



News Release

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Dean Smith Named Michigan Small Business Person of the Year

Detroit, Michigan – Dean T. Smith, President and Chief Executive Officer of Specialty Heat Treating, Inc., in Holland has been named the 2004 Michigan Small Business Person of the Year by the Small Business Administration (SBA). Smith will travel to Orlando, Florida for the SBA Expo '04: Celebrating National Small Business Week celebration in May and is eligible to be named National Small Business Person of the Year.

Specialty Heat Treating provides high volume metal heat-treating services to manufacturers in a wide variety of industries. The company has 100 employees and heat treating plants located in Grand Rapids, Holland, and Elkhart, Indiana. Smith has increased the company's annual sales from \$2 million in 1989 to \$11 million today, and the business is now the ninth largest commercial heat treating firm in the United States. The company has been selected by the Michigan Business Professional Association as one of West Michigan's "101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For."

Smith began working at the company in 1975 while still in high school. Over the years he worked in shipping, distribution, furnace operations, and finally as a plant manager. In 1989, Smith faced his biggest challenge when his father died unexpectedly and he was named president & CEO. He overcame this challenge by recognizing there was still much he needed to learn. Among the keys to the company's success have been Smith's self development, coupled with his ability to find and rely on other professionals to help his company grow.

"At an early age, Dean Smith assumed the heavy responsibilities of running a large company while also dealing with the loss of his father," said SBA District Director Richard Temkin. "Dean took on the challenge and learned to adapt and grow from his experience. His tenacity and commitment are the key qualities that have resulted in the success of the business. I am proud to announce his selection as SBA's Michigan Small Business Person of the Year."

Smith and other SBA award winners will receive their awards during a breakfast reception hosted by the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce on May 4, 2004. For more information on the awards ceremony, please contact Cathy Blackburn at the Holland Chamber at (616) 392-2389.

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