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Boise Metro Chamber, SBA issue awards

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Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Small Business Administration Boise District Office officials on June 25 honored several businesses and entrepreneurs at their annual Small Business Awards luncheon. Honorees attributed their success to employees, customers and assisting organizations.

U.S. Small Business Administration Boise District Director Norm Proctor recognized Mara McMillen for being named SBA 2009 Small Business of the Year for Idaho.

McMillen received the Idaho award early this year, and went on to win the award at the Region 10 level and to compete for the nationwide award, Proctor said. McMillen and her husband, Mort McMillen, own McMillen LLC. The firm offers engineering, environmental services, natural resources and construction services. It has offices in Boise, Coeur d'Alene and Walla Walla.

Also honored was Zions Bank, which won SBA's Lender of the Year award at the Idaho and national levels in the 2008 fiscal year.

Capital Matrix, Boise, was named SBA Boise District Office Certified Development Company of the Year for fiscal 2008. The district includes parts of southern Idaho and eastern Oregon. Certified development companies team with lenders and the SBA to fund and back SBA 504 Program loans that fund fixed assets such as real estate.

The Boise Metro Chamber issued Small Business of the Year Awards to McMillen LLC (10 employees or greater) and Great Western Barbecue Supply LLC (10 employees or fewer). The Chamber's first Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award went to Dr. Taylor Clark of All About You Dental and the Assist to Succeed dental assistant training school – which now fields 20 offices including six in Idaho.

Keys to success boiled down to a few fundamentals, business operators said.

Toni Nielsen, Zions Bank regional president, recognized Zions employees, as well as a number of entities that help small businesses.

Capital Matrix President Deborah Brown said it has been a privilege to work with the company's lending partners.

Mara and Mort McMillen said hiring good employees, and targeting certain segments of their industry for success have helped their firm succeed.

Sherman and Anne Leibow of Great Western Barbecue Supply said that they try to foster a team environment in the office – employees' desks face each other – and that they emphasize promotional and educational support to their dealer base as well as service to the community.

Clark, a published author, said seeking out national experts is an

