Emerald Awards Honor Local Businesses

THE EUGENE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE recognized four local businesses on Sept. 20 at the third annual Emerald Awards ceremony at the Hult Center. The Emerald Awards highlight the important connection between the quality of life in Eugene/Springfield and the success of local business. This year’s Emerald Award winners are Isler CPA, Emerald Award for Community Caring; Rexius, Emerald Award for Environmental Values; SeQuential Biofuels, Emerald Award for Innovation; and Oregon Medical Laboratories, Emerald Award for Job Growth.

ISLER CPA, which received the award for Community Caring, donated 1,500 hours of service to local organizations last year, enabling many charitable agencies to provide valuable services for the community. The time the accounting firm’s 21 employees spent volunteering represents $200,000 of value. In addition, Isler CPA also donated in-kind cash exceeding $32,000 to community organizations.

SEQUENTIAL BIOFUELS was recognized with the Emerald Award for Innovation for turning used cooking oil into biodiesel using a modular manufacturing plant and leading biodiesel efforts in Oregon. By impacting the region and working to find viable solutions to a worldwide energy problem, SeQuential is building an environmental brand for fuel.

REXIUS was recognized with the Emerald Award for Environmental Values for implementing cutting-edge practices to make the business more environmentally friendly. Rexius uses Volkswagen vehicles that are cleaner than the industry standard four-wheel-drive vehicles and also uses environmentally friendly products such as B-20 Biodiesel and best managerial practices (BMPs).

OREGON MEDICAL LABORATORIES (OML), which received the Emerald Award for Job Growth, has continually increased its number of employees between 5 and 10 percent per year. The hospital laboratory for Sacred Heart Medical Center, OML offers an average wage of $18.62 per hour and also offers employees a flexible health care program, free LTD bus passes plus spending accounts for using pretax earnings. Starting wages are above minimum wage at OML, and even part-time employees are eligible for a full benefit package. Longevity and satisfaction are demonstrated by OML employees’ average of nine years worked at the lab.

Thank you to the following businesses for sponsoring the 2006 Emerald Awards: Bank of America, Endeavor Law Group, Smith Barney, Weyerhaeuser Company, KEZL-TV, KMTR News Source 16, Fox/KEVU TV, Comcast and Monaco Coach.