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ARA Announces Newly Certified Awards/Engraving Professionals

14 Members Receive Professional Certification from Awards and Recognition Association

Glenview, IL (March 12, 2010) - The Awards and Recognition Association (ARA) recently honored 14 members for achieving professional certification. Through the ARA Professional Certification Program, awards and engraving professionals can achieve either Certified Recognition Master (CRM) or Certified Recognition Specialist (CRS) designations.

The following participants were honored at the ARA International Awards Market last February in Las Vegas: ***Certified Recognition Master (CRM): Mark Warren, CRM***, American Awards & Promotions (American Awards & Promotions, LLC, Milton, WI) ; ***Certified Recognition Specialists (CRS): Kevin Arnold, CRS***, Arnolds for Awards (Shingle Springs, CA); ***Sandra Bailey, CRS***, Victory Trophies & Plaques (Sacramento, CA); ***Joyce Belli, CRS***, Victory Trophies & Plaques (Sacramento, CA); ***Tony Green, CRS***, Bend Awards (Bend, OR); ***Toni Hayes, CRS***, Graphics Awards (Marion, IL); ***Eddie Hill, CRS***, Awards Masters (Midland, TX); ***Willie H. Holmes III, CRS***, Holmes Awards & Trophies (Texas City, TX) ; ***D. Keith Hunt, CRS***, Awards Unlimited (Edmonton AB, Canada); ***James Rich, CRS***, Rich Trans Graphics (Shelton, WA); ***Barbara Roehling, CRS***, Words Worth (Humble, TX); ***Bill Russell, CRS***, Classic Engraving (Phoenix, AZ); ***Edson Setzer, CRS***, Ted's Gifts and Jewelry (Pulaski, NY); and ***Paul Walgren, CRS***, Laser Doodles (American Fork, UT).

“Awards professionals pursuing certification demonstrate their dedication to both the industry and their customers,” says ARA President BJ Bailey. “They’re committed to enhancing their business knowledge, which ultimately improves the quality of service to their customers. Certified awards professionals provide guidance, customer support and of course, memorable awards for the recipients.”

The CRM designation is an achievement shared by less than 1% of awards professionals nationwide. CRM marks the highest level of professional accomplishment in the awards and engraving industry and is achieved by completing 170 hours of technical and business seminars sponsored by ARA, an international trade organization with approximately 3,000 member companies. To date, ARA has certified 58 CRMs and 224 CRS'.

ARA's certification program enhances the technical knowledge and business skills of its members through a series of seminars led by qualified industry speakers. For every 10 hours of seminar instruction, a CEU (continuing education credit) is earned. It takes seven CEUs (70 hours) to become a *Certified Recognition Specialist (CRS)* and an additional 17 CEUs (170 hours) to become a *Certified Recognition Master*.

For more information about the ARA Professional Certification Program, contact Daniel Weinstock at 847/ 375-4748 or dweinstock@connect2amc.com.

The Awards and Recognition Association (ARA) is an international not for profit organization serving both retailers and suppliers in the awards and engraving industry. In line with its mission of advancing the professionalism and success of the industry, the association hosts an annual International Awards Market in Las Vegas, the largest trade show in the industry, publishes a monthly magazine, Recognition Review, and offers a variety of member benefits and programs, including seminars, professional certification, the ARA Online Buyer's Guide, and a product locator service. For more information about ARA, visit www.ara.org.

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