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The monthly news magazine of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce

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Steppin’ Out at the 98th Annual Dinner

Neither rain, nor sleet, nor hail, nor major snowstorms could stop the show from going on at the 98th Annual Dinner of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. Not that there weren’t a few anxious weather related moments leading up to the event.

The week started out with news of a major snowstorm that hammered the Washington D.C. area, which happens to be home of the Capitol Steps, scheduled to be the entertainment for the Annual Dinner. That, coupled with local forecasts of up to a foot of snow for the Lansing region caused the Capitol Steps to hurriedly change travel plans (not to mention a few sweaty palms for the Chamber staff) and arrive in Lansing a day early. Fortunately, all worked out and the show went on as planned!

What a show it was! 850 people packed the beautiful Wharton Center for Performing Arts at Michigan State University for a memorable evening of networking, recognitions and a laughter-filled musical performance of political satire from the Capitol Steps.

“The Annual Dinner was everything we all hope for and expect from the region’s premier networking event of the year,” said LRCC Board Chairman Vic Verchereau. “The venue at the Wharton Center was incredible and the energy of the crowd was very high throughout the evening.”

The layout of the Wharton Center combined with the new strolling dinner format proved to be a perfect combination for attendees, many of whom had indicated a desire for increased networking opportunities at the

Annual Dinner. A crowd favorite was clearly the Jackson room, which offered a panoramic view of the Michigan State University campus.

The traditional highlight of the Annual Dinner is the presentation of the region’s premier business awards, Outstanding Small Business Award, Community Service Award, ATHENA PowerLink and the Athena Award, including:

ATHENA Award

Tiffany Dowling, Motion Marketing and Media

Tiffany Dowling was recognized for her commitment to the community, particularly in causes that benefit women. Tiffany and her team members at Motion Marketing and Media donate more than 1,000 hours per year to numerous causes including the Shared Pregnancy Women’s Center, The International League for the Protection of Horses and the Sparrow Foundation. Tiffany is also publisher of Capital Area Women’s Lifestyle Magazine.

ATHENA PowerLink

Linda Hundt, Sweetie-licious Pie Pantry

Linda Hundt pursued her dream and opened Sweetie-licious Pie Pantry in Dewitt. Linda began entering local baking contests to help make a name for herself and her shop within the community. She could have never guessed that she would win Best of Show at the 2009 American Pie Council (APC)/Crisco © National Pie Championships

in Celebration, Fla. In addition to pleasing her Sweetie-licious customers, Linda has also been featured nationally on the Food Network.

Community Service Award

Jeff Hicks, Hicks & Mullett, PLLC

Jeff Hicks was recognized for demonstrating excellence in business, and as an outstanding individual who has given of his time and expertise to numerous organizations in the community. Hicks has served as trustee on the Ingham Regional Healthcare Foundation, Habitat for Humanity-Lansing and the Lansing Sesquicentennial Foundation Board of Directors. He is a member of the Lansing Rotary, currently serving as Rotary Foundation Board Chair. Hicks is a member of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Outstanding Small Business

Public Policy Associates & Jeff Padden

Public Policy Associates was formed in 1991 by Jeff Padden. The company provides public policy expertise and project work for state and federal government organizations, as well non-profit organizations. Beginning with just two employees, the company has grown to 27 employees in 18 years, and currently serves 130 clients across the country. In 2009, the firm was the recipient of an Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business in Workplace Flexibility.

Attendees at the 98th Annual Dinner agreed that the event showcased much of what is great about our region: a world-class university setting, recognition of community leaders committed to building a great community and business leaders supporting growth in the region through a strong Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce.

“The evening was a great celebration of community accomplishments and the Wharton Center was filled with a positive energy for the future,” said Jason Sanders of Fifth Third Bank. “The Lansing region is in great hands with their community leaders.”

Award Winners at the Annual Dinner (l-r) Tiffany Dowling (Athena), Jeff Hicks (Community Service), Jeff Padden (Outstanding Small Business) and Linda Hundt (ATHENA PowerLink)

