

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ernst & Young LLP seeks Orange County's outstanding entrepreneurs

Nominations are open for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year[®] 2012 Regional Awards, celebrating Orange County's most innovative business leaders

Irvine, CA, January 17, 2012 — Ernst & Young LLP is calling for nominations for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year 2012 Regional Awards, recognized as one of the most prestigious business award programs in the country. Entrepreneurs may nominate themselves or be nominated by peers and other business leaders. Online applications can be accessed at: <https://eoy-nomination.ey.com>

The deadline for applications is March 9, 2012, with the Orange County Awards ceremony scheduled for June 7, 2012 at the St. Regis in Laguna Niguel, CA.

“This program honors the outstanding entrepreneurs in our region,” said Kim Letch, Ernst & Young LLP Partner and Entrepreneur Of The Year Program Director for Orange County. “These entrepreneurs improve our community through their innovation and development of new products and services, providing jobs and advancing economic development and commerce locally. They deserve our support and recognition.”

Last year, five Orange County entrepreneurs in various industry categories were selected as Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Of The Year Award winners from more than 60 nominations. The award

winners were Ronnie Andrews of Clariant, Dr. Rajesh Shrotriya, Spectrum Pharmaceuticals, Paul Kulkarni, gkkworks, Puneet Nanda, Dr. Fresh and Richard Heard, Insight Investments, LLC.

Among the many other prestigious Orange County award recipients in past years were Andy Lee of Alorica in 2010, Kenneth, Daniel and W. Henry Walker of Farmers & Merchants Bank, 2009, William Wang of VIZIO, 2008, and Jay Longley of Rainbow Sandals, 2007, to name a few.

In Orange County, local sponsors include Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth, Marsh, Union Bank, ADP, Orange County Business Journal, Scherzer Intl., and HKA, PR Inc.

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 9, 2012.

Entrepreneurs eligible for consideration include not only company founders, but also leaders of multi-generation family businesses and transformational public and private company CEOs. Additionally, the nominee's company must be at least two years old.

Information is also available at www.ey.com/us/eoy. For information on the Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards in Orange County, please visit www.ey.com/us/eoy/oc.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards Nationwide

Now in its 26th year, the National program has honored inspirational leadership of some of the country's most recognized entrepreneurs such as Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com, Michael Dell, Dell Inc., Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines, Fred Smith of FedEx, Larry Page and Sergey Brin of Google, Richard Schulze of Best Buy, Andrew Mason of Groupon, Mindy Grossman of HSN, Inc., Reid Hoffman and Jeff Weiner of LinkedIn, and many more.

More than 250 entrepreneurs from across the nation were selected as Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year 2011 Award winners from more than 1,900 nominations. “Entrepreneurs are the key to the innovation, economic growth, and job creation that we need so desperately in America right now,” said Bryan Pearce, Director of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Program in the U.S. “Our Entrepreneur Of The Year Program is helping to build a movement by celebrating the stories of these men and women whose confidence, tenacity and drive to be the next business leaders are already impacting the way we live and work as well as the revitalization of our economy.”

Founded and produced in the US by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards is nationally sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. The Entrepreneur Of The Year Program honors entrepreneurs regionally in June. All regional honorees are then invited to the national Entrepreneur Of The Year gala, hosted by Jay Leno, on November 17, 2012 in Palm Springs, CA. The gala is the culminating event of the Ernst & Young Strategic Growth Forum[®], the nation’s most prestigious gathering of high-growth, market-leading companies. For more information on the Ernst & Young Strategic Growth Forum, please visit www.ey.com/us/strategicgrowthforum.

The overall national US winner will compete for the World Entrepreneur Of The Year title in Monaco in June 2013.

Contact information

For more information, as well as nomination information, contact: Kathy Beckman, Program Manager, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Orange County Awards, at 949 437 0236 or Kathy.Beckman@ey.com. Information is also available at www.ey.com/us/eoy/oc.

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 unique award makes a difference through the 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, 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 140 cities in 50 countries.

About Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. Worldwide, our 152,000 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.

For more information, please visit [ey.com](https://www.ey.com).

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