



News Release

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Mary Lyn Baker, DH Casters, Inc., Selected as Small Business Week 2020 Woman Owned Small Business of the Year

Management style emphasizes family, empowerment, and customer service

SANTA ANA, Calif. – The U.S. Small Business Administration, Orange County / Inland Empire District Office is pleased to announce Mary Lyn Baker, President and owner of DH Casters, Inc., as the 2020 Woman Owned Small Business of the Year. DH Casters is in Ontario, Calif.

The Baker Family has been in the hardware business for three generations, and DH Casters got its start in 1985. Mary Lyn Baker joined the company in 1994 and became president and owner in 2014.

For over 35 years, DH Casters has provided casters and wheel solutions to domestic and international customers, including original equipment manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and maintenance and repair companies. DH Casters has also partnered with government agencies and city municipalities. The company works closely to find the right product match and to get the product to the buyer when it is needed. Having a large, stocked warehouse allows DH Casters to ship products within 48 hours, and their staff of 13 fulltime employees is trained to assist buyers in selecting the appropriate caster or wheel to “avoid caster disasters.”

Baker’s management style is family spirited, encouraging, and hands on. Her leadership is characterized by partnership and collaboration. She believes in understanding each employee’s role and making sure that they all support each other, while keeping the customer’s needs first. From listening to her employees and using their feedback, Baker has crafted customer focused processes and procedures. Her style allows creativity and motivates her team to be successful.

Baker’s success has not come without challenges; however, her response is what sets her apart. In 2018, the company needed more inventory because of high demand for their products. In the caster business, it is a must to have the product available when the customer needs it, and Baker needed a way to purchase more inventory in advance of sales. Baker tapped into the SBA’s 7(a) loan program to bridge the gap. She was approved for an SBA loan which provided the cash needed to purchase more inventory and to keep the company’s growth cycle moving upward.

In Baker's own words, "the SBA has helped me more than just financially." In 2019, she completed the Export Trade Assistance Partnership Program, where she was introduced to many SBA resources. Baker has also taken advantage of the services provided by SBA resource partners, like SCORE. She works with SCORE's advisor board to continually improve and grow her business. Baker is also a part of SCORE's CEO Forum, and she enjoys high-level networking at their Women in Business Breakfast series. SCORE advisors have also worked with Baker on financial decisions, and they assisted her with the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) process. DH Casters received loans through both the EIDL program and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which allowed the company to keep their employees on the payroll during the COVID-19 shutdown. Baker says knowing that people from the SBA care makes a huge difference to her business.

Because of COVID-19, DH Casters had to make changes to cope with the times like so many others. With the changes in business due to the lockdowns, they jumped into getting their e-commerce site up. The company's new site is expected to launch in October 2020 with a custom, customer friendly e-commerce website that makes purchasing casters and wheels even easier. With the help of their SCORE advisor, DH Casters also created their own brand ambassador, DHarma, a cartoon superhero character with a PPE mask on.

Beyond casters and wheels, Baker makes time for her community here and around the world. She works with an organization called Corazon to build homes in Mexico, and she has participated with Skid Row Ministry, which before COVID-19 was a once every 6 weeks Sunday morning event to give out smiles, food, and clothing to the local homeless population. The DH Casters team also supports a child in Honduras through the Compassion Organization, and DH Casters sponsors the Heroes Wear Helmets Golf Classic, put on by the Greater Ontario Business Council to raise money for military causes and programs.

Baker currently serves on the board of the National Association of Women Business Owners, as the director of corporate sponsors. She also participates in the Greater Ontario Family Business Council and the Greater Ontario Women's Affinity Group.

The SBA Orange County / Inland Empire District is honored in recognizing Mary Lyn Baker and DH Casters, Inc. as the Woman Owned Small Business of the Year.

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About the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 and is a Cabinet-level agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. The SBA helps Americans start, build and grow businesses, and recover from disasters. Through an extensive network of field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations, the SBA delivers its services to people throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. To learn more about SBA, visit www.sba.gov.

About the Orange County / Inland Empire District Office

The Orange County / Inland Empire District Office, under the leadership and vision of J. Adalberto Quijada, District Director, is responsible for the delivery of SBA programs and services in the Southern California counties of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino. Located in Santa Ana near John Wayne Airport, the office and its staff facilitate understanding and access to SBA loan programs; coordinate and conduct hundreds of training sessions and special events annually such as matchmaking forums and loan workshops; and manage a portfolio of nearly 100 businesses enrolled in the agency's 8(a) business development program.