



U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
BALTIMORE DISTRICT OFFICE
City Crescent Bldg., 6th Floor
10 S. Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

2016 Maryland Small Business Week Awards Program Nomination Guidelines

Any individual or organization dedicated to the support of the small business community in the United States may submit nominations for Small Business Person of the Year, Champion Awards and special Small Business Week awards.

Small Business Persons of the Year, Champion Awards and special award winners will be selected at the state level. Nomination packages for each state Small Business Person award winner will be sent to the SBA Office of Advisory Councils for review. The National Small Business Person of the Year will be selected by the SBA Administrator, based on the recommendation of the SBA's Small Business Week panel of judges.

All nominations are due in the U.S. Small Business Administration's Baltimore District Office by **3pm EST on Monday, January 11, 2016**. It is anticipated that winners will be announced in late March. Awards will be presented at the **32nd Annual Maryland Small Business Week Awards Luncheon on Friday, April 29, 2016** at Martin's West, Woodlawn, Md.

For questions or additional information, contact Rachel Howard by phone at (410) 244-3337 or by email at rachel.howard@sba.gov.

2016 Award Categories

- * **Small Business Person** (*Advances to National Competition*)
 - * Entrepreneurial Success
 - * Financial Services Champion
 - * Home-Based Business Champion
 - * Family-Owned Business
 - * Minority Small Business Champion
 - * Small Business Exporter (*Advances to National Competition*)
 - * Accountant Advocate
 - * Veteran Small Business Champion
 - * Women in Business Champion
 - * Young Entrepreneur
 - * Attorney Advocate
 - * Insurance Advocate

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

All nominees for Small Business Week awards must be residents of and employed in the United States or its territories and will be subject to background checks. Small businesses owned and operated by nominees must comply with federal civil rights laws. The SBA size standards apply in defining a small business as small. Individuals may not be nominated for more than one award category. *The Agency reserves the right, in its sole reasonable discretion, to remove a nominee from the selection process.*

MD Small Business Person of the Year Award

Any individual who owns and operates or who bears principal responsibility for operating a small business may be nominated. Partners who jointly own and operate a small business may be nominated as a “team”, so long as the number of individuals in the team nomination does not exceed four. Business must qualify as “small” according to the applicable SBA size standards. Individuals who have received the small business person award at the state level within the past five years are not eligible. While receipt of SBA assistance is not required, it is preferred.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Staying power—a substantiated history as an established business; including:
 - Number of years in business;
 - Sustained growth including, but not limited to expansion, addition of territories, growth in square footage occupied or web traffic.
2. Growth in the number of employees—a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market.
 - Sustained over a minimum of three years
 - Increases over the three years must be in excess of growth in Gross National Product
3. Increase in sales, net profit and net worth for calendar years 2012, 2013 and 2014
4. Innovativeness of product or service offered—an illustration of the creativity and imagination of the nominee.
 - Specific description of the uniqueness of product or service
 - Explanation of how product or service fits a niche not being adequately addressed by the competition
5. Response to adversity—examples of problems faced in the nominee’s business and the methods used to solve them, including:
 - Specific description of the financial, physical, legal or other crisis
 - Substantiation of the threat to the continuity of the business
 - Defined actions taken by the nominee to resolve the crisis
6. Contributions to community-oriented projects – evidence of the use of his/her personal time and resources, including:
 - Listing of specific contributions of money, time, or resources to charitable causes
 - Membership in councils, boards and clubs providing support and services to the community
7. If applicable, a description of the products exported and markets served.

Nomination Packages must include, in this order:

1. A completed background form (SBA Form 3300, Award Nomination Form). For “team” nominations, a background form is required for each team member.
2. A completed nomination form (SBA Form 3301, Small Business Person of the Year)
3. An original 8” x 10” or 5” x 7” photo of the nominee; or a digital photo (at least 300dpi). Photocopies are not acceptable.
4. Additional supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation, nomination letter (if not self-nominated) and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination. Supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages. Videos will not be considered.
5. A completed SBA Form 2137 Award Nomination Consent Form. For “team” nominations, a separate form is required for each team member.

Small Business Exporter of the Year Award

Any individual who owns and operates a small business engaged in exporting may be nominated.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Increased sales, profits and/or growth of employment because of exporting.
- Creative overseas marketing strategies, including a description of the products exported and markets served.
- Effective solutions to export-related problems, including trade financing, payment and currency issues; market entry and logistical challenges; cultural differences, etc.
- Demonstrated encouragement of other small businesses to export.
- Volunteer assistance to other small businesses entering the export market.
- Cooperation with other businesses in the creation of export trading companies and/or introduction of unique trading relationships, products or services.

