



Working Wheels Keep Families Working

Susan Jacobs

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Contact:

Gail Rine, Office Manager, Wheels of Success, 813-490-9414
or Gregg Laskoski, 813-289-1320

JACOBS NAMED TBBJ NONPROFIT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Tampa, FL – August 25, 2009 – The 2009 *Tampa Bay Business Journal* Non-Profit Woman of the Year is Susan Jacobs, Founder and CEO of *Wheels of Success*. The charity offers transportation solutions to help keep people working in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco counties. In her remarks, Jacobs paid tribute to the generosity of the Tampa Bay community as well as the perseverance of her fellow nominees who are “still here” despite a challenging economy.

Jacobs lost her job following 9/11. Seeing the personal loss as an opportunity rather than a disaster, in 2003 she established the only 501(c)3 nonprofit organization providing a full range of transportation solutions, including vehicle replacement and car repairs as well as licensing, car payment and down payment assistance to low and moderate income working families. In just six years, 528 families have remained *on the road* and able to commute to work as a result of receiving vehicles (257) or services (271) provided by *Wheels of Success*. For the first three years of the program, Jacobs worked for no salary in order to commit 100% of funding to assist the first 100 WOS recipients; she worked a full-time evening job in order to commit to starting *Wheels* by day.

On September 7th, *Wheels of Success* will hold its 4th Annual Labor Day program to give away 20 vehicles to people who otherwise might be unable to continue working. One of these recipients will be the 25th Caspers McDonald's employee to receive a car under the highly successful *Wheels of Success / Caspers McDonald's* partnering program through which the company is able to promote staff as a direct result of the transportation solutions provided by WOS. A visionary seeking to help before jobs are lost, Jacobs established such win/win employer partnering programs to afford continued employment and promotability via the flexibility for shifts and overtime enabled by personal transportation.

Founded on a *pay-it-forward* philosophy, *Wheels of Success* allows recipients to help others facing similar challenges through a program of low monthly payments (to cover repairs to donated vehicles) and volunteer hours (three per month). For more information on Jacobs' popular, local nonprofit, please visit www.wheelsofsuccess.org.