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Eighteen Jersey City Businesses Honored at 2018 Small Business Awards Ceremony ***Businesses in All Neighborhoods Recognized for their Dedication to the Jersey City Community***

JERSEY CITY – Yesterday, **Mayor Steven M. Fulop**, the **Jersey City Economic Development Corporation**, and the **Jersey City Council** awarded the winners of the 2018 Small Business Awards at a ceremony in City Hall. Over 150 people attended the event, which honored 18 small businesses for their dedication to the Jersey City community. In addition, this year’s awards included the recognition of a local small business who has participated in the new Certified Green Business Program.

“Jersey City’s small businesses are truly the foundation of our local economy, and I am proud to join these owners and managers in recognizing their hard work and dedication to their businesses and our City,” said Mayor Fulop. “With over 650 small businesses opened throughout the City during the past five years, we have become a place where entrepreneurs come to build a home and to engage with our thriving, supportive community. I know that these businesses will continue to serve as incredible examples of success to anyone looking to open shop in Jersey City.”

The 18 small businesses honored at the event are located throughout the City in each of the local neighborhoods. Lee Sims, a chocolate shop on Bergen Avenue, was the oldest of the award recipients, having been open for 56 years. The event concluded with a panel discussion of local small business owners, where eight of the owners shared insights on how they have remained successful, as well as useful tips for new or aspiring business owners.

“It is great that the City and JCEDC recognizes the small businesses and actively tries to keep us engaged with other small business owners. I am grateful of the award and hope that JCEDC continues to stay actively involved with small businesses in Jersey City,” said Vincent Citro, owner of Salerno Salumeria, located at 453A Central Avenue in the Heights.

During the event, the EDC and the Office of Sustainability also recognized Bucket & Bay Craft Gelato Co. for their participation in the Green Business Certification Program. Earlier this year, the Fulop Administration launched the Green Business Certification Program, offering business development seminars and classes to help local small businesses implement sustainable practices in areas such as energy, waste, and water use. Through this program, the City will award marketing materials and public recognition to Certified Green Businesses to highlight these practices, help consumers make informed choices, and help sustainable businesses attract environmentally conscious customers.

“Starting and owning a small business is an accomplishment. We want to honor and acknowledge the hard work and service these businesses and their families have given to their customers and the community,” said Vanessa Quijano, Small Business Development Coordinator with the JCEDC.

Each Council member selected two small businesses from their respective Wards to receive recognition. The Council-At-Large members selected two small businesses citywide. ‘Anchor Award’ recipients have been located in Jersey City for 10 or more years and have between 1-50 full-time employees. ‘Pioneer Award’ recipients have been located in Jersey City for less than 10 years, with between 1-50 full-time employees.

2018 Small Business Service Award Winners

Carmine's Italian Deli, Owner: Carmine Scalia

Milk Sugar Love, Owner: Emma Taylor

Moore's Lounge

Abbondanza Trattoria & Brick Oven Pizza, Owners: Deborah and Salvatore Mazzaresse

Sky Tobacco

ME Casa

Laico's Restaurant, Owners: Louis and Gloria Laico, Adam Laico

Above Average Ink Studio, Owners: George Alston and Jon Arnold

Lee Sims Chocolates

Halftime Bar & Grill, Owners: Simon Yang and Mei Myung

Dar El-Eiman Travel, Owner: Ahmen Shedeed

WHEALTH and Co, Owners: David Trotta and Gina Cassese-Manning

Salerno Salumeria, Italian Deli & Dairy, Owners: Vincent and Francesca Citro

Dulce De Leche Bakery, Owner: Julieta Urgilles

Carmen Rosa's Bakery, Owner: Carmen Rosa Copeilan

Gia Gelato and Café, Owners: Deborah Brackett and Angela Ratliff

H. Roscoe Taylor Insurance Company, Owner: H. Roscoe Taylor, Jr.

The Grind Shop, Owners: Charles Boyd, Mike & Shane Clark

Certified Green Business Recognition: Bucket & Bay Craft Gelato Co., Owner: Jen Kavlakov

During the past five years, the Fulop Administration has prioritized the growth of the City’s small business community, with the opening of the Office of Small Business, streamlining the business permitting process, and partnering with local businesses to revitalize commercial corridors. The City has seen over 650 new small businesses open during this time, in all neighborhoods and all industries.

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