts & New England Small Business Exporter Award

Leslie and Ed Grinnell, owners
Eddie's Wheels for Pets, Inc.
Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

Eddie's Wheels for Pets, Inc., founded in 1998, makes custom mobility carts for disabled dogs, cats, and other companion animals, restoring quality of life for disabled animals, and providing the means for them to rehabilitate from neurological or orthopedic injuries and diseases.

Ed and Leslie Grinnell created the business when their dog lost the use of her rear legs due to a slipped disc. Dissatisfied with the commercial products available at the time, and with

35 years of experience as an industrial mechanic, electrician and mechanical designer, Ed built her a wheelchair that would restore her to a decent quality of life. Leslie brought her artistic skills to the business after having been a studio potter for 25 years.



Ed & Leslie Grinnell with Daisy (left) and Sweet Pea

P. Ann Pieroway, program director of the Western Massachusetts office of the Massachusetts Export Center, a SBA resource partner, began working with Eddie's Wheels in 2001. She developed an international marketing plan, assisted in locating foreign markets, identified both domestic and international competition and has helped them identify potential agents and veterinarians in Canada, the UK and Ireland. Ms. Pieroway nominated the Grinnells for this award. Eddie's Wheels has sent carts all over the world including: Japan, Australia, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Israel, Greenland, Turkey, Ecuador, and Europe. Eddie still designs every cart, and their well-trained experienced crew still builds each cart by hand with the dog's name on it.

Save the Date – Presentation of SBA Small Business Week 2007 Awards

The SBA awards will be presented at a Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce small business day event which will include morning workshops and a luncheon. The event will take place at the Riverwalk Conference Center, 350 Merrimack Street, Lawrence, MA on Friday, May 11, 2007.

For more information about the day's events, please call Merrimack Valley Chamber President Joe Bevilacqua @978-686-0900.

SBA Encourages Lenders to Offer Incentives to Veterans

SBA is offering our participating lenders the opportunity to show appreciation to our Armed Forces veterans through special veterans' incentives on SBA loans. This initiative has met with great success in other SBA offices. Lenders are electing to either provide **lower interest rates or waive repayment of part or the entire SBA guaranty fee on loans to veterans.** We encourage all lenders to participate in this special outreach initiative to veterans. Please consider what you can do to help and respond with the veterans' incentives your lending institution is willing to provide, the length of time you will offer these incentives, and a bank contact for this initiative. We will issue a press release, list participating lenders on our website, and provide the list of lenders at all of our veteran outreach events.

Please contact Anne Rice Hunt, lead lender relations specialist in the Boston office, at 617-565-5577 or Bob Nelson, branch manager at our Springfield office, at 413-785-0484 with your response. Please respond by March 23, 2007 in order to be included in the press release. Let's give our vets a big "Thank You" for their sacrifices!

SBA's READY – SET – GO Community Workshops

Learn about SBA's programs & services.

4/17: Scibelli Enterprise Center, Springfield, 9 – 10:30 a.m. IN SPANISH. Call 413-785-0268 to register.

4/18: CareerWorks, Brockton, 2 – 4 p.m. Call 508-513-3400.

4/19: Plymouth Career Center, 10 a.m. – 12 noon. Call 508-732-5399 to register.

4/24: O'Neill Federal Building, Boston, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Contact Anna Outerbridge at 617-565-8510.

4/26: Scibelli Enterprise Center, Springfield

Two Day Basic CEO Workshop in Boston

SBA has partnered with Unlimited Services Systems Management and Consultants (USSMC), a small business based in Largo, MD, to present a "Basic CEO/Executive Development" workshop on April 10 and April 11, 2007. The training will highlight:

- Perfecting the business and strategic plan;
- Marketing and doing business with the federal government;
- Learning the procurement process and how to write winning proposals;
- Cash flow management;
- Points of contact in contracts

Firms that are eligible for this training include: HUBZone firms, 8(a)-certified firms in the developmental stage of the 8(a) program, firms that operate in areas of high unemployment or low income, or firms owned by low-income individuals.

