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MOST ADMIRED COMPANIES 2013

SD METRO is proud to present – for 2013 – companies and organizations that have earned the trust and loyalty of their constituencies by adhering to high standards of professionalism, integrity and accountability.



Shea Homes:

Bolstered by their core values of honesty and integrity, respect for the individual, teamwork and competitive spirit, the J.F. Shea Company remains one of the few third- and fourth-generation family-owned businesses remaining in the country. Founded in 1881, the Shea family and its companies have worked on some of the country's most notable projects, including the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) and the Hoover Dam. It lent its construction expertise to many other tunneling and dam public works projects, as well as ship-building during World War II. Moving into housing in 1968, Shea established a San Diego operation in 1986. Specializing in single-family attached and detached residences, Shea Homes San Diego continues to be a leader in the local housing market, offering homes for first-time buyers through the luxury market. Shea is heavily involved in numerous charitable ventures, such as a multi-faceted literacy program that urges parents to "Read With Your Child 15 Minutes A Day," and has given away much of its model home furnishings to military families. Shea Home was the first "for sale" builder to open a new project in the Civita master-planned community in Mission Valley. Shea has been the recipient of the prestigious J.D. Power Customer Service Champion Award two years in a row.



Higgs Fletcher & Mack

Higgs Fletcher & Mack's start in San Diego dates back to 1939. While the firm has grown to over 140 employees since then, its business philosophy and principles have remained the same: be good to your employees, work hard for your clients, and give back to the community that you serve. Higgs demonstrates this not just as a principle but also as a practice. A major component of Higgs' philanthropic endeavors is its commitment to diversity and advancement in education. Each year, Higgs participates in the SDCBA's Diversity Fellowship Summer Intern program, pairing a law student with a senior attorney to get hands-on, paid experience in the practice area in which they are interested. Not only do they offer their time for learning opportunities, they provide generous contributions to help the advancement of law students through their annual \$10,000 scholarship, given to deserving University of San Diego diverse law student. Over the past five years, Higgs' attorneys have collectively contributed more than 450,000 in Diversity scholarship funds through USD School of Law. They have also expanded their giving this year to include California Western School of Law. Higgs has also taken a strong interest in increasing the diversity of its staff — significantly growing the number of minority and women partners and associates within the firm over the past several years. This year one of Higgs' most senior female partners, Susan Hack, received the Daniel T. Broderick Award, known in the legal community as the "Oscar" for attorneys. The award is given to a lawyer in private practice with substantial civil litigation experience who epitomizes the highest principles of civility, integrity and professionalism. Higgs has consistently been ranked in U.S. News-Best Lawyers rankings for many years. The firm has 72 lawyers and since 2011 has grown by nearly 25 percent, adding 28 lawyers to its ranks.



California Bank & Trust

Voted "San Diego's Best Bank" for three years in a row, California Bank & Trust (CB&T) has always been proud to call San Diego its home. With a rich history of serving the San Diego community for over 60 years, CB&T is now the largest financial institution headquartered in San Diego with 475 employees in the region and assets that exceed \$11 billion. As specialists in business banking, CB&T not only meets the needs of area business leaders, but has set deep roots in the local community through 30 branch offices located throughout the area. Indeed, CB&T's focus extends beyond highly sophisticated financial products and services. Each of the bank's experienced and seasoned business bankers is dedicated to developing strong relationships with clients and takes great pride in not only meeting, but exceeding client expectations. CB&T's local roots begins with its leadership. Troy Nixon, president of CB&T's San Diego Division, has lived and been actively involved in the San Diego community for the past 25 years. He earned his B.S. degree in business administration from San Diego State University where he was captain of the football team. He received his MBA from USC's Marshall School of Business. CB&T employees donate thousands of hours of time each year volunteering for local organizations to assist disadvantaged families, helping underprivileged people start businesses, and working to improve the educational opportunities for San Diego's youth.



