



News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LEWISTOWN BUSINESSMAN NAMED SBA'S FIRST RUNNER-UP SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

HELENA, MT – Michelle Johnston, District Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Montana District Office, announced today the winners of the annual Montana Small Business Week Awards. Jack Morgenstern of Century Companies, Inc. in Lewistown was named the First Runner-up Montana Small Business Person of the Year and will be honored, along with a cast of outstanding business owners and advocates at SBA's annual Small Business Week Awards luncheon at Missoula's Doubletree Inn on May 7th.

Starting with a small personal loan of \$3,000, seven trades people and an old, nearly worn out spread of paving equipment, Jack Morgenstern assembled a highly mobile, top-quality business that went to work in 1976 as Century Paving, Inc.

Twenty-eight years later, Century Companies, Inc. has become one of the most successful and unique rural-market paving and infrastructure companies of its kind in Montana and the Northwest. Century, as it is commonly known, has grown to employ more than 125 full-time employees. The business has redefined the rural paving industry in Montana and the Wyoming Basin, and amassed an amazing fleet of equipment and resources. At the same time, the company has developed an enviable financial position that allows it to provide outstanding wages and benefits to its employees, answer the many calls for philanthropic assistance, and deliver a solid return on investment for its owners.

Among the most prominent achievements of Jack Morgenstern and his company has been the development of hundreds of trusting relationships with the leaders of public and private businesses and public entities throughout Montana and the industry. These relationships have resulted in Morgenstern becoming known as one of the state's business statesmen. He is looked to for leadership and guidance on a number of issues critical to the business economy of the region and state. He is a key figure in the leadership of the Montana State Fund, has been asked by the State and private industry groups to lead public policy negotiations on several issues related to construction in Montana, is on numerous boards of directors of both public and private organizations, and is recognized as one of the "deans of the industry" by the state's educators and industry leaders.

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First Runner-up

Jack Morgenstern was nominated by Senator Conrad Burns. Other award winners being honored include: William Woody of Nightingale Nursing Services, Inc. of Missoula – Montana Small Business Person of the Year; Jennifer Keck of Big Sky Travel Nurses, Inc. in Conrad – Woman owned Business of the Year; Frederick “Rick” Larson of Employee Benefit management Services, Inc. – Entrepreneurial Success Award; Ryan Deskins of R&R Pressure Washing of East Helena – SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year; Kim Wild of TowHaul Corporation, dba Smith Equipment USA of Belgrade – National Small Business Exporter of the Year; Mandi Luce-Heinle and Sarah Ann Hamlen of Innovative Marketing Solutions, LLC of Hathaway – Main Street Business of the Year; Jerry Sullivan of Flint Creek Valley Bank in Philipsburg – Financial Services Advocate of the Year; Sheryle Shandy of Billings Food Bank & Montana Harvest Kitchens/Montana Harvest Gift Boutique in Billings – Home-Based Business Advocate of the Year; Flathead Business Journal of Kalispell – Small Business Journalist of the Year; Craig Smith of Fort Peck Community College in Poplar – Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year; Joe Fletcher of the Great Falls Job Service Workforce Center – Veteran Small Business Advocate of the Year; and Joy Ott of Wells Fargo Bank Montana, N.A. in Billings – Women in Business Advocate of the Year.

For more information on SBA programs and services, contact the Montana SBA District office at (406) 441-1081 or log onto www.sba.gov/mt.

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