

In Business LAS VEGAS



Rob Dorinson, CEO of Evergreen Recycling, accepts the Small Business Person of the Year award for Nevada at the In Business Las Vegas 2009 Small Business Awards luncheon at the Orleans on May 7.

By [Stephanie Tavares](#), In Business reporter
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The Small Business Administration honored the best in Nevada's small businesses at its annual luncheon May 7 at the Orleans.

The event, sponsored by In Business Las Vegas, sought to recognize strong businesses and their supporters at one of the most trying times for Nevada's business owners.

"We came together today amid the most challenging environment we've experienced in our business community," In Business Las Vegas Group Publisher Bruce Spotleson said. "It's impacted every industry in the state."

Small businesses employ 45 percent of the state's private workforce. The SBA office in Nevada is tasked with supporting those businesses through loan and business coaching programs designed to make small businesses stronger.

The top award this year, the Small Business Person of the Year, went to Evergreen Recycling CEO Rob Dorinson, who started the business as a tiny recycling outfit near North Las Vegas in 1997. In the ensuing years he has built it into the most visible small recycling company in the valley. Dorinson thanked the SBA for the recognition and In Business for

creating a forum for so many small-business people to come together. "In these tough economic times we've got to stick together," he said. "We've got to meet, got to network."

The company recently won another award from the federal government. The Environmental Protection Agency gave Evergreen one of its environmental awards at its annual ceremony in San Francisco. The EPA award acknowledges commitment and significant contributions to the environment in California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, the Pacific islands and tribal lands.

Dorinson said it has been his company's mission to not only make money, but to make Las Vegas a better place.

"If Evergreen helped to inspire somebody in some small way to help the environment, that means they care about their community," Dorinson said. "That would be a tremendous legacy."

The awards luncheon also unveiled the annual Michael Graham Entrepreneurial Spirit Award, which was created in honor of former UNLV Small Business Development Center Director Michael Graham. It will be given annually to a businessperson who shows entrepreneurial spirit and supports small business and the community.

The first recipient, Southern Nevada Courier Service President Horatio Lopez was a close friend of the late Graham.

The SBA also recognized John Holliday of Aloha Medicinals as the Small Business Exporter of the Year. Aloha Medicinals is a health supplements company specializing in a rare antiviral mushroom. The company left California for Nevada a few years ago, a change of scenery that Holliday described as "the best thing we ever did."

Other SBA awards are: Microenterprise Person of the Year, Lisa McQuerrey of Professional Writing Services; Financial Services Champion of the Year for Nevada and Region 9, Mary Kerner of Rural Nevada Development Corp.; Home Based Business Champion of the Year, Shawn D. Lane of Cheyenne Marketing; Minority Small Business Champion of the Year, Janis Stevenson of Nevada Small Business Development Center; and Women in Business Champion of the Year, former Miss Nevada Carrie Henderson of the BEST Agency.

The Small Business Journalist of the Year went to Connie Brennan, CEO of the Nevada Business Journal.

Several banks that provide SBA loans were also recognized for their contributions with the Economic Independence Awards: Nevada State Development Corp. and U.S. Bank, Platinum Level; Mortgage Capital Development Corp. and Wells Fargo Bank, Gold Level; Nevada State Bank, and Capitol Bankcorp Limited.

For more information on the SBA Awards or on small business aid programs, log on to www.sba.gov.

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