

SUCCESS STORY

Portland District Office

The SBA Portland District Office Small Business Person of the Year Susan Webb, President, Glass Alchemy, Ltd. The Premier Manufacturer of Borosilicate Art Glass



Henry Grimmert & Susan Webb

Small Business Administration Oregon District Director, Harry DeWolf, announces that Susan Webb, President of Glass Alchemy, Ltd., is the SBA 2008 Small Business Person of the Year for the state of Oregon. Awards will also be given to a family-owned business, to small business Champions, and an excellence and innovation award will be given to a small business development center. "For more than 40 years, SBA has recognized outstanding small business owners for their contributions to Oregon's economy and for their personal achievements during small business week. I

am proud to honor our top Oregon entrepreneurs and our true champions of small business whose tireless efforts have provided tangible and significant support to small businesses and their communities," said SBA District Director, Harry DeWolf. The Awards will be presented at the Oregon SBA's Small Business Week Awards Gala May 22, 2008, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Portland, Oregon.

Susan Webb isn't the typical president of a manufacturing company. Most of her career was spent as an artist and a sculptor until eight years ago when she and her husband, Henry Grimmert, started their own business. Both had worked with glass as an art medium and they saw a need to expand the range of colors available in borosilicate glass, which is more durable and resistant to heat than the "soft" glass blown by artists, and is commonly found in the home today in the form of coffee pots and oven cookware. Webb and Grimmert created most of the colors used in borosilicate today.

Since the inception of Glass Alchemy, Ltd. (the premier manufacturer of colored borosilicate art glass), Webb and her husband have been manufacturing glass products in a 10,000 square foot facility. With an increase of employees from four to seventeen over the past eight years, and a continued rise in glass production volume, the company outgrew its current facility. With the help of an SBA 7(a) loan from West Coast Bank, the company will relocate to a larger space of approximately 20,000 square feet to accommodate its growth.

The company originally manufactured glass for artists in Oregon; however, with the additional 200 colors researched and created by Grimmert, the company now sells its glass both in the United States and abroad. The company has maintained steady growth in net worth. Today, Susan Webb, her husband and seventeen employees manufacture the raw materials used by artists in the U.S. and internationally to make beads and jewelry, decorative fireplaces, outdoor fountains, artistic goblets and teapots.