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Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Announces 2019 Business Award Winners and Finalists *CAVA, Deborah Marriott Harrison, Sandy Spring Bank Among Honorees for This Year's Event*

ROCKVILLE, MD: On Thursday, November 21, 2019, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) will host its 2019 Business Awards Dinner. This event will celebrate the best of Montgomery County's business community, with over 800 guests expected to attend. The Business Awards Dinner takes place from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in North Bethesda, Maryland.

The event will begin with an invitation-only Award Winners Reception at 5:00 p.m., sponsored by **Marriott International, Inc.** Following the Award Winners Reception, all attendees are invited to attend the General Reception at 6:00 p.m. This reception is sponsored by **Penn Parking.**

The dinner and awards ceremony will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. This year's honorees are:

- CAVA
- BOLAND
- Sandy Spring Bank
- The Tower Companies
- Deborah Marriott Harrison, Marriott International Global Cultural Ambassador Emeritus
- Bruce E. Lansdowne, President & CEO of Trinity Technology Partners, Inc.
- José L. Arrieta, Chief Information Officer, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
- Ahmed R. Ali, Founder and President, TISTA Science and Technology Corporation
- Award Finalists: Adaptive Phage Therapeutics, INKY, and LunchSkins

Spirit of Free Enterprise

The 2019 Spirit of Free Enterprise Award Winner is **CAVA**. This award is presented to an individual or company that is successful in business, a leader in promoting free enterprise and a competitive business climate and actively involved in making Metro Maryland a great place to live, work, and play. This award will be presented by **CohnReznick LLP.**

Corporate Social Responsibility

BOLAND is this year's Corporate Social Responsibility Award Winner. This award is presented to an individual or company that has demonstrated exemplary business practices, dedicated involvement and unyielding commitment to community service and volunteer programs that enrich the lives of Metro Maryland residents.

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

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“Being a local business since 1960, we are deeply committed to our community and to the people who live and work here,” said **Lou Boland**, Executive Vice President of BOLAND. “Helping others is deeply rooted in our DNA and our culture, and we are proud to give back to the community where we live and work.”

This award will be co-presented by **Shapiro & Duncan, Inc.** and **Clark Construction Group, LLC.**

Corporate Achievement

The 2019 Corporate Achievement Award is being awarded to **Sandy Spring Bank**. This award is presented to an individual or company that demonstrates leadership, innovation, commitment, and good corporate citizenship in Metro Maryland and beyond. The awardee has set consistently high standards for financial performance, sound management, and sustained growth over a period of many years, and has made significant and lasting contributions to the local economy and the community.

“It is an honor to be recognized by the local business community in this way,” said **Daniel J. Schrider**, President and CEO of Sandy Spring Bank. “Our culture is rooted in our commitment to our employees, clients, and communities - and it drives how we do business. For us, this means that how we engage with people, how we value people, and how we conduct ourselves is equally as important as what we achieve. This approach builds trust and it will help us achieve long-term, sustainable success.”

Green Business Innovator of the Year

The Tower Companies is this year’s Green Business Innovator of the Year. This award is presented to an individual or company in Metro Maryland that demonstrates ecologically-integrated business practices and leads change in the marketplace through the goods and services they provide. This award will be co-presented by the **Montgomery County Departments of General Services and Environmental Protection.**

“We are delighted and honored to be recognized by the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce as the 2019 Green Business Innovator of the Year,” said **Jeffrey Abramson**, partner at The Tower Companies. “Our family has always been driven by a deep sense of responsibility to transform the real estate industry and yield a positive impact for all people and our planet. It’s in our DNA as a company, but climate change is everyone’s responsibility. We urge all business owners to take a leadership role by finding ways to address our global climate crisis through their day to day operations - and join us to be a catalyst for change.”

Emeritus Business Leader of the Year

Deborah Marriott Harrison is the 2019 Emeritus Business Leader of the Year. She currently serves as **Marriott International** Global Cultural Ambassador Emeritus. This award is presented to an individual approaching or newly retired and has had a substantial impact on the way business is conducted in Metro Maryland and who has shown, through many years of active and continuing service, a true commitment to the Community.

“I am deeply honored by this tremendous recognition and I thank my peer members of the Chamber for the nomination,” said **Marriott Harrison**. “My work would not have been possible without the contributions of my grandparents, **J.W. and Alice Marriott** who started this company in 1927, my father, **Bill Marriott**, who continued their legacy, and the more than 700,000 people around the world who wear a Marriott name badge. Together, we work each day to uphold a vision of creating opportunities – for our guests, our associates and the local communities where we operate. As I retire, I look forward to finding new ways to contribute to Montgomery County, my home.”

