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Bowers, Kubota get Hawaii's top SBA honor

Pacific Business News

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Brian Bowers and **Dexter Kubota** of the architectural/engineering firm Bowers + Kubota Consulting Inc. have won the 2011 SBA Small Business Person of the Year award for the state of Hawaii. Bowers and Kubota will represent Hawaii at the U.S. [Small Business Administration](#)'s National Small Business Person of the Year competition in Washington, D.C.

Along with Bowers and Kubota, the SBA has named Hawaii's 2011 Small Business Administration Award winners in 11 categories.

The awards recognize small-business owners, advocates and entrepreneurs who show business skills and tenacity to excel in their industry, according to the SBA.

County by county winners for Small Business Person of the Year are:

- **Blake Kolona**, president of Kolona Painting and General Construction on Oahu;
- **Michael McKinney** (president), and **Christopher Kaiser** (vice president) of Pacific Quest Corp. on the Big Island;
- Rob and Lois Silverman, owners of Rob's Good Times Grill on Kauai;
- **Mariah Brown** and **Les Tomita** of Restaurant Destination Inc, doing business as Da Kitchen on Maui.

The Entrepreneurial Success Award winner is **Robert Fujimoto**, chairman of **HPM Building Supply** Ltd. on the Big Island.

County by county winners for Family Owned Small Business are:

- **Alan Okami**, vice president of KoAloha Inc., doing business as KoAloha Ukulele, on Oahu;
- **Curtis Takaoka**, owner of Tasty Crust Inc. on Maui;
- Orville "Puhi" and **Melynda Dant** of Fair Wind Inc. on the Big Island;

- Drs. Gordon, Jared and **Lester Kanemaru** of Kanemaru Dental Group Inc. on Oahu.

The Small Business Exporter Award winners are:

- **Joseph Rossi**, president & owner of Maui Babe Inc. on Maui;
- **Stephen Mulgrew**, president of Mulvadi Corp. on Oahu.

The Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award winner for 2011 is **Daniel Wright**, owner of Tambor on Kauai.

The Financial Services Champion Award winners are:

- **Patrick Garcia**, partner and business consultant at Strategic Financial Concepts LLC;
- **Rodney Batara**, partner and CPA at Hedberg, Batara & Vaughan-Sarandi LLC on Oahu.

The Women in Business Champion Award winner is **Judy Bishop** of **Bishop and Co.** on Oahu.

The Minority Small Business Champion Award winners are:

- **Eddie Flores Jr.**, president and CEO of L&L Drive-Inn and **L&L Hawaiian Barbecue**;
- **Claire Tanamoto**, president of **Empower Oahu**;
- **Melissa McFerrin Warrack**, executive administrator at the Kauai County Farm Bureau;
- **Kai Pelayo**, **Maui Native Hawaiian Chamber** and **Grand Wailea Resort** on Maui;
- **Marah J. Hardt**, owner and consultant at Oceanlink on the Big Island.

The Home Based Business Award goes to:

- Roger Lane, president of **Roger Lane Inc.** on Maui;
- **Shane Griffin** of Kai Oli Oli – Ocean Joy Cruises on Oahu.

The Veteran Small Business Champion's Award winners are:

- Henry "Hank" Cashen, director of the Soldier & Family Assistance Center, **U.S. Army** at Schofield Barracks, on Oahu;
- **Melvin Arai**, veterans employment representative for the state of Hawaii.

The Tibbetts Award for Innovation winner is **David Kane**, Trex Hawaii-Advanced Materials Group on Kauai.

The winners will be recognized at the 24th-annual SBA Small Business Awards luncheon at the Hilton Hawaiian Village on April 29 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The luncheon is hosted by the **Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii**.