That business spirit

Eleven Santa Barbara business women honored at Bacara

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The business community honored 11 Santa Barbara women at the Bacara Resort & Spa on Friday night with the 2016 Spirit of Entrepreneurship Awards.

The gala affair recognized the impact this group has in Santa Barbara County, not just through their own individual efforts, but the revenue brought in to our county and the jobs that their businesses have created.

Cathy Feldman, CEO of Spirit of Entrepreneurship, said the 30 finalists bring in "gross revenues that total approximately $32 million and employ 450 people, mostly in Santa Barbara County."

10 winners were chosen by a group of independent judges who do not live in Santa Barbara and who are not affiliated with the organization. The Life Achievement Award winner, Sara Miller McCune, was previously selected by the board of the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Foundation.

The winners of the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Awards:

- Morgan Clendenen was honored for Cold Heaven Cellars, the Buellton-based winery where she is owner and winemaker, producing short runs of wines from syrah to viognier. Cold Heaven Cellars began 20 years ago, ahead of the Santa Barbara wine renaissance.

- Norah Eddy, co-owner of Salty Girl Seafood, was honored for her emerging business and its commitment to her sustainable fishing company that
understands the concerns of modern food consumers. Her company, which she founded with Laura Johnson, rigorously screens the seafood sold under its name.

- Also honored in the seafood business was Randee Disraeli, co-founder of Kanaloa Seafood, not just for promoting local seafood, but for being the first certified environmentally responsible seafood company in North America. Ms. Disraeli was honored under the Green/Social Entrepreneurship.

- Robin Walker of Core Fitness Training was honored in the health category for her business on Hollister Avenue. The former body builder oversees the training of all her instructors and often speaks to groups on the importance of fitness and health.

- In the tourism category, Sherry Villanueva of Acme Hospitality was honored. Her business is best known for its list of boutique eateries: The Lark, Lucky Penny, Les Marchands, Santa Barbara Wine Collective, Notary Public wines, and the upcoming Helena Ave. Bakery.

- Kristi Cooper won in the media/communications category with her Pilates Anytime website, which offers the world the chance to sit in on over 2,000 different classes.

- Nathalie Gensac was honored for her non-profit Youth Interactive, the FunkZone location that offers kids a chance to start up their own businesses and teaching the business side of art.

- Honored for Professional Services, Judy Hawkins and her Ruby Road Leadership took the prize for her training and leadership services that advance entrepreneurial cultures.

- Mahri Kerley, owner of beloved Santa Barbara institution Chaucer's Books was honored for retail.

- Andrea Neal of Blue Ocean Sciences was honored for Science and Technology. Her business provides fast and efficient water testing services to both the consumer and professional customers.

In a special Life Achievement Award, Sara Miller McCune was honored for her philanthropy, her 50-plus years as the Founder and owner of SAGE Publications, and the owner of Pacific Standard magazine. The Rock Star - as the award is called - also honored the influence she has had on other female entrepreneurs.