Hughes Marino:

When Jason Hughes and Dave Marino set out to form Hughes Marino, they aimed to create a different kind of commercial real estate company. Both Jason and Dave have long been tenant-only advocates — committed to providing conflict-free real estate services to their clients. But Hughes Marino takes the model a step further. Hughes Marino is more than a tenant representation firm. It is a professional services firm dedicated to supporting companies in all aspects of their real estate, from finding the best real estate for their company at the best economics, to managing the construction process, to reviewing operating expenses free of charge and to ensure that they are properly billed. Hughes Marino is committed to excellence and has the best team in town to ensure this. Hughes Marino is passionate about giving back to the community as the firm supports over 70 local nonprofits.



R3 Strategic Support Group

R3 is a company that, despite sequestration and the current economic challenges, doubled its revenues and employee base this year. Currently more than 60 individuals call R3 their employer. The success of the service-disabled, veteran-owned small business company is due to its ability to operate in agile environments and still provide innovative strategic solutions to rapidly identify requirements, capture resources and maximize readiness that accelerate its clients success. R3 is a proud supporter of the EOD Warrior Foundation and serves on the Executive Advisory Board for the National Defense Industrial Association EOD Committee.



Allison+Partners

Allison+Partners is one of the fastest-growing mid-size global communications firms. Scott Allison and co-founding partners Andy Hardie-Brown and Scott Panksy wanted to create a positive and highly entrepreneurial environment where talented people at all levels could do great work and thrive. The core values encourage employees to keep an entrepreneurial mindset, maintain an enthusiastic personality, empower others, exceed expectations and collaborate environments. Allison+Partners offers digital, creative and marketing services to clients across the U.S. The firm has been recognized with awards for its work for Baja California's Secretary of Tourism, Hard Rock Hotel San Diego and various community organizations. Some of its other clients include Toyota, Kampgrounds of America, AV Concepts, Alaska Communications and Great Call.



Walden Family Services

Walden Family Services is a most admired and inspiring local organization. Walden Family provides foster care and adoption related-services throughout Southern California's major regions. The non-profit is 37 years old, making it among the oldest, most established organizations serving the needs of abused and neglected children. The children Walden focuses on are medically fragile, have severe behavioral needs and/or are developmental disabled, pregnant teens and teen parents. Additionally, Walden focuses on foster youth, ages 18-21, who have aged out of the foster care system. Walden served more than 600 children and youth in 2013 and on any given day serves more than 200 children in over 150 certified homes in Southern California. Sixty-five percent of the Walden youth achieved permanency in 2012, either through reunification with biological relatives or adoption. Administrative costs make up only 11 percent of the annual budget.



CyberFlow Analytics

CyberFlow Analytics is a next-generation cyber security company that solves security with advanced mathematic and data analytics. Founded only this year by Dr. Hossein Eslambolchi, a former CTO of AT&T, CyberFlow has already attracted global attention with a \$2 million strategic investment from Toshiba. With over 90 percent of business affected by cyber security breaches, CyberFlow is committed to protecting networks from advanced persistent threats. Eslambolchi and his team are revolutionizing the cyber security industry in order to protect businesses and property, including those that we depend on for our health and security. CyberFlow is automating the once manual process of forensic analysis with a real time virtualized model of security detection. This technology will dramatically increase the ability of enterprises to gain visibility into their networks, perform forensic analysis in real time, and reduce risk at lower cost.



AV Concepts

AV Concepts is at the forefront of immersive technical solutions. AV Concepts resurrected Tupac at Coachella 2012, projected the San Diego skyline on the side of the Midway and wowed audiences at Comic-Con. Most recently, it created the holographic performances of Ol' Dirty Bastard and Easy-E for Rock the Bells. The holographic illusions the company has created have become so iconic that they've been integrated into pop culture, making appearances on both "Saturday Night Live" and "The Simpsons." It is the only company in the world experienced in creating outdoor holographic projections in uncontrolled environments. AV Concepts has patented numerous new technologies, making the stuff of sci-fi a reality. The core of AV Concepts' business is to provide high-quality audiovisual and staging for events, and the company has proven to be one of the best.