Online registration at www.ussmc.com. Call 617-565-8510 for more information.

SBA 101 Offered in Boston & Springfield in April

The SBA will offer the next training for new lenders and/or for lenders looking to refresh their SBA basic lending skills and/or learn more about centralization of SBA loans on April 4, 2007, from 1 – 4 p.m. at the O'Neill Federal Building in Boston and on April 25, 2007, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Scibelli Enterprise Center in Springfield

SBA 101

- SBA loan underwriting criteria
- Basic eligibility criteria
- Distinctions concerning the different loan programs
- Loan Closings
- SBA reporting requirements
- Centralization process

Contact Christine Carter at christine.carter@sba.gov or 617-565-5560 to register.

SBA Website Provides Multilingual Information

There is a flyer on the SBA website that provides a basic overview of the SBA and the services offered called "An Introduction to the Small Business Administration" that is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, French, Portuguese, Japanese, Russian and Arabic.

The information is of a very general nature on SBA's four programmatic functions: access to capital, entrepreneurial development, government contracting and advocacy. The flyers can be found at: www.sba.gov/aboutsba/overview/index.html.

Mass Export Center Organizes International Seafood Buyers' Tour of New Bedford

Seafood buyers from all corners of the world descended upon New Bedford on March 13, 2007 to meet with some of the area's leading seafood companies.

Over 20 seafood buyers, mainly from Europe and Asia, visited the Whaling City Seafood Auction and four New Bedford seafood companies before attending a luncheon at the New Bedford Whaling Museum featuring New Bedford Mayor Scott W. Lang.

The visiting delegation also included members of the European seafood press and foreign trade representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The international visitors were in Massachusetts for the 2007 International Boston Seafood Show. Food Export USA, a non-profit export promotion organization, sponsored the visit of the foreign buyers specifically to promote northeastern U.S. seafood exports.

The tour represented the third annual visit of international seafood buyers to the New Bedford area organized by the Massachusetts Export Center, part of the state's Small Business Development Center Network. The Export Center provides a broad range of services to Massachusetts exporters and operates a New Bedford office.

Following the seafood company visits, a luncheon was held in honor of the visiting delegation at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The luncheon was organized and sponsored by the International Trade Assistance Center and the City of New Bedford's Office of Economic Development.

Holyoke Credit Union Named SBA Participating Lender

Holyoke Credit Union was granted SBA lender status in February 2007. Holyoke Credit Union President, Michael Murphy, commented on the SBA approval. "We created our *Small Business Banking* package specifically for our members who are also small business owners. The majority of these businesses are ideal candidates for the kind of loan assistance the SBA provides," said Murphy. He added, "we think this is going to be a great resource for the small businesses of our community."

The Holyoke Credit Union has been serving the financial needs of its members for 96 years. From its inception as a simple savings and loan resource for a small group of Holyoke parishioners and municipal employees, the HCU has grown into a sophisticated financial institution bringing to its members a full range of personal and commercial banking products, electronic banking, and an extensive portfolio of home mortgage products. The Holyoke Credit Union accepts members who live or work in Hampden or Hampshire Counties.

Small Firm Establishment Births Propel State Economies

Small firm establishment births are the most important factor propelling growth in gross state product, state personal income, and total state employment. These findings are contained in a study released by the Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Small Business and State Growth: An Econometric Investigation, written by Donald Bruce, John Deskins, Brian Hill, and Jonathan Rork, with funding from the Office of Advocacy, uses newly available U.S. Census Bureau data to analyze the impact of small firm establishment births and closures on state economies. The data became available through a program partially funded by the Office of Advocacy.

The study used data covering the years 1988 to 2002 and examined a wide variety of factors influencing state economic growth. After controlling for many determinants of growth, the authors conclude that in order to increase gross state product, state personal income, and total state employment, "the most fruitful policy option available to state governments is to establish and maintain a fertile environment for new establishment formations."

For more information and a complete copy of the report, visit the Office of Advocacy website at www.sba.gov/advo.

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