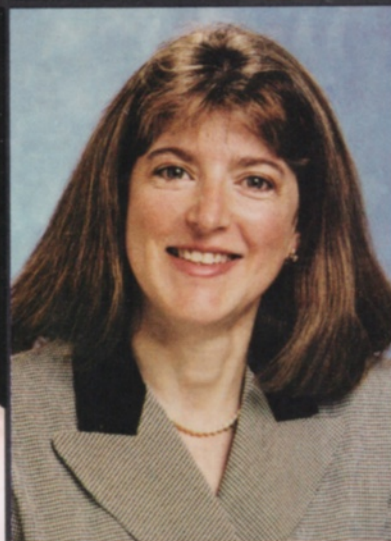


# ST LOUIS Women

May 2006  
Vol. 3 No. 2

▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ *On The Move*

## The Stars of Small Business in St. Louis



*From left to right:*

Maxine Clark  
Maryanne T. Preston  
Shera Dalin  
Andrea S. Johnson  
Angela M. Lieb  
Suzanne Magee Joyce  
Maggie Laughlin  
Honerkamp





# Seven Stars of Small Business Week 2006

Each year the president of the United States designates one week to recognize the contributions of our nation's small business community. The motivation, dedication and ingenuity of these enterprising small business owners and employees make them the heart of the American economy and have ensured our unprecedented economic prosperity.

Small Business Week of Eastern Missouri 2006 is a dynamic six-day event starting on May 8 that brings together current and future small business owners, corporations, trade associations, federal government employees and community leaders. Attendees have the opportunity to participate in an array of events designed to enhance opportunities for entrepreneurs through valuable networking possibilities, unique educational information, and unparalleled inspiration. We will celebrate our common vision of the development and growth of small business.

First on our list of winners are **Andrea Johnson and Suzanne Magee Joyce**, co-founders of **TechGuard Security** who are the **St. Louis District Small Business Team of the Year**. This award is won by individual(s) who own and operate or who bear principal responsibility for operating a small business. The evaluation criteria includes staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales volume, proof of improved financial position in the business, innovativeness of product or service offered, response to adversity, and contributions to community.

Andrea Johnson and Suzanne and James Joyce founded TechGuard Security, LLC (TechGuard®) in

early 2000 as a response to Presidential Decision Directive 63 to security US Critical Infrastructure. The mission was to create proactive countermeasures to malicious network attacks through deployment of a neutral net firewall using TechGuard's now patented artificial intelligence technology in conjunction with industry leading services. As opposed to security remaining a game of catch-up, this approach would stay one step ahead of the hackers and the growing number of network threats. During the research, a fledgling TechGuard incorporated elements of this technology into a firewall platform to which the AI modules would later be added. TechGuard deployed this platform to guard



**Andrea S. Johnson**



**Suzanne Magee Joyce**



their own company network and soon realized the potential of their firewall. To date, this original platform has protected TechGuard without malfunction or incident. TechGuard has integrated this technology into the Great Walls of Fire® product suite.

TechGuard has served the federal government since inception, providing expert leadership in various programs sponsored by the FBI, NSC, and Department of Homeland Security. TechGuard participated in the Critical Technologies Homeland Security Committee for the state of Missouri and has served as president on the FBI's InfraGuard St. Louis Chapter board. InfraGuard is the FBI-sponsored public/private partnership to secure the critical infrastructure of the United States.

But the TechGuard entrepreneurial journey has not been an easy one. In large part, it is the U.S. Small Business Administration programs that sustained and encouraged them to reach profitability, perform successful defense contracting and research and develop cutting edge Great Walls of Fire® security products. SBA support and programs have resulted in the founders retaining ownership of the company, the creation of many high-level technology jobs, and TechGuard surviving to execute on its national security mission and give back to the community and the nation.

TechGuard is committed to job and wealth creation in the region, the garnering of additional intellectual property capital, and the development of small business

opportunities in the St. Louis area and beyond, and its National Security Mission—TechGuard is a company that lives a motto that they learned from their mentor—the US Small Business Administration—“it is in giving that you receive!”

**Angela Lieb** who is the president of **Xpress Office Center** and Consulting, co-founder of **City of Experts**, and founder and former owner of OffiStart Business Centers is the Region VII 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. The evaluation criteria includes volunteer time and energy to improve conditions for home-

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based businesses, engagement in entrepreneurial training for home-based businesses, demonstrated interest in home-based businesses, and measurable accomplishments in advancing home-base businesses, such as adoption of public policy.



