



News Release

Corporate Communications

Media

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Nominations open for 12th Wells Fargo Copper Cactus Awards *Southern Arizona's oldest, largest awards program honors small businesses*

TUCSON, JUNE 1, 2009 – Nominations are open for the 12th Annual Wells Fargo Copper Cactus Awards, Southern Arizona's oldest and largest awards program for small businesses. Deadline for nominations is June 15. The awards will be presented Oct. 8 at the Westin La Paloma.

"Small businesses employ more than half the country's private work force, create three of every four new jobs and generate a majority of American innovations," said Larry Finuf, regional president for Wells Fargo Community Banking in Southern Arizona. "Wells Fargo developed the Copper Cactus Awards to honor this vital sector of our economy, and we encourage people throughout our area to nominate a business for the award.

"Finalists for the Wells Fargo Copper Cactus Awards are considered the 'best of the best' among locally owned small businesses," Finuf added. "The awards focus on the importance of small businesses in our Southern Arizona economy and the high caliber of our local business owners. Public interest in the awards has increased greatly. Since the program's inception in 1999, participation has grown from about 200 nominations to more than 500 in 2008."

The Wells Fargo Copper Cactus Awards are open to the public, and tickets for the evening can be purchased at www.coppercactusawards.com. The event will be hosted by MIIX-FM's Bobby Rich and KOLD News 13's Chuck George.

Winners are honored in three categories: Business Growth, Community Service and Best Place to Work. To qualify for an award, a business must have 250 or fewer employees and be locally owned and operated,

profitable and in operation more than two years. Wells Fargo has again teamed up with the Tucson Chamber of Commerce to present the Small Business Leader of the Year Award. Judges for the Wells Fargo Copper Cactus Awards are:

- Sharon B. Foltz, Community Relations director, Tucson Electric Power Company
- Joe Higgins, owner, Talking Trash
- Sherry Hoskinson, director, Chris and Carol McGuire Center for Entrepreneurship, Eller College of Management
- Dave Iaconis, shareholder, Beach, Fleishman & Co., P.C.
- Mark Irvin, managing member, Mark Irvin Commercial Real Estate Services
- Lisa Lovallo, vice president and systems manager, Cox Communications

In Arizona, Wells Fargo has 14,000 team members and 286 stores. Wells Fargo & Company is a diversified financial services company with \$1.3 trillion in assets, providing banking, insurance, investments, mortgage and consumer finance through more than 10,400 stores, over 12,000 ATMs and the internet (wellsfargo.com) across North America and internationally

Wells Fargo is America's #1 small business lender in total dollar volume according to the most recent Community Reinvestment Act data (2007) and the #1 SBA 7a national bank lender in total dollar volume (2008). Wells Fargo has loaned more than \$38 billion to women, African American, Latino and Asian business owners since 1995. For more information, speak with a Wells Fargo banker, visit wellsfargo.com/biz or call the National Business Banking Center at 1-800-CALL-WELLS.

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