



**Oak Tree Communications, LLC**  
Melinda Zemper, President  
**(513) 706-3737**  
[www.oaktreecommunications.com](http://www.oaktreecommunications.com)  
*"Growing Your Influence Through Media"*

Contact: Melinda Zemper  
Phone: (513) 706-3737

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## SCORE Announces 2009 Clients of the Year

*Cooking instruction, childcare, and consignment clothing businesses lauded*

Consumer focus on necessities this year helped fuel the success of three emerging small businesses in the greater Cincinnati area.

The Learning Kitchen of West Chester, Skiddadles of Florence, Kentucky, and Children's Designer Boutique in Hebron, Kentucky took top honors this year at the 2009 John J. Frank Client of the Year awards.

The awards are given by Greater Cincinnati SCORE chapter 34, which selects firms for their outstanding business development and growth. The Cincinnati SCORE chapter serves southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. Its 83 working and retired executives and business owners volunteer to help entrepreneurs and new business owners through no-cost, confidential counseling and low-cost workshops.

Jennifer Vogel and Doreen Grontkowski were named top SCORE Client of the Year for the Learning Kitchen, a hands-on cooking school and retail store based in Union Centre in West Chester. The Learning Kitchen offers cooking classes to individuals to

improve cook-at-home skills and civic and business groups who wish to engage in team building. Vogel and Grontkowski worked with SCORE counselors Mary Jane Good and John Zuske for a year before opening the store in summer, 2008.

"We were very impressed with how they identified the unfilled need in the area for a hands-on school versus several demonstration schools," said Good. "They recognized the desire of participants to do preparation and cooking, not just watch someone else do it. "

Good said she and Zuske helped develop The Learning Kitchen's business plan, made suggestions on store layout, reviewed financial projections, and challenged assumptions. They encouraged Vogel and Grontkowski to create a detailed time-line of what needed to be done, who needed to do it, and when it needed to be accomplished.

Tiffany Sams, owner of Skiddadles, an anytime child care company with expanded evening hours, was named first runner-up. Skiddadles is located in Florence, Kentucky. SCORE counselor Bill DiGrezio helped this firm, reviewing its marketing and business plans, and aiding with business growth.

"Tiffany is an astute business manager, a quick study," said DiGrezio. " She has had many requests from other businesspeople to become a franchise."

SCORE chair Tom Moon. “Our counselors are continually energized by client successes as local entrepreneurs and small business owners increasingly seek out SCORE counselors who can help them start their businesses or run them better.”

The Cincinnati SCORE chapter estimates it helped create 400 jobs locally this year. SCORE Chapter 34 was recognized as national SCORE Chapter of the Year in 2005, and was a finalist in both 2006 and 2007.

SCORE, a volunteer arm of the Small Business Administration, has 389 chapters in the U.S., with 10,500 volunteers nationwide. Since 1964, the organization has assisted more than seven million entrepreneurs and small business owners.

SCORE recently moved to new offices at 525 Vine St., Suite 1030. For more information, contact [www.scoreworks.org](http://www.scoreworks.org) or call the office at (513) 684-2812.

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