**Angela M. Lieb**

As a mother of four and multipreneur, Angela has not only worked from home but served those who have worked home for many years. When she launched OffiStart, her marketing efforts and time focused on the needs of

the home-based businesses rather than the large corporations. She wanted to provide these small, home-based businesses with affordable services that would give them the professional image they needed when starting their business. By outsourcing the mail handling and telephone answering, her clients could focus on their core capabilities and let OffiStart manage the administrative support. She opened her meeting rooms to local organizations and encouraged her virtual clients to use the space whenever they needed to conduct a meeting.

Angela and co-founder, Karen Hoffman, work with many experts, speakers, authors and consultants who run their businesses from their home offices. They offer a web-based membership organization that helps the home-based businesses connect with those who are looking for experts in their specific niche. They also host networking events and informational workshops to serve these individuals.

Perhaps the most exciting busi-

ness venture that Angela has been involved with is Xpress Office Center (Xpress-O). Xpress-O will be a private business club for the home-based and mobile worker; a place where you can get work done, but also make connections with other business people. While you are there, you will be able to use the wireless internet, get some coffee or soda, print, copy, fax, pick up and drop off mail, and host a meeting or a workshop in one of our private meeting rooms.

This concept has been a vision of Angela's since 1997. It has evolved over time but her mission has never changed. She wanted to create an environment where the home-based worker could go to network, regroup and get work done away from the home office. She anticipates opening Xpress-O by the end of 2006.

Angela continues to mentor start-up companies and home-based business owners by offering workshops, one-on-one consulting and networking events that bring these individuals together.

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Coalition of Labor Union Women**





**Maggie Laughlin  
Honerkamp**

**Maggie Laughlin Honerkamp** who is the president of **Laughlin Promotions** is the **St. Louis District SBA 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 is under the age of 30 may be nominated. The evaluation criteria includes evidence of success as measured by sales and profits, increased employment opportunities, development and/or utilization of innovative or creative business methods, and demonstrated entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.

Maggie Laughlin Honerkamp created Laughlin Promotions in 2000 as a women-owned and run company that provides promotional products to corporations, schools, sporting teams and non profit organizations. Laughlin Promotions can supply any type of product that a logo can be placed on. By

visiting Maggie's website at [www.laughlinpromotions.com](http://www.laughlinpromotions.com), it gives the end user a search engine of the variety of items and apparel Laughlin Promotions can produce.

In the first year of business, Maggie dedicated her time to establishing an efficient way to run the office as well as keeping up with customers and acquiring new business. In 2001, Maggie hired her first full-time employee to serve as the office manager to enable her to have more time to devote to expanding cliental and new revenue generation.

Laughlin Promotions saw an increase in sales of 50 percent from the first year of its creation to its second. Since that time, it has sustained a constant growth in revenue as well as net income. Today, Maggie manages a portfolio of nearly 500 clients, a far cry from her first year of 140. She has total sales to date of \$1.6 million and is aggressively pursuing her first \$1 million sales year in 2006. Maggie is also in the process of launching a baby website of personalized baby apparel and gifts. This will be a spin off of Laughlin Promotions, and it is called The Initial Baby. The website should be up and running late spring of 2006, and the website is: [www.theinitialbaby.com](http://www.theinitialbaby.com).

Maggie and Laughlin Promotions recently received its approval for a Women's Business Enterprise National Council certification allowing the company to pursue additional sales growth in the minority business segment.



**Shera Dalin**

**Shera Dalin** who is co-owner of **CarisMedia, Inc.** is the **Region VII Small Business Journalist of the Year**. Any journalist representing television, radio, electronic or print media may be nominated. The evaluation criteria includes concerted efforts to increase public understanding of the importance of small business contribution to the economy, contribution of news and feature stories, editorials, columns, and commentary that highlight and analyze small business issues, and voluntary community service aimed at enhancing small business opportunity and growth.

Shera Dalin exemplifies in every sense what a journalist who covers small business should be. It is a cliché that small business drives the American economy. Shera writes stories that transform that cliché into vivid portraits of small firms that grow rapidly and have a real impact on our nation's ability to compete in the global marketplace. She has a keen ability to highlight small companies in such a way as to offer insight into the



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company itself and the way it fits into the economy at large. She identifies industry trends that small business owners need to know so they can remain competitive.

Shera is not afraid to deal with the problems facing small business, such as affordable health care, employee retention, and access to capital. She has paid particular attention to these issues with regard to women and minorities as is illustrated by her relations with groups like the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Women Entrepreneur program at St. Louis Community College.

Although Shera left the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in January to work in the company she co-owns with Jorge Riopedre, she is still committed to small business. She is now writing about small business for large magazines like *Latina* for

a national audience.

