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## BizE awards spotlight success stories

### *UptimeLV, Crisci Builders among winners in chamber competition*

BY VALERIE MILLER

It was a shot in the arm for small businesses at a time they need it the most. That's what Las Vegas chamber officials called the third installment of the BizE Awards as hundreds of people turned out to cheer on some of the rare bright spots of the local economy.

The 2008 awards honored companies that were making an impact in Southern Nevada. Winners were kept secret until the Sept. 16. awards luncheon at the Rio. Fafie Moore, chairwoman of the chamber's board of trustees, served as mistress of ceremonies.

"Small business creates three out of every four new jobs," she said. "It's only fitting that we honor some small businesses in these hard times."

The top BizE award of the five given out, Entrepreneur of the Year, went to Shelly Rounds, owner of technology solutions company UptimeLV.

Rounds said the award surprised her.

"I didn't expect to win," she said, adding encouragement to others in her acceptance speech. "A very wise mom and dad said, 'Always do what you love and the money will follow. Never give up.'"

UptimeLV was founded in 2001 in a garage with \$50,000 and last year had revenues of \$2 million. Rounds said her expansion plans required her small business to add an executive to take the 12-employee company to the next level of growth. The company offers outsourced IT functions.



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Fafie Moore, left, chairman of the board of trustees for the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, watches Sept. 16 as Bob Linden of Shred-It Las Vegas gives his acceptance speech after winning the Green Business of the Year award at the third annual BizE Awards at the Rio.

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The ailing economy has made UptimeLV's services even more valuable to businesses, Rounds said. "It (the BizE award) gives us credibility to know we are going to support them and help them through this right now. We can support you on a project so you don't have to spend a lot of money."

Rounds was joined in the winners circle by Crisci Builders as Small Business of the Year and Shred-It Las Vegas as Green Business of the Year. Positively Kids was named Nonprofit of the Year, while KT Graphics snagged the award for Innovative Business of the Year. Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman received the chamber's monthly Circle of Excellence Award.

Goodman joked about the International Lingerie show taking place in the hallway and meeting space next door to the chamber event. The mayor said he was "sad" to be missing the sexier, adjacent trade show.

"I said to (chamber President and CEO) Kara Kelley, 'As mayor I have the power to do this. Can I adjourn this (chamber) meeting?' and she said, 'Mayor behave yourself!'"

Shred-It Las Vegas owner Bob Linden reflected on his younger days in his acceptance speech after receiving the first-ever BizE "Green" award for conservation efforts.

"As an old tree huger, I say, 'Go Green!'" Linden told the lunchtime crowd.

Positively Kids CEO Fred Schultz said he was gratified that his organization had been singled out for the award in field of worthwhile groups.

"With 3,500 nonprofits in town, this is quite an honor," he said.

After the event, Schultz said Positively Kids fills a niche that wouldn't otherwise be met in Nevada. The company supplies assistance and resources to chronically ill children, such as those born with deformities, Schultz explained.

"Children who can't go to normal day care can go to (special) day care ... We are the only agency that focuses on kind of pediatric (support)," Schultz said.

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