

Athena Awards set for Jan. 20

Jim Stinson • Staff writer • January 12, 2011

The 25th annual Athena Awards luncheon is set for noon Jan. 20 at the Riverside Convention Center.

Eighteen women chosen as finalists for the Athena Award, given by the Rochester Business Alliance's Greater Rochester Women's Council, will be honored at the event as women "demonstrating significant achievements in business, community service and the professional advancement of women."

One woman will be chosen from that group of finalists to be the 2011 Athena recipient.

The Women's Council will also pay a special tribute to past recipients, as well as Susan R. Holliday, president and publisher of the *Rochester Business Journal*.

The 2011 finalists are: Dr. Nancy M. Bennett, director, Center for Community Health; Dr. Mary L. Dombovy, medical director, Spine Center of Unity Health System; Dr. Deborah I. Friedman, professor of ophthalmology and neurology, University of Rochester; Marisa Geitner, executive vice president, Heritage Christian Services; Pamela P. Heald, president, Reliant Community Federal Credit Union; Victoria Godwin Hines, president and CEO, Visiting Nurse Service of Rochester and Monroe County Inc.; Norma Holland, anchor and reporter, 13WHAM-TV;

A. Gidget Hopf, president and CEO, Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired-Goodwill Industries of Greater Rochester Inc.; Janet Lomax, news anchor, WHEC-TV; Angella Luyk, CEO, Midnight Janitorial Inc.; Lisa Marcello, vice president, Episcopal SeniorLife Communities; Kathleen Cahill Murray, president, Net Sales;

Cynthia Oswald, president, Livingston County Chamber of Commerce; Kathy Palokoff, CEO, CUSTOMERicity; Mary C. "Kitty" Van Bortel, president, Van Bortel Ford; Mary Whittier, executive director, Bivona Child Advocacy Center; Dr. Bridgette Wiefing, president and CEO, Anthony L. Jordan Health Center; and Joyce Zimowski, senior vice president, Unity Health System.

Tickets for the Athena luncheon are \$75 per person or \$650 for a table of 10.

Students may purchase tickets for \$40.

Patron tables are also available for \$1,500 and include sponsorship recognition and an invitation to a private reception honoring the finalists, sponsored by the E. Philip Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology.

The reservation deadline is Friday. For information or to purchase tickets or tables, call (585) 256-4612 or e-mail Susan.George@RBAAlliance.com.

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Last year's winner

The 2010 Athena Award recipient was Jennifer Leonard, president and executive director of the Rochester Area Community Foundation. At the luncheon last year, council officials said Leonard has overseen the foundation's growth from \$32 million to \$200 million. Grants have increased from \$3 million annually to \$22 million.

Leonard moved to the Rochester area 17 years ago to head the philanthropic organization, after learning of the job in California from the 1991 Athena winner, Mary Frances Winters.

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