

The Greater Knoxville SCORE Chapter Recognizes Clients and Journalist of the Year

In recognition of the small business community's contribution to the American economy and society, the President of the United States designates one week each year as National Small Business Week. This year it is May 17-23. During that week, Greater Knoxville SCORE Chapter, a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting small business owners start and expand their businesses, presents awards honoring the area's entrepreneurs and small business champions.

Signs 'N Such Named Client of the Year

The Greater Knoxville SCORE Chapter has named Signs-N-Such as its Client of the Year. Connie Hutchison, owner of Signs-N-Such, a sign fabrication company, has built her business from a startup five years ago into a profitable operation with five employees. She and her staff have helped hundreds of Knoxville area customers with their signage needs. Hutchison will be honored at a reception on May 20th at 10 AM at Rothchild's Conference Center.

Hutchison came to the Greater Knoxville SCORE Chapter office five years ago. She partnered with veteran counselor Chuck Christiansen to work on business strategy and implementation in the areas of pricing, cost of goods, market demand, business plan creating, and funding. Hutchison has remained a client of Christiansen's through her growth the past five years.

Mr. Walter Williams, Greater Knoxville area SCORE Chapter Chair says, "Hutchison had a clear vision of how she could make an impact on the local economy when she first came to us." Williams adds, "SCORE counselor Chuck Christiansen helped her do a great deal of research to start the business, an

Several happy customers provided testimonials about Signs-N-Such. Brian Brown of Capital Commercial Real Estate says "I wanted to let you know how pleased we have been with the service and professionalism of Signs-N-Such. We were lucky enough to find them, and they have been responsible for replacing all of our signs on our available properties. They also install and remove our signs for us. Committed to customer service, Signs-N-Such always delivers on time. We recommend their services to each tenant so that they can be impressed with them as we have been."

Hutchison says Christiansen's assistance was invaluable to the success of her business, and his attitude gave her confidence about her ability to succeed.

Southern Stars Symphonic Brass Named Client of the Year Runner Up

Dwight Wages, founder of Southern Stars Symphonic Brass, a non-profit paid professional 30 piece brass band, has built his business from a startup last year into a successful operation averaging 200-300 audience members per performance. Wages will be honored at a reception on May 20th at 10AM at Rothchild's Conference Center.

Wages first attended a SCORE workshop held by counselors Dana Peterka and Don Griffin at Roane State Community College. He has since continued to partner with SCORE mentors to work on small business formation strategy, marketing strategy, and financial projections, and to connect with local area resources.

Several happy audience members, which have rated the group an average of 9.8 out of 10 in surveys, provided testimonials.

- Longtime Crossville native, Brenda Hinch said, "I've been to several of their concerts and they are just wonderful. You can't go to Knoxville or Nashville and hear anything better than this symphonic brass group. We are blessed to have them in our midst."
- Cumberland County Mayor, Brock Hill commented, "My family and I agreed that our community is blessed to have such talent assembled and giving concerts here. They play a variety of

selections, performed with great energy and enthusiasm. We are looking forward to their next concert."

Carly Harrington Named Journalist of the Year

The Small Business Journalist of the Year award is presented to a television, radio, electronic, or print medium journalist whose work has contributed to the public understanding of the importance of small business contributions to the economy. Carly Harrington, journalist for the Knoxville News Sentinel was named recipient of this award for 2009.

Her feature stories about local businesses and industries have appeared in the News Sentinel since 2004. Harrington previously worked as a reporter for The Tennessean in Nashville. She is a 1998 graduate of the University of Tennessee, where she was managing editor of the school paper, The Beacon. Harrington lives in West Knoxville with her husband, Trey, and children Kyra, 5, and Isaac, 2.

Since 1964, SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" has assisted more than 8 million aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners through counseling and business workshops. More than 10,500 volunteer business counselors in 389 chapters serve their communities through entrepreneurial education dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses.

For more information about starting or operating a small business, call 865-692-0716 or visit the Greater Knoxville SCORE Chapter at www.scoreknox.org.