Nomination Packages must include, in this order:

1. A completed background form (SBA Form 3300, Award Nomination Form). For “team” nominations, a background form is required for each team member.
2. A completed nomination form (SBA Form 3302, Small Business Exporter of the Year)
3. An original 8” x 10” or 5” x 7” photo of the nominee; or a digital photo (at least 300dpi). Photocopies are not acceptable.
4. Additional supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation, nomination letter (if not self-nominated) and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination. Supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages. Videos will not be considered.
5. A completed SBA Form 2137 Award Nomination Consent Form. For “team” nominations, a separate form is required for each team member.

MD Small Bus. Person & Exporter - Nomination Packages

Submit nominations through one of the following methods not later than 3pm EST on Monday, January 11, 2016.

- **Electronic:** Use the dedicated web portal <http://awards.sba.gov> or
- **Traditional:** Mail or hand deliver to the U.S. Small Business Administration, Baltimore District Office, ATTN: SBW Awards Nomination Committee, 10 South Howard Street, Ste. 6220, Baltimore, MD 21201. (Paper nomination packages **must be typewritten on one side of 8 ½” x 11” white paper, and secured in a 1½” 3-ring binder.** Please do not use page protectors, except as necessary for supporting documentation (brochures/flyers, certificates, newspaper articles, etc.)

In order to be considered for competition, the nomination package must contain each of the items listed above. All evaluation/selection criteria must be specifically addressed. Incomplete packages will not be considered.

For questions, contact Rachel Howard by phone at (410) 244-3337 or by email at rachel.howard@sba.gov.

Local Champion & Advocacy Awards

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

Any individual who serves as a majority owner and operates or bears principal responsibility for operating a small business with a three year track record, and **who will not have reached the age of 30 by June 1, 2016**, may be nominated.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
- Increased employment opportunities created by the nominee's business.
- Development and/or utilization of innovative or creative business methods.
- Demonstrated entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.

Family-Owned Small Business of the Year

This award honors a family owned and operated business which has been passed on from one generation to another. Nominees must also serve as a majority owner and operator or bear principal responsibility for operating a small business with at least a 15-year track record.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
- Increased employment opportunities for family members and non-family members for the nominee's business.
- Demonstrated potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.
- Voluntary efforts to strengthen family-owned businesses within the community.

Entrepreneurial Success of the Year

Individuals meeting the following two criteria may be nominated: They must own and operate businesses initially launched as small businesses according to SBA size standards and subsequently developed into large businesses; and they must have received SBA assistance to help the business grow.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Staying power — a substantiated history as an established business; including:
 - Number of years in business.
 - Sustained expansion, addition of territories, growth in square footage occupied.
 - Steady growth in net worth as evidenced by total assets less total liabilities on fiscal year end annual balance sheets over three years.
2. Growth in number of employees — a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market.
 - Sustained over a minimum of three years.
 - Increase over the three years must be in excesses of growth in Gross National Product.
3. Increase in sales and/or unit volume — an indication of continued growth over the last three years.
 - Consistent growth in net income as evidenced by fiscal year annual profit-and-loss statements for a minimum of three years.
4. SBA Assistance – documentation of the type(s) and amount(s) of SBA assistance received by the business and the year(s) in which they were received.
5. Innovativeness of product or service offered — an illustration of the creativity and imagination of the nominee.
 - Specific description of uniqueness of product or service.
 - Explanation of how product or service fits a niche not being adequately addressed by the competition.
6. Response to adversity — examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them, including:
 - Specific description of financial, physical, legal/other crisis; defined actions taken to resolve the crisis.

- Substantiation of the threat to the continuity of the business; defined actions taken to resolve the crisis.
7. Contributions to community-oriented projects:
- Listing of specific contributions of money, time, or resources to charitable causes.
 - Membership in councils, boards and clubs providing support and services to the community.

Financial Services Champion of the Year

Individuals who assist small businesses through advocacy efforts to increase usefulness and availability of accounting or financial services for small businesses may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Outside of regular business duties, the amount and quality of assistance given small businesses to obtain financing.
- Advocacy for changes in the financial services industry to assist small companies.
- Encouragement of the flow of investment capital to small ventures.
- Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small firms.
- Measurable accomplishments through the advocacy efforts of the financial services industry to advance small business interests.

Home-Based Business Champion of the Year

Individuals who have experienced the rewards and difficulties of home-based businesses and have volunteered to improve the climate for these businesses may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be current small business owners.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Volunteer efforts to improve the conditions for home-based businesses.
- Entrepreneurial training, policy development efforts, or financial or business planning specifically tailored for home-based businesses.
- Demonstrated interest in home-based business as an owner or former owner.
- Measurable accomplishments in advancing home-based businesses, such as adoption of public policy or expansion of a program.

