

PREVIOUS SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR WINNERS HOW ARE THEY NOW?

With this year's nominees for the Chamber's Small Business of the Year award, the *Business View* editors decided to take a look back and see what has happened to our previous winners and how being Small Business of the Year affected their businesses.

2015 - McAleer's Office Furniture

Melissa Cross, president
mcaleers.com



What made you apply to be the Chamber's Small Business of the Year? More than anything, I wanted to recognize our dedicated employees and all the hard work it has taken to be successful. We definitely couldn't have done it without them. Sharing in this victory made us all so happy and proud to be a part of something wonderful.

What has winning this award done for you or your business? I'd be lying if I didn't say how much I greatly enjoyed the visibility that being the Mobile Chamber's Small Business of the Year gave to McAleer's Office Furniture. The Chamber plays such a crucial role in Mobile's business community, and winning their most prestigious small business award provided us a recognition that we still enjoy today.

What advice would you give to this year's finalists? Being celebrated as one of the top three small businesses in Mobile is a huge honor, especially when you consider all of the amazing businesses in our community. Enjoy it!

2016 - B&B Pet Stop

Sally Trufant, general manager
bbpetstop.com

What made you apply to be the Chamber's Small Business of the Year? I don't remember why we applied – it seemed like a good idea at the time!

What has winning this award done for you or your business? The recognition by the Chamber put a little pep in our step and is something we used at the time to commend our krewe and congratulate them for being on a winning team. It's a little bit of the secret sauce contributing to the sense that we're doing good work here and we can be proud of ourselves.

What advice would you give to this year's finalists? Embrace what makes you special. Whatever it is that makes your business stand out, or makes your business successful, go all in on that.



Anyone who is a finalist for this award is doing something right. I advise them to focus on that and make it as much fun as possible.