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### **Cincinnati SCORE Selects Top Clients of the Year**

*Local cabinetry, resort travel, and restaurant are among businesses lauded*

A high-end cabinetry business owner, resort vacations wholesaler, and local restaurateur were selected the top three winners of the 2007 John J. Frank Client of the Year awards given recently by the Greater Cincinnati SCORE chapter 34.

The ceremony was held at SCORE's annual luncheon meeting at the Kenwood Country Club.

The Greater Cincinnati SCORE chapter serves southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. Its 83 working and retired executives and business owners volunteer to help aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners through confidential counseling and low-cost workshops.

Sherri and Victor Machado of National Millwork, Inc. of Mount Healthy were named top SCORE Client of the Year. The Machados specialize in creating custom cabinetry for financial institutions nationwide, and have worked with SCORE counselors Pat Brady and Ralph Lowenstein for four years.

The Machados anticipate revenues of \$3.2 million this year, up from \$3 million last year. They own a 40,000 square foot factory on Hamilton Avenue in Cincinnati.

“Our concept has been to do an excellent job for the customer and to be proud of what we do,” said Sherrie Machado, National Millwork, Inc. vice-president.

“They were successful when I met them, and even more successful after I met them, a fantastic business-minded couple,” said Lowenstein.

Berrece Andrews of Mason was named first runner-up. He is president of NextLevel Vacations, an online resort vacation wholesaler. Andrews was inspired to form his business while on vacation in the Caribbean in 2005, just one month after retiring from P&G. He offers travel agents, travel agencies, corporations, groups and nonprofit organizations resort vacations at wholesale prices.

He has worked with SCORE counselors Bill Haman and Jerry Agin for three years to organize and establish his business.

Revenues his first year were in six figures, and Andrews estimates he’ll have annual revenues of a million dollars by 2010.

“The SCORE seminars helped a lot,” said Andrews, “because they were relevant. I could choose what topics were important to my development at that time. My counselors and I talk a lot about focus and opportunities. We developed a business plan focused on slow, methodical growth, and to seize opportunity as it came along.”

Second runner-ups were John and Molly Caldwell, owners of Through the Garden, a Blue Ash restaurant. SCORE counselor Alex Nasiri met them in the spring of 2008, and quickly helped them increase profits when they were discouraged and thinking of quitting the business.

The Top Ten finalists were: Amy Collins, of the Cadence Group; Fabienne Christenson, of Possets; Rebecca Ewing of United Ministries; Bruce Keaton of Predator Trac; Elizabeth Na of Elizabeth Na, CPA; Maria Ramos of Innova Engineering; and Beth Zahneis of Zahneis Law Firm.

“Each year the selection of our top Client of the Year gets more difficult,” said SCORE chair Bill Haman. “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 7 million entrepreneurs and small business owners. For more information, contact [www.scoreworks.org](http://www.scoreworks.org)

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