Minority Small Business Champion of the Year

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to support minority entrepreneurship may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Volunteer efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance minority small business interests within the community, state and/or nation.
- Demonstrated efforts to improve conditions in the minority small business community, as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
- Volunteer efforts to provide professional services to the minority small business community in legal, legislative, managerial or financial capacity.
- Demonstrated accomplishments in advising minority small business groups of opportunities within the overall business community.
- Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's merit as an effective advocate for minority small business interests.

Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for veterans of the U.S. armed forces may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be veterans.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
- Evidence of increased business opportunities for veterans as a result of the nominee's actions.
- Advisory activities to improve awareness among veterans' groups of small business opportunities.
- Advocacy of special consideration for veteran-owned small businesses in government policymaking.
- Demonstrated success in obtaining support within the community for the establishment of veteran-owned small businesses.
- Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's effective advocacy of and support for veteran-owned small businesses.

Women in Business Champion of the Year

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
- Efforts to increase business and financial opportunities for women.
- Legal, financial or managerial assistance provided to enhance women's business ownership.
- Voluntary efforts to strengthen the role of women business owners within the community.
- Advocacy of the women-owned business community, as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
- Other accomplishments demonstrating effectiveness in improving the environment for the creation and expansion of businesses owned and operated by women.

Accountant Advocate of the Year

Individuals who have contributed as accountants to a better economic and financial climate for small firms may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners. This award is only given at the local level.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Volunteering time and energy outside of business duties to assist small firms.
- Advocacy of a reduction of financial and regulatory requirements for small business.
- Support for initiatives to promote legislation strengthening the financial health of small businesses.
- Participation in other activities that exemplify the nominee's efforts to improve the economic climate for small businesses.

Attorney Advocate of the Year

Individuals who have contributed as lawyers to a better economic and financial climate for small firms may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners. This award is only given at the local level.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Volunteering time and energy outside of business duties to assist small firms.
- Advocacy of a reduction of regulatory requirements for small business.
- Support for initiatives to promote legislation strengthening the overall health of small businesses.
- Participation in other activities that exemplify the nominee's efforts to improve the economic climate for small businesses.

Insurance Advocate of the Year

Individuals who have contributed as insurance professionals to a better economic climate for small firms may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners. This award is only given at the local level.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Volunteering time and energy outside of business duties to assist small firms.
- Advocacy of a reduction of regulatory requirements for small business.
- Support for initiatives to promote legislation strengthening small businesses.
- Participation in other activities that exemplify the nominee's efforts to improve the economic climate for small businesses.

Submission of Local Champion & Advocacy Awards

Submit nominations through one of the following methods not later than **3pm EST on Monday, January 11, 2016.**

- **Electronic:** All items listed below must be completed and included in an MS WORD or PDF document and submitted **via email to rachel.howard@sba.gov** or
- **Traditional:** Mail or hand deliver to the U.S. Small Business Administration, Baltimore District Office, ATTN: SBW Awards Nomination Committee, 10 South Howard Street, Ste. 6220, Baltimore, MD 21201. (Paper nomination packages **must be typewritten on one side of 8 ½" x 11" white paper, and secured in a 1½" 3-ring binder.** Please do not use page protectors, except as necessary for supporting documentation (brochures/flyers, certificates, newspaper articles, etc.)

In order to be considered for competition, the nomination package must contain each of the items listed above. All evaluation/selection criteria must be specifically addressed. Incomplete packages will not be considered.

For questions, contact Rachel Howard by phone at (410) 244-3337 or by email at rachel.howard@sba.gov.

***Note:** Small Business Person of the Year & Small Business Exporter of the Year nominations must be submitted as outlined in pages 2 & 3.

In order to be considered for competition, the nomination package must contain each of the items listed below. All evaluation/selection criteria must be specifically addressed. Incomplete packages will not be considered.

Nomination Packages must include, in this order:

- A. SBA Form 3300 (Award Nominee Background Form)
- B. SBA Form 2137 (Award Nomination Consent Form)
- C. A nomination letter, to include a concise statement of the qualities and performance that merit the award, not exceeding four pages.
- D. A brief biography of the nominee, not exceeding one page.
- E. A business profile, not exceeding one page.
- F. Any other supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination. Supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages. Videos will not be considered.

NOTE: Finalists in each category may be asked to provide additional information as requested by the panel of judges.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The undersigned herewith agrees and consents to the disclosure by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) of the information in its file concerning his/her nomination for the Small Business Person of the Year, Advocate of the Year, or Special Award winners (Phoenix Award) to those persons chosen by the SBA as judges for these awards.

This consent is given with the understanding that disclosure shall be limited to the information contained in that file, and that no disclosure shall take place after the selection of the Small Business Person of the Year and Advocate and Special Award winners is made.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SBA Form 2137 (12-99)