

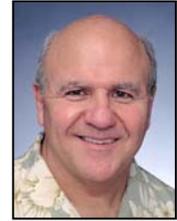
## SMALL BUSINESS JOURNALISTS OF THE YEAR



**Cathy S. Cruz**  
Pacific Basin  
Communications  
State of Hawaii

**Cathy S. Cruz** has been a major contributing journalist for Hawaii Business since relocating to Hawaii. Her work celebrates the success of local small businesses and discusses the challenges that were met which not only inspire entrepreneurs but provide valuable lessons for others. With Pacific Basin, Ms. Cruz launched inserts like “SB Hawaii” to showcase small businesses and the “Aid Stations”, a resource promoting small business programs and services for the U.S. Small Business Administration, Small Business Hawaii, and the Hawaii Small Business Development Center Network. After 9-11, Cruz seized the opportunity to look at how small businesses were affected in Hawaii, producing articles about successful small businesses – how they started, their struggles with cash flow, the road to success and also other more obscure issues. Her work made her a finalist in the 2003 Hawaii Society of Professional Journalist Awards. She serves as an advisor to the Young Business Roundtable and speaks at University of Hawaii and Sacred Hearts Academy in their Women in Leadership series. Cruz was named SBA’s 2000 Small Business Journalist for Guam/Saipan. She is now editor of the Downtown Planet. *Nominated by: Steven Kaneko, Bank of Hawaii.*

Returning to Hawaii to take the helm of two Emmis Communications television stations, **Rick Blangiardi** quickly put his 13 years of experience in media and communications to work to reposition KHON 2 and KGMB 9 as leaders in the local news. He focused on the needs of the community and its critical small business sector. Blangiardi believes that small business is the economic lifeline of any community. Format changes initiated by Blangiardi at the stations have served to increase public awareness and understanding of the role of small businesses in the community. In a partnership with Pacific Business News, KHON 2 features news and commentary on small business activity with reporter Howard Dicus five days a week. The show also includes many segments on small business, their accomplishments, innovations, and challenges. Through marketing research, Blangiardi has also developed new models to better serve the advertising needs of Hawaii’s small businesses and capture new clients who may not have considered standard television advertising as an affordable option. His efforts are designed to improve the performance of the stations and to promote, support and stimulate the economy at the same time. Blangiardi also volunteers his expertise with many community and charitable organizations including the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii. *Nominated by: Ann Takiguchi, Central Pacific Bank.*



**Rick Blangiardi**  
Emmis Communications  
City & County of Honolulu



**Jim Wilson**  
Hawaii Tribune Herald  
County of Hawaii

**Jim Wilson** retired as the Publisher of the Hawaii Tribune Herald in 2003, but his influence on small business and the local economy will be felt for many more years. Through his thirty year career with the Tribune Herald, Wilson has been a strong supporter of economic development on the Big Island. As a small business advocate, he reported on the contributions of small business on the island’s and State’s economies. His pro-business stance on issues such as the timber industry, irradiation, the cruise ships, the observatories, and the Pohakuloa Training Area conveyed his recognition of the positive impacts these endeavors could produce. Wilson spearheaded several initiatives that aided the local business community. He initiated the weekly Business Section and his “Publisher’s Corner” which appeared each Monday with a focus on island wide issues. He also assisted with training and preparing many smaller local firms for competition with the “big box” retailers. His business leadership has been demonstrated through his work with both the Hawaii Island Chamber and the Japanese Chamber as well as several other organizations. *Nominated by: Art Taniguchi, Bank of Hawaii.*