



U.S. Small Business Administration

SANTA ANA DISTRICT OFFICE

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# News Release

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## **Greg Christy and Julie Christy Named 2017 Small Business Persons of the Year by U.S. Small Business Administration**

*Award-winning technical direction and design coordination company has helped produce events around the world; growth has been aided by SBA 504 loan*

**SANTA ANA, Calif.** - The U.S. Small Business Administration, Santa Ana District Office has selected Gregory Christy and Julie Christy, Co-Founders of Brite Ideas By Greg Christy, Inc., to be recognized as the 2017 Small Business Person of the Year. Gregory and Julie, who founded the award winning technical production company in 1989, were nominated for the award by Janine Navarro-Poblete of Capital Bank in San Juan Capistrano, CA. Gregory is the firm's CEO, while Julie serves as its CFO.

Gregory Christy, a Theatrical Lighting Design graduate of California State University, Fullerton, launched the company in Irvine almost 30 years ago. The company's offices and warehouse, currently located in Rancho Santa Margarita, were purchased in 2014 with an SBA 504 loan funded by Capital Bank and Enterprise Funding Corporation. With Julie running the business end of things, Gregory is free to unleash his creativity, represent the company publicly, and be the firm's top salesman.

Brite Ideas' production team travels to destinations and venues across the globe throughout the year. The company's scope of services include technical direction and design coordination; concept and idea development; theatrical and broadcast quality lighting, audio, and staging; show direction, and much more. Christy's design credits are all encompassing including: NFL Super Bowls for over fifteen years; broadcast lighting for the dedication ceremony of the Nixon Presidential Library; grand opening of the Venetian Resort in Las Vegas; and technical director for Maroon 5, Sir Elton John, and the Black Eyed Peas.

Brite Ideas has earned numerous awards for its projects, one of which was for the opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The event included flying stages with live performers, 70,000 lbs. of chandeliers flying over guest's heads, and one of the largest Kabuki drops ever attempted.

Christy didn't set out to be an entrepreneur in the beginning. After the sound company he worked for went out of business, he found himself out of a job and said to his wife, "Let's just go out and do it." And so, Brite Ideas was born. The firm's first major event-lighting request was from the Irvine Company, who asked if Christy could light a tent. He responded that he could, even though he had never lit a tent before.

Following the September 11th attacks, Brite Ideas weathered the decrease in and cancellation of events and conferences. The firm's employees voted to opt out of possible overtime earned and to reduce overhead spending. Slowly, the phone started ringing again with requests for bids from clients throughout the world. Gregory and Julie's proudest achievement is giving Brite Ideas' 32 employees an exciting and fulfilling job.

The Christy's will be recognized and receive their award as the 2017 Small Business Persons of the Year at the local Small Business Week Awards program which will be held Friday, June 9, 2017 from 10:30 a.m. until approximately 2:00 p.m. at the Disneyland Hotel Grand Ballroom. The event is being hosted by the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. For more information on the event or to register, email [events@ochcc.com](mailto:events@ochcc.com) or call 714.953.4289.

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### **About Small Business Week**

Every year since 1963, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation announcing National Small Business Week, which recognizes the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners. More than half of Americans either own or work for a small business, and they create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year. As part of National Small Business Week, the agency takes the opportunity to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners and others at local events around the country. Every day, these individuals are working to grow small businesses, create 21st century jobs, drive innovation, and increase America's global competitiveness. For more information, please visit [www.sba.gov/nsbw/nsbw](http://www.sba.gov/nsbw/nsbw) .