Business Partner of the Year

Bruce E. Lansdowne, President & CEO of **Trinity Technology Partners, Inc.**, is the 2019 Business Partner of the Year. This awardee is nominated annually by the **MCCC GovConNet Council**. The goal of this award is to recognize a business that demonstrates excellence in subcontracting and/or supports small business to accelerate their success, and meets the mission of GovConNet, "to promote the economic impact of the federal government presence and to advocate on behalf of the contracting community for business opportunities." This year's award is sponsored by **Sandy Spring Bank**.

"I am thrilled to be recognized by the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the GovConNet Council for my passion for helping small businesses succeed in the Federal government contracting space," said **Lansdowne**. "I am honored to advocate for Trinity Technology Partners, Inc., as well as the vast array of businesses across the Country. I plan to continue working to improve accountability and transparency until we have reached and are equipped to maintain a fair and equitable playing field."

Government Partner of the Year

José L. Arrieta, Chief Information Officer of the **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**, is the 2019 Government Partner of the Year. This award recognizes a public partner who supports the mission of GovConNet and is also nominated by the GovConNet Council. This year's award will be co-presented by **CONTEMPORARIES, Inc.** and **United Solutions LLC**.

Small Business Leader of the Year

The Small Business Leader of the Year is **Ahmed R. Ali**, Founder and President of **TISTA Science and Technology Corporation**. This award is presented to a successful small business owner or manager with 500 or fewer employees whose business has experienced substantial growth and whose leadership provided a positive impact on the business community in Metro Maryland. This award will be presented by **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield**.

"On behalf of our TISTA employees, I'm humbled and honored by this award and recognition of our employees' collective, dedicated and innovative work in support of our customers' mission," said **Ali**.

Verl Zanders Emerging Business of the Year Finalists

In addition to the 2019 Business Award Winners, MCCC's **Business Awards Dinner Committee** annually selects three businesses as **Verl Zanders Emerging Business of the Year Finalists**. This award is presented to an emerging company on the leading edge of innovation by creating milestones in technology and/or business that has achieved enhanced earnings and contributed to Metro Maryland's reputation as an outstanding place to do business. The winner of the Emerging Business of the Year Award is announced live during the event.

Previous winners of this award include HonestTea, Sweetgreen, WeddingWire, and Hungry Harvest. This year's Emerging Business of the Year Finalists are:

- Adaptive Phage Therapeutics
- INKY
- LunchSkins

Adaptive Phage Therapeutics (APT) is a clinical-stage company founded to provide an effective therapeutic response to the global rise of multi-drug resistant pathogenic bacteria. Since 2016, APT's technology has been used to rescue critically ill patients in which standard-of-care antibiotics have failed.

“APT is thrilled to be recognized as a Verl Zanders Emerging Business Finalist! Our phage therapy approach is emerging as a key to deal with the worldwide superbug crisis,” said **Greg Merrill**, CEO of Adaptive Phage Therapeutics. “Advancing this cure is a 50+ year dream of our co-Founder, **Dr. Carl Merrill**.”

INKY leads the industry in mail protection powered by unique computer vision, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. The company’s flagship product, INKY Phish Fence, uses these novel techniques to "see" each email - much like a human does - in order to block phishing attacks that get through every other system.

LunchSkins reusable and recyclable bags are a patent-pending, stylish, durable, affordable, and award-winning alternative to single-use plastics bags. LunchSkins donates proceeds from every order to a non-profit partner that helps fight against plastic pollution in our oceans.

“It is a huge honor to be a finalist for the Verl Zanders Emerging Business Award and I thank Montgomery County for being a great launchpad for sustainable brands like LunchSkins,” said **Kirsten B. Quigley**, Founder and CEO of LunchSkins. “The region’s focus on health and wellness and its knowledgeable and diverse consumers have made it a perfect fit for us to grow from a local innovation to national distribution. As a woman entrepreneur, I am grateful for the support from the business community to help break down barriers to growth and nurture our success and the success of future entrepreneurs in Montgomery County.”

For a list of previous award winners and to learn more about registration, visit mcccmd.com/businessawards.

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About the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) is a membership organization that accelerates members’ success through effective advocacy, programs, and events. Its membership includes small, medium, and large organizations representing a wide range of industries. For more information, visit www.mcccmd.com.

About Verl Zanders

In 2008, the MCCC Board of Directors approved renaming the “Emerging Business of the Year Award” in honor of the late Verl Zanders, Founder of Z-Tech. For many MCCC members, their first introduction to Mr. Zanders was on the Business Awards stage in 2006, when Z-Tech was named the Emerging Business of the Year. From 2006-2008, he served on MCCC’s Board of Directors and was the first Vice-Chair of MCCC’s Small Business Committee.

In 2007, ICF International acquired Z-Tech. Soon after selling his company, he joined the Chamber’s staff as Director of Business Development. Before founding Z-Tech, Mr. Zanders worked for more than 30 years in the Federal government as a contracting officer and a small business representative. Mr. Zanders was the inspiration behind the Chamber’s GovConNet and was passionate about growing Maryland’s Federal contracting community.