

## News Release

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**For immediate release**

### **Ernst & Young LLP Seeks Orange County/Desert Cities Outstanding Entrepreneurs**

#### **Nominations Now Being Accepted for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2009 Award**

**Irvine, Calif. – JANUARY 20, 2009** – Ernst & Young LLP today opened the nomination period for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2009 Orange County/Desert Cities Awards. The deadline for applications is March 16, 2009, with the awards ceremony scheduled for June 11, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency Irvine.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® Awards program, now in its 23rd year, is recognized as the most prestigious business awards program in the country. Award recipients are selected by a panel of independent judges, including local business owners – many of whom have won the award in the past – as well as area leaders from civic organizations and academic institutions.

“Ernst & Young is proud to continue its support of entrepreneurs,” said Larry Haynes, Americas Director of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® program. “As an essential building block of America, entrepreneurial ingenuity is more important than ever.”

#### **The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® Orange County/Desert Cities Awards**

Last year, seven entrepreneurs in seven categories from Orange County/Desert Cities were selected as Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® award recipients from more than 85 nominations. Past award winners have included William Wang, Vizio, Inc.; J. Doug Pruitt, Sundt Construction, Inc.; Stuart Cumming, eyeonics; Manu Shah, MS International, Inc.; Mark Loberg, PremierGarage; Tony

Hsieh, Zappos.com; William Lyon, William Lyon Homes, Inc.; Steele Platt, Yard House Restaurants; Jeff Margolis, Trizetto; and Victor Tsao, Linksys.

“This program honors the exceptional business executives in our local area,” said Kurt Binder, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® Orange County/Desert Cities Program Director. “Entrepreneurs are nominated and evaluated by those in the area, bringing regional business, academic and community leaders together to celebrate their remarkable achievements.”

### **Awards Criteria**

Awards are given to entrepreneurs who have demonstrated excellence and extraordinary success in such areas as innovation, financial performance, and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. Self-nominations are encouraged, and there is no fee. Application forms must be received by March 16, 2009.

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must be an owner/manager of a private or public company who is primarily responsible for the recent performance of the company and an active member of top management. Additionally, the nominee's company must be at least two years old.

### **Sponsors**

Founded and produced by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year® Awards are nationally sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and SAP America.

In the Orange County/Desert Cities program, local sponsors include Marsh, Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth, Orange County Business Journal, Strategic Equity Group, HKA, Inc., and RR Donnelley Financial.

## **Contact Information**

For more information and nomination forms contact: Roseann Wright, Program Manager, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® Orange County/Desert Cities Awards, at 949-437-0497 or [roseann.wright@ey.com](mailto:roseann.wright@ey.com). Information is also available at [www.ey.com/us/eoy](http://www.ey.com/us/eoy).

## **About Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Of The Year®**

Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Of The Year® is the world's most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs. The award makes a difference through the unique way it encourages entrepreneurial activity among those with potential and recognizes the contribution of people who inspire others with their vision, leadership and achievement. As the first and only truly global award of its kind, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® celebrates those who are building and leading successful, growing and dynamic businesses, recognizing them through regional, national and global awards programs in more than 135 cities in 50 countries.

## **About Ernst & Young**

Ernst & Young is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. Worldwide, our 135,000 people are united by our shared values and an unwavering commitment to quality. We make a difference by helping our people, our clients and our wider communities achieve their potential.

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