

Alfred University presents Galanis Awards to five businesses

9/23/08

BUFFALO, NY Alfred University honored five Western New York firms with Galanis Awards for Excellence in Family Business. Buffalo Hotel Supply Co., Eastman Machine Co., John W. Danforth Co., L.C. Whitford Co., and Quality Inspection Services, Inc., received the awards during a banquet celebration Wednesday, Sept. 17, at The Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo. The awards are made possible by a gift from the families of Terry Galanis Sr. and Terry Galanis Jr. Galanis Sr. is a 1940 graduate of Alfred University and founder of Sealing Devices, Inc., of Lancaster. Galanis Jr. is the president of Sealing Devices and a member of the AU Board of Trustees. Winners of Galanis Awards, presented since 2000, are judged on a number of criteria that the Galanises and Alfred University consider hallmarks of successful family enterprises: commitment to employees and the local community; innovation and foresight; and growth and stability. Sealing Devices was founded in 1963 by Terry Galanis Sr. in the Buffalo suburb of Alden. The company, which manufactures and distributes o-rings, gaskets and seals, has enjoyed tremendous growth over the years and is now located in a state-of-the-art facility in nearby Lancaster. Terry Sr. still serves as company chairman, while his granddaughter, Elizabeth Miller (Terry Jr.'s daughter), is a marketing specialist. Founded in 1939 in Amherst by James Bedard Sr., Buffalo Hotel Supply Co. provides food service equipment and supplies, commercial interior and kitchen design and installation services, and furniture and linens to the food service, health care, education and hospitality industries. The company has grown steadily since its founding nearly 70 years ago. While serving primarily the Upstate New York region, Buffalo Hotel Supply also does business in other states. Clientele ranges from small pizzarias to large firms in the hospitality industry. With headquarters in Amherst, the firm operates a millwork shop in Orchard Park and also has display showrooms and cash and carry stores in Amherst, Albany and Rochester. Buffalo Hotel Supply employs about 80 people and is a fourth-generation family business. James Bedard III, grandson of the founder, became company president in 2000 and today works with two sisters Susan (executive vice president) and Ginger (vice president). Three of James Bedard III's sons have worked at the firm throughout high school and college. The company supports numerous charitable organizations in Western New York, including The United Way, Catholic Charities, the Lutheran Home of Buffalo, and the American Cancer Society. James Bedard III accepted the award. He lauded his grandfather for starting the firm during the Great Depression "Can you think of a worse time to start a business?" he asked. Seven decades later, through three generations of the Bedard family running the business, Buffalo Hotel Supply has enjoyed tremendous growth and stability. Eastman Machine Company was founded in Buffalo in 1888 by Charles Stevenson as a manufacturer of manually-operated cutting machines. Today, the company also makes fully-automated, computerized cutting systems, material handling equipment and design software used in a multitude of industries including aerospace, apparel, composite, marine, recreational, and wind energy. The firm has grown significantly over the years. Headquartered in Buffalo, it has expanded internationally, operating a factory in Ningbo, China. The company has a staff of field sales and application engineers that install and service Eastman-manufactured automated machines that are sold throughout the world. The company employs approximately 100 people, with more than half its workforce having been with the company for 20 or more years. Eastman Machine is a fifth-generation family business, with two generations of the Stevenson family actively involved in the company's operations. Robert L. Stevenson and Wade Stevenson II, great-grandchildren of the company founder, serve as president/CEO and export president, respectively. R. Trevor Stevenson, great-great-grandson of the founder, serves as vice president of technical services. The firm is actively involved in philanthropic efforts in the Buffalo area, supporting, among other organizations, The United Way, the American Heart Association, Albright Knox Art Gallery, the American Cancer Society, and the American Diabetes Association. Trevor Stevenson cited his company's employees and customers, as well as the Buffalo-area community, for helping Eastman Machine succeed over five generations. "Family businesses need the support of the local community. They're the backbone of the Western New York economy," he said. "The strength of our business lies in the loyalty of our employees and our business partners. Long-term relationships are the foundation of any successful business." John W. Danforth Company was founded in 1884 by the firm's namesake as a company specializing in residential plumbing. Today, the firm specializes in heating, air conditioning, plumbing, sheet metal, filtration, process piping and duct cleaning for the commercial, residential and industrial markets, and is the largest mechanical contractor in Western New York and one of the largest in the nation. Throughout its 124-year history, the firm has remained family-owned. Two generations of the Danforth family owned the company in its early years, followed by three generations of the Hopkins family, and

