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CHAMBER ANNOUNCES 2019 SMALL BUSINESS AWARD WINNERS

Local businesses recognized for customer service, innovation, community impact, marketing, and service to the military community

SAN DIEGO (May 23, 2019) – From educating San Diegans about the environment to helping service members and their families start a business, six local small businesses have earned awards for their outstanding work in our region. The San Diego Regional Chamber presented the honors at the 2019 Small Business Awards held today.

“Small businesses are doing big things in communities across San Diego and we celebrate the important role they play as drivers of our economy,” said Jerry Sanders, President and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber. “The majority of our Chamber membership is small businesses and we are committed to providing programs and resources that help them grow and thrive.”

Small businesses - those with fewer than 50 employees - employ half of San Diego’s workforce and account for more than 90 percent of businesses in San Diego County. Small businesses are an important economic generator for the region and a foundation for our region’s business community. The Chamber is dedicated to advocating for a business climate that is supportive and empowering of small businesses.

“Today we recognized six outstanding local businesses that are really making a difference in San Diego,” Sanders said. “The winners and applicants highlight the diversity of the county’s vibrant small business community. Their impact and success is what makes our region a great place to do business.”

This year’s Small Business Awards were presented to an audience of 200 attendees at the Shiley Special Event Center at the San Diego Central Library. The 2019 Small Business Awards winners are:

Walden Family Services & The Water Conservation Garden – Tie as winners of the **Making a Difference** award for organizations dedicated to helping others and making a positive impact.

- Walden Family Services is a nationally-recognized foster care, adoption, and youth services agency providing programs that lay a new foundation for lives impacted by traumatic experiences and redirect young lives from pain to prosperity and happiness.
- The Water Conservation Garden inspires positive change in the living environment by providing a safe, natural environment to explore and discover plants and animals with hands-on exhibits that foster a direct connection to the environment, creating informed and engaged children and adults.

UPS Store on Park Blvd – Winner of the **Customers First** award for providing exemplary customer service.

- The UPS Store on Park Blvd is a family-run business dedicated to going the extra mile for their customers and serving as a resource for community members. Their customer-centric culture has earned them many loyal and repeat customers, business partnerships, and extensive positive reviews.

Cravory Cookies – Winner of the **Innovation Leader** award for an organization that has shaken things up in its industry with creative forward-thinking and innovation.

- Cravory Cookies started in 2009 as a farmer’s market stand and has grown to three brick-and-mortar locations across the county. The company’s creative cookies are revolutionizing the sweet treat industry with more than 4,000 unique flavors.

Knockaround Sunglasses – Winner of the **Marketing Magic** award for a creative marketing or promotion campaign that led to measurable success.

- Knockaround is the original, affordable sunglasses company founded in San Diego. To help create a name for themselves in an industry dominated by big brands, Knockaround partnered with the rock band Weezer to create a limited edition pair of sunglasses in celebration of the band’s new album. All 1,000 pairs of glasses sold out in just five hours.

The Rosie Network – Winner of the **Thank You For Your Service** award for work to benefit San Diego’s veteran, active duty, and service member communities.

- The Rosie Network strengthens military families through the most fundamental of American activities: starting and growing a businesses. Using a personalized approach, The Rosie Network provides no-cost training, resources, and mentorship to help service members and their families gain financial success and stability.

All award nominations were evaluated by a panel of former award winners who reviewed applications based on criteria for each award category. Finalists were then scored based on how well they met the award category criteria by pitching their company to the Chamber’s Small Business Roundtable. Winners were selected based on the highest score in each category.

For highlights from the Small Business Awards search the hashtag #SDSmallBiz on social media.

About the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

The San Diego Regional Chamber is the hub for connections and collaboration among the regional business community, and uses that clout to advocate for public policies and candidates that support economic growth and

the creation of jobs for all businesses. As the largest local Chamber on the West Coast, representing approximately 2,500 businesses and an estimated 300,000 jobs, the San Diego Regional Chamber is fighting to make San Diego the most business-friendly region in California. For more information, please visit SDChamber.org or call 619-544-1300.

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