It is very refreshing to see a journalist who both reports about the community she lives in and takes an active role in making it better.



**Maryanne T. Preston**

And finally, **Maryanne Preston** who is president of **Hiring Solutions** is the **Region VII Women in**

### **Business Champion of the Year.**

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership may be nominated. The evaluation criteria includes active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small business, 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, and advocacy of the women-owned business community as a whole.

It takes a great deal of time, hard work, perseverance and dedication to get any organization started. It takes even more effort to start a new organization for women when there are already several other established organizations in the

# *You Glow, Girl!*



Congratulations, Maryanne Preston!  
Women in Business Champion of the Year

*eWomen*  
network



Congratulation Maryanne!  
You have been an inspiration to many women business owners and career women. I am ecstatic that you are receiving this wonderful recognition.

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area competing for many of the same members. Maryanne Preston has been able to not only start one successful chapter of eWomen Network in the St. Louis area, she has established two—one in St. Louis and one in St. Charles—to promote and connect women in business.

She has done this by providing "Accelerated Networking"™ events which enable women business owners and professionals to make contacts that help them with their business. And her efforts have not stopped in St. Louis. She has established eWomen chapters in Chicago, Detroit and Indianapolis. In recognition of her accomplishments, Maryanne was awarded the 2004 eWomen Network Managing Director of the Year award for her outstanding performance as a "promoter and connector of women." She was recently promoted to International Recruiting Director and has hired and trained Managing Directors to lead chapters in Kansas City, MO, Providence, RI, Houston, TX, Minneapolis, MN, Boston, MA, El Paso, TX, and Fort Myers, FL.

She has not limited her activities

to eWomen. She has been actively involved in the women-owned business community as a whole and has participated in and promoted many other women's business organizations.

She has directed the eWomen Network Foundation fundraising activities and has secured several grants for women's non-profit organizations. In 2004, a grant of \$4000 was awarded to Covenant House of Missouri, which helps teenage girls get off the streets and on to success. This was followed by an additional grant in 2005 of \$3,000 in cash and \$4,000 in Microsoft and Office Depot products which were awarded to Connections to Success, an organization which helps women re-entering the workforce and business world find the resources to find a job or start businesses.

Maryanne has done this while running her own successful business, Hiring Solutions, a consulting firm she founded in 1999 to help business owners and managers select, hire and retain great employees.

Small Business Week of Eastern Missouri web site is [www.small-businessweekstl.org](http://www.small-businessweekstl.org).



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[www.eWomenNetwork.com](http://www.eWomenNetwork.com)



For complete details and registration, visit [www.eWomenNetwork.com](http://www.eWomenNetwork.com), or contact:

St. Louis event—**Donna Gamache**,  
Managing Director, 314-968-9664

St. Charles Cnty. event—**Darlene Willman**,  
Managing Director, 636-387-3000

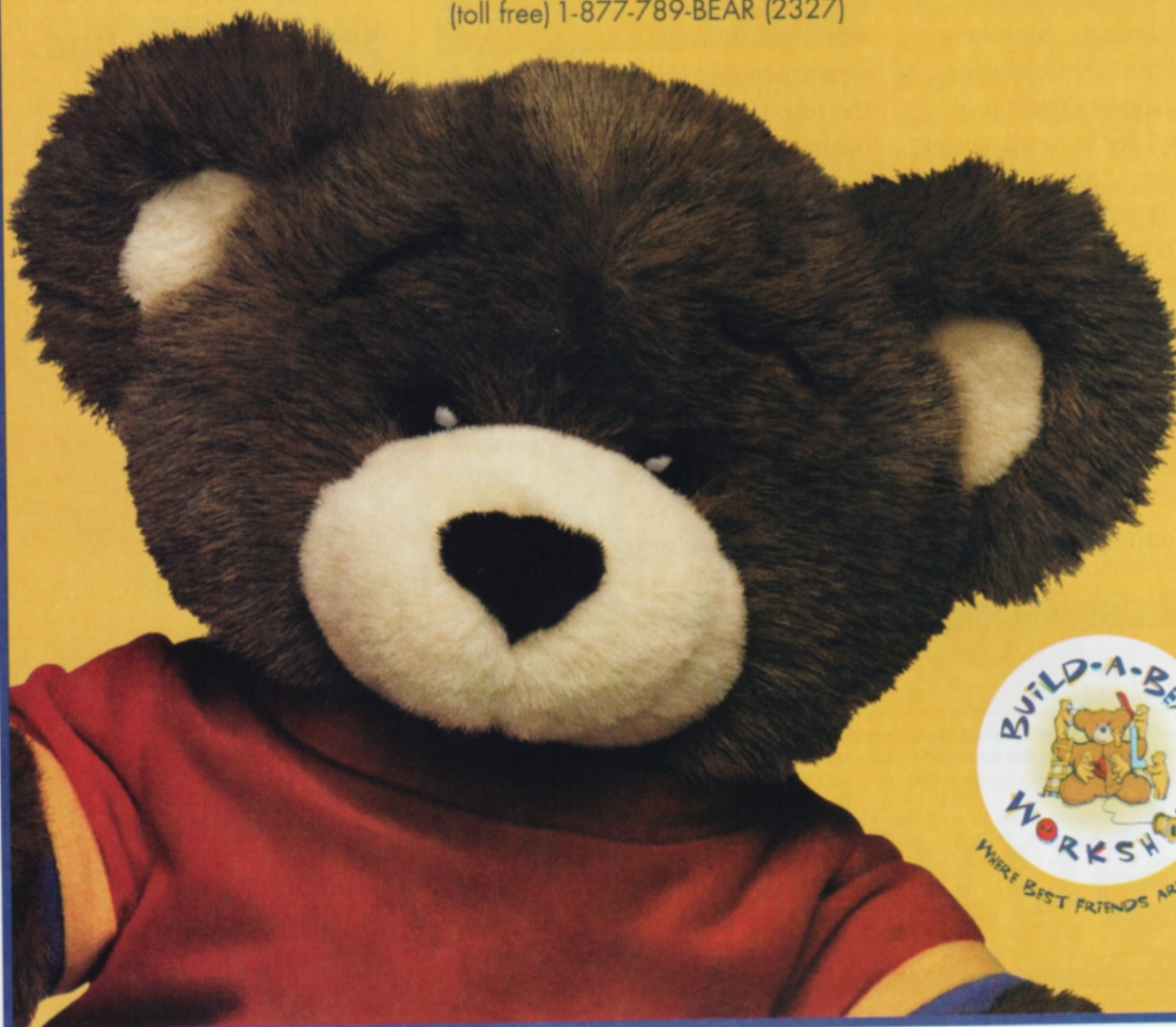


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**Maxine Clark**

## Hall of Fame Inductee

**Maxine Clark** has been **Chief Executive Bear** of **Build-A-Bear Workshop Inc.** since the company's inception in 1997 and has served as chairman of the board of directors since conversion to a corporation in April 2000.

Maxine Clark is one of the true innovators in the retail industry. During her 30-year career, her rare ability to spot emerging retail and merchandising trends and insight into the desires of the American consumer generated growth for retail leaders, including department store, discount and specialty stores. There are over 240 stores worldwide, including Canada, Australia, Denmark, France, Japan, Korea, Sweden, Netherlands, Taiwan and the United Kingdom. Maxine Clark's newest addition to entertainment retail is friends 2B made®, which launched in 2004. It's based on the simple premise that kids, especially girls, love dolls.

Build-A-Bear Workshop, friends 2B made and Maxine Clark are proud to be recognized in their industry. In 2006 Maxine Clark was inducted into the Junior Achievement National Business Hall of Fame. In 2005, the National Association of Small Business Investment Companies (NASBIC) made Build-A-Bear Workshop their Portfolio Company of the Year. Build-A-Bear Workshop was a 2005 iParenting Media HOT Award Winner, named one of the International Council of Shopping Centers "Hottest Retailers of 2004," and the Retail Innovator of the Year for 2001 by The National Retail Federation. friends 2B made® received First Prize: Exterior -In-line Store Category in the Chain Store Age 2004 Retail Store of the Year Design Competition. Maxine was recently named a Customer-Centered Leader in the 2005 Customer First Awards by Fast Company. She was one of the Wonder Women of Toys by Playthings magazine and Women in Toys and was also one of the National Finalists in Retail for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2004.

Maxine is a member of the Board of Directors of The J.C. Penney Company, Inc., where she also serves as Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee, Barnes Jewish Hospital and the Simon Youth Foundation. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Council of Shopping Centers, Washington University in St. Louis and her alma mater, the University of Georgia. She is also Chair of Teach for America St. Louis and a member of the Committee of 200, a leading organization for women entrepreneurs around the world. In May 2006 her first book "The Bear Necessities of Business. Building a Company with Heart" will be published by Wiley.

In 1989 the St. Louis district office initiated a new category of winner, the Hall of Fame Inductee. The winner had to have received SBA assistance (financial, procurement or management) and achieved outstanding success as evidenced by at least five years of sustained business achievement. Other factors include civic service, job creation, innovation and growth. All inductees are excellent examples of the American Dream.