

St. Croix EDC Names Top Businesses for 2011

February 16th Banquet will Honor Winners

Ryan Sicard, president of St. Croix Economic Development Corporation, announced the EDC's selection of the following companies as recipients of the 2011 business of the year awards in St. Croix County, Wisconsin:

Future Farm Food and Fuel, LLC (rural Baldwin) as 2011 Emerging Business of the Year (based in St. Croix County and in business for five or fewer years)

Stevens Engineers (Hudson) as 2011 Small Business of the Year (29 or fewer employees)

Sajan, Inc. (River Falls) as 2011 Business of the Year (30 or more employees)

"This year's award winners reflect the diversity of businesses in St. Croix County," said EDC president Ryan Sicard. "Future Farm introduces sustainable elements that are aligned with new products in modern agriculture. Stevens Engineers has a track record of more than 35 years, and now it is a certified women's business enterprise. Sajan is a home-grown, high-tech company that has a global footprint with offices in North America, Europe, and Asia."

The companies will be honored at an awards banquet on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at Kilkarney Hills (rural River Falls, Wisconsin).

About the 2011 Winners

Future Farm Food and Fuel (www.afuturefarm.com): The terms 'sustainable', 'green' and 'locally grown' are increasingly important among consumers. John Vrieze of Baldwin Dairy and business partner Steve Meyer had a vision to complement Vrieze's Baldwin Dairy, a 100+ year-old family farm. They created Future Farm to use the waste streams of farms and other operations to create food, fuel and revenue and to reduce the impact on the environment. Meyer serves as director of operations for Future Farm. The state-of-the-art aquaponic greenhouse in rural Baldwin uses the fuel from the dairy farm to minimize CO2 emissions, which

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reduces the carbon footprint. The 27,000 square foot aquaponic and hydroponic system produces all-natural vegetables and tilapia fish without chemicals or pesticides. Fancy leaf lettuce, vegetables, and herbs are grown in an environment powered by biogas from the nearby dairy farm. The tilapia provide nutrient rich water that fertilizes the plants so commercial chemicals are not needed. Future Farms also produces a natural fertilizer that is especially created for the consumer market. The company provides consulting services to help other dairy operations enter the sustainable, locally grown markets.

Stevens Engineers, Inc. (www.stevensengineers.com): Stevens has been providing professional engineering and planning services to public and private sector clients since 1973. Their clients include municipalities, counties, state agencies, watershed districts, and private entities. Angela Popenhagen and Scott Ward are the principals of Stevens, having purchased the company from the previous owner in February 2007. Popenhagen is a LEED Accredited Professional and with her majority interest in the company, Stevens Engineers is a certified women's business enterprise. Ward has gained a strong, national reputation in planning, consulting, and designing ice rinks. This has allowed Stevens to provide consulting services on over 100 ice rink projects such as the Phoenix Coyotes training facility (Scottsdale, AZ); Ice Skating Center (Pasadena, CA); Schwan's Super Rink at the National Sports Center (Blaine, MN) Division 1 colleges facilities such as Amsoil Arena (Duluth, MN); Sanford Center (Bemidji, MN) and Kohl Center expansion (Madison, WI). Other services provided by Stevens include

comprehensive planning, geographic information (GIS), surveying, and site and land development.

Sajan, Inc. (www.sajan.com):

Sajan was found in 1997 by Shannon Zimmerman and his wife and partner Angel Zimmerman. The business emerged as a technology company but in responding to market demands, quickly adapted the offering to blend both language technology and service as a way to offer a more complete solution to clients. Today, Sajan is the leading global provider of cloud-based language translation services and software. Sajan has global companies as clients that are served in offices in the U.S., Europe, Asia and India. From River Falls, the company provides language translation solutions to customers selling their products into global markets or those customers otherwise requiring language translation of many varieties of content. Language is often a barrier in global commerce, and the demand

for effective language translation continues to grow. Sajan offers consulting services, solutions services, and managed services to its clients. Industries served include life sciences, software, e-commerce, manufacturing, legal, and travel, hospitality and leisure.

This is the 18th annual business recognition program for St. Croix EDC. The EDC was established in 1993 as a private, non-for-profit organization that operates as the independent economic development of St. Croix County, Wisconsin. Reflective activities include marketing and communications, business retention, expansion, recruitment, new business start-ups, and legislative advocacy.

For additional information, please contact William Rubin at (715) 381-4383.



Last year's 2010 Business of the Year winners (l to r): Steve Weinzierl and Michael Fuchs of Engineered Propulsion Systems, Inc.; Director's Award recipient John D. Soderberg; Greg Mitsch, of GaMra Composites, Inc.; and Todd and Jerry Gilbert of Valley Cartage, Inc.