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The Cakery named Bowie's top business of 2007

by Andrea Noble | Staff Writer

The Cakery was named Business of the Year during the Bowie Business Appreciation Luncheon's first awards ceremony last week.

Sponsored by the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce and the Bowie Economic Development Committee, four awards were distributed Friday to show business owners that their work is appreciated and set a level of professionalism for owners to strive to reach, EDC Chairman Edward Leyden said.

The Cakery, a bakery that specializes in made-from-scratch pastries and cakes, is owned and operated by Bowie couple Greg and Gail Sinkovic.

Gail Sinkovic said winning the award has energized them.

"You work so hard and you get consumed in your day-to-day work," said Gail Sinkovic. "So [winning] is a real shot in the arm."

The Sinkovics opened The Cakery in 1996 so they could work closer to their Bowie home. Now, Gail Sinkovic said, both her son and daughter help out at the shop.

Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Committee members nominated approximately 50 businesses for the awards, GBCC Executive Director Kelly Pierce said.

Other winners included Comcare Pharmacy, owned by Marie-Therese Oyalowo, for Small Business of the Year; Robert Thompson as Entrepreneur of the Year for his work in Old Bowie and ownership of Old Bowie Town Grille; and developer Edward St. John, of St. John Properties, for community service including his \$3.5 million philanthropic contributions to Bowie.

"This helps set a standard for what we would like to see businesses accomplish," Leyden said.



Brenda Ahearn/The Star

Greg and Gail Sinkovic make cakes at The Cakery Tuesday in Bowie. The Cakery was named Business of the Year at Friday's luncheon sponsored by the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce and the Bowie Economic Development Committee.



Oyalowo's business opened at the Bowie Town Center in 2001. The award was for her quality customer service and community outreach, including educational seminars she offers to customers and presentations on health-related information she gives to area schools, according to the nomination criteria.

Thompson was named the year's top entrepreneur for demonstrating leadership and tenacity in managing all facets of his business.

He operates both Old Bowie Town Grille and Netsys America, a sales office for computer networking products, out of historic buildings in Old Town Bowie and has served on the city's revitalization committee to promote Old Town.

While St. John Properties, which is developing the 432-acre Melford commercial site, is not a Bowie-based business it has provided philanthropic support to the city.

Since 1998, the Edward St. John Foundation has given \$3.5 million in cash contributions to aid in work done at Bowie High School, Bowie Center for the Performing Arts, Bowie State University and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, according to the EDC and BGCC release on the award winners.

"Once you start giving you just keep doing it," said St. John, who recalled his first philanthropic donation was for scholarships to the McDonough School in Owings Mills in the 1970s.

Honorees were given their awards at a luncheon at the BelAir Mansion by members of the Chamber and Economic Development Committee, Mayor G. Frederick Robinson and County Councilwoman Ingrid Turner (D-Dist. 4) of Bowie.

"With all the [economic] challenges in your way you still find the time to engage with the city," Robinson said of the winners. "For that commitment I want to say how grateful we are."

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Award winners

The Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce and the Bowie Economic Development Committee gave four awards to businesses at the Business Appreciation Luncheon held Friday.

Business of the year: The Cakery

Small business of the year: Comcare Pharmacy

Entrepreneur of the year: Robert Thompson

Community service award: St. John Properties