most recently, three generations of the Reilly family. Emmett Reilly and Kevin Reilly serve as president and CEO, respectively, while a third generation of the family, Patrick Reilly, is senior vice president. The company, headquartered in Tonawanda with manufacturing/fabrication facilities in Tonawanda and Victor, NY, employs 572 people. The firm has enjoyed solid growth over the years. In 2005, three years after the opening of its new corporate headquarters, Danforth opened a new Sheet Metal and Filter Shop in Tonawanda, to which a 5,000-square-foot addition was added in August. John W. Danforth Company supports numerous charitable organizations in Western New York, including the United Way, Ride for Roswell, Boys and Girls Club, Kaleida Health, the American Heart Association, Hunter's Hope, Olmstead Center for the Visually Impaired, and the YMCA. Kevin Reilly said receiving the Galanis award "is a great honor" and pointed to the criteria used for choosing the award-winners and being hallmarks for J.W. Danforth's ongoing success. "We've been around for 125 years. The criteria for the awards are words for us to live by for the next 125 years," he said. Founded in 1916 by Langford Clinton Whitford in Allegany County as a provider of residential and commercial construction services, L.C. Whitford is headquartered in Wellsville, NY, with a second division in Atlanta, GA. The company has grown and diversified greatly over the years. Founded as a construction company, the firm built numerous landmarks in Western New York and Pennsylvania, from bridges and highways to libraries and hospitals. Today, the firm also operates the L.C. Whitford Equipment Co., which sells and rents construction and forestry equipment, and the L.C. Whitford Materials Co., which manufactures ready-mix concrete and pre-stressed concrete beams, and fabricates rebar. More than 400 people are employed by L.C. Whitford at its locations in New York and Georgia. L.C. Whitford is a fourth-generation family business. Until January 2006, Langford Chandler "Chan" Whitford, grandson of the company's founder, served as president. His son, Langford Bradley "Brad" Whitford currently serves as president, while Daniel Whitford, Brad's younger brother, serves as general manager of the L. C. Whitford Materials, Co. Inc., Wellsville. Brad Whitford accepted the award and thanked his father for "being my mentor." He cited the importance of L.C. Whitford's employees, many of whom represent second- or third-generation workers at the company. The firm contributes to several charitable organizations in Wellsville and Western New York. They include Jones Memorial Hospital, the American Red Cross, several local volunteer fire departments and emergency rescue squads, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and Ronald McDonald House. The firm also supports David A. Howe Library in Wellsville, which it built in 1935. Quality Inspection Services was founded in 1987 in Buffalo by John E. Sisson as a firm providing inspection services to a variety of industries, including manufacturing, construction, rail, power generation, food, pharmaceutical, petro chemical, and ship building. Sisson started the company to fulfill a need of industry in Central and Western New York and Northern Pennsylvania for nondestructive testing, quality assurance/quality control and civil testing services. The company performs numerous tasks in its area of expertise for both large and small companies. Among the company's services are heat treating, ground penetrating radar, thermography, civil materials testing, outage support services, materials engineering, and positive materials testing. Quality Inspection Services is headquartered in Buffalo and employs approximately 280 people. The company has additional facilities in New York (including in Depew, Rochester and Syracuse) and in six other states. The firm is a second-generation family business. The founder, John E. Sisson, serves as president and CEO, while three sons John M. Sisson (assistant to the president/CEO), Luke Sisson (technician), and Daniel Sisson (operations manager, Buffalo) and three nephews Adam Purtell (operations manager, Syracuse), Nick Purtell (technician), and Joshua Tainter (technician) are also actively involved. Quality Inspection Services supports a number of charitable organizations, including St. Luke's Mission, Boys and Girls Club of Springville, American Cancer Society, Young Life, Boy Scouts of America, and CJ's Inner City Youth Club. Sisson thanked Alfred University and the Galanis family "for having the vision to create the (excellence in family business) awards." "Family-owned businesses here in Western New York are the backbone of the region's economy and we're proud to be counted among them," Sisson said. More than 45 family firms have received Galanis Awards since 2000. Galanis Sr. and AU President Dr. Charles Edmondson said it's important to recognize the contributions family firms make to the region. "The bread and butter of our communities goes back to private enterprise and family businesses," he said. "That's who we honor here today." "We recognize these businesses, not only to encourage them, but to show others there are exemplars in this very challenging field," Edmondson added.