



ACG Louisiana Announces Eighth Annual ACG Louisiana Awards Winners, Recognizing Growth Companies, Business Professionals and Noteworthy Transactions from the State of Louisiana

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New Orleans, LA—Today, ACG Louisiana (the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Corporate Growth) announced the award winners for the eighth annual ACG Louisiana Awards, presented by Whitney Bank. These awards recognize growth companies, business professionals and noteworthy transactions from the State of Louisiana. The winners will be honored at an awards dinner on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at the Roosevelt Hotel New Orleans, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The reception will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a seated dinner at 7:00 p.m., following the reception. Sponsorships (\$1000-\$10,000) for the event and tickets (\$100 for ACG members, \$150 for guests and non-members) are available for purchase on the website, www.acg.org/louisiana.

The categories and award winners are as follows:

Outstanding Corporate Growth

Reily Foods Company was founded in New Orleans in 1902 as a coffee roasting, packaging and distribution company. Today Reily Foods Company manufactures and markets well-known brands such as Blue Plate Mayonnaise, Luzianne Tea, CDM Coffee & Chicory and French Market Coffee, La Martinique Salad Dressings, Wick Fowler and Carroll Shelby Chili Kits, and Swans Down Cake Flour. Most recently, Reily Foods purchased New England Tea & Coffee Company, in Malden, MA, making Reily Foods one of the largest independent coffee roasters in the country. With a network of three manufacturing facilities and strong food safety credentials, Reily Foods is also sought after as a manufacturer of private label items for a number of the country's largest grocery and restaurant customers.

Emerging Growth Company

Republic Business Credit is a commercial finance company headquartered in New Orleans with regional offices in Chicago, Illinois and Houston, Texas. Twenty one of the twenty four full time employees are located in the New Orleans headquarters. RBC specializes in secured working capital loans up to \$5 million to lower and middle market businesses going through turnaround and growth phases. Since inception, the company has financed over \$1.2 billion of working capital advances. In its first 4 years of operations, RBC has averaged over a 30% compound annual growth rate. The company, which returned an operating profit in year 2, has operating returns on average equity over the last 3 years in the high teens. Despite operating in a competitive and challenging industry dominated by companies in much larger cities, the company has thrived while being headquartered in New Orleans. The company is co-managed by Allen Frederic, Jr., CEO, a 40 year banking and finance veteran in New Orleans and Stewart Chesters, an English transplant to New Orleans who previously served as the U.S. CEO of Bibby Financial, a 200 year old shipping and finance company headquartered in England. RBC is owned by its co-managers and other private and institutional investors.

Deal Of The Year

Albemarle Corporation, On July 15, 2014, Albemarle Corporation (NYSE:ALB) and Rockwood Holdings, INC. (NYSE:ROC) announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement under which Albemarle will acquire all outstanding shares of Rockwood in a cash and stock transaction valued at approximately \$6.2 billion. The combination reflects both companies' commitment to drive sustainable growth, creating one of the world's premier specialty chemical companies, with market-leading positions across four high-margin businesses: lithium, catalysts, bromine and surface treatment. On January 12, 2015, Albemarle announced that they closed the transaction.



Emerging Young Leader

Benjamin D. Cappiello is the inventor of Bioceptive's core technologies and the scientific founder of the company. He devised the initial concept while a biomedical engineering student at Tulane University and brought together the management team and founded the company following his graduation. The company has recently received FDA clearance on its platform technology, a method to engage the cervix for use in a variety of women's health therapeutic and diagnostic procedures. In addition, the company recently received ISO 13485 certification, opening the door to a global launch of its products. Bioceptive has raised approximately \$3 million in venture capital, angel, foundation, and grant dollars and are poised for growth in the coming years. The company is based in the New Orleans BioInnovation Center.

Dealmaker Of The Year

Daniel O. Conwill IV, On December 31, 2013, Global Hunter Securities, LLC combined its operations with Sea Port Group Securities LLC to form a combined firm with approximately 300 employees located in 21 offices across the United States. Danny Conwill heads the firm's investment banking division which, during 2014 included the operations of both Global Hunter Securities, LLC and Sea Port Group Securities LLC, which were combined to form Seaport Global Securities LLC during the year. Based out of the New Orleans office, Danny oversees the Seaport Global investment banking team, which participated in 44 transactions in 2014 raising an aggregate of almost \$12 billion in capital for issuing companies. The firm also facilitated numerous mergers, acquisitions, corporate restructuring and provided advice in connection with corporate strategy and business development. Although many of the transactions involve non-Louisiana companies, the worldwide headquarters for the Seaport Global investment banking operations is located in the New Orleans office.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Robert Merrick, Merrick, built his career on a foundation of commercial real estate. He bought Latter & Blum in 1986 and rapidly brought almost 40 real estate firms under the company's wing. Over the past several decades, Merrick has built the largest real estate business in the Gulf South and one of the largest in the country. The Latter & Blum chairman has showered millions of dollars and many volunteer hours on dozens of groups, with some of his most substantial investments benefiting the American Red Cross, Boy Scouts of America, Junior Achievement, Habitat for Humanity, March of Dimes, the Fore Kids Foundation and the University of New Orleans. The American Red Cross honored him as its Humanitarian of the Year in 2005, and in 2012 named him to its Chairman's Council, which recognizes donors whose cumulative giving to the organization exceeds \$1 million. In December 2014, the University of New Orleans (UNO) awarded Merrick an honorary doctorate. Merrick has chaired the UNO business school advisory board as well as the university's board of trustees. He endowed a chair in real estate; helped create the Max Derbes III Professorship in real estate; made substantial donations to the university's economic research division; and recently gave \$100,000 to support scholarships and graduate programs in coastal sciences and engineering. In the past year, his charitable efforts hit a new high when he made a single \$1 million gift to the United Way of Southeast Louisiana, becoming the first person in the state to join an elite circle of million-dollar donors to United Way worldwide. Meanwhile, Latter & Blum continues to expand its territory and now operates 35 offices in Louisiana and Mississippi. Merrick expects to complete several more corporate acquisitions in the next few months and says the company's 2014 real estate transaction values will set a new high. In late December, he predicted Latter & Blum would end the year with \$3 billion in sales.

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The Association for Corporate Growth (ACG) is the global community for middle market M&A dealmakers and business leaders focused on driving growth. ACG members have access to data, content and networking to access capital, make deals and drive corporate growth. Founded in 1954, ACG has grown to more than 13,000 members organized in 56 chapters throughout North America, Europe and Asia. For more information, please visit www.acg.org.

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