

Delta Dental of Iowa Honored with Venture Award



Pictured left to right: Greg Shireman, Sherry Perkins, Jill Hamilton and Sherry Maly Delta Dental of Iowa; Donn Hutchins, President & CEO, Delta Dental of Iowa; Debi Durham, Director, IEDA; Ranae Calvert, Heather Hughes, Cheryl Harding and Rich Russell, Delta Dental of Iowa; and Rand Fisher, President, IADG.

Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) on behalf of Iowa's rural electric cooperatives and member municipal electric systems has honored nine distinguished Iowa companies with the Iowa Venture Award. The Iowa Venture Award business recognition event began in 1988 and has honored over 190 of Iowa's finest business leaders and companies.

The Iowa Venture Award was also presented to Delta Dental of Iowa for ***"Distinguished Leadership."*** For over 50 years Delta Dental of Iowa has provided dental health coverage for families, employers and dental practitioners. Delta Dental is committed to improving oral health by emphasizing preventative care and making dental coverage accessible to all Iowans. Delta Dental is also dedicated to assisting dental professionals in finding practice opportunities in Iowa.

Since 2003 Delta Dental of Iowa has been encouraging the location of dentists in rural Iowa by helping pay down their tuition debt. In total, 18 dentists and communities across Iowa have benefited from their leadership and generosity. In September, of this year, Delta Dental of Iowa surpassed the \$1 million mark in assistance for rural Iowa dentists. In 2008, The FIND project was launched. FIND, (Fulfilling Iowa's Need for Dentists), connects graduating dentists with communities in need. FIND is a partnership of Delta Dental of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Health, the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and Iowa Area Development Group. Through a partnership with the State of Iowa the FIND initiative recently received \$50,000 from the Iowa Legislature that will serve as matching funds to further assist the FIND program and Delta Dental's commitment to rural Iowa.

“The Iowa Venture Award honors the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals and organizations. The luncheon ceremony is a celebration of the courage, contribution, innovation, social responsibility and vision of Iowa entrepreneurs. IADG has recognized Iowa’s leading companies large and small and it has become evident that our honorees are among the most accomplished and successful companies in the state. Together they help sustain and grow Iowa’s economy. Iowa Area Development Group on behalf of our sponsors is grateful to have the opportunity to honor and recognize these outstanding Iowa companies,” said IADG president, Rand Fisher. Since 1985 the Powerful Partnerships and economic development efforts of IADG and their sponsoring rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities have helped generate over \$6 billion dollars of capital investment and create or retain nearly 40,000 jobs for Iowa.

The 2011 **“Outstanding Business of the Year”** Venture Award was presented to Valley of the Moon Commercial Poults, Inc. and Aviagen Turkeys, Inc., a global market leader in poultry genetics, for locating Valley of the Moon Commercial Poults in Osceola, Iowa. The new 87,000 sq.ft. single-stage hatchery, with capacity to incubate over 50 million eggs per year and provide poults throughout the U.S., is the largest turkey hatchery in world.

Iowa Venture Awards were also presented to seven other businesses for their significant contributions in diversifying and strengthening Iowa’s economy. The 2011 Iowa Venture Award recipients include: Clickstop, Inc, Urbana; Golden Eagle Distributing Co., Mount Pleasant; Icon Ag & Turf, Le Mars; Interpower Corporation, Lamoni; Iowa Cage-free, L.L.P., Goldfield, Iowa Protein Solutions, Estherville; and Royal Oaks Development Corporation, Peosta & Bellevue. Iowa Economic Development Authority, Director Debi Durham assisted IADG in presenting the Iowa Venture Awards and honoring the Iowa companies and their leaders.

IADG is the business and community development leader for Iowa’s rural electric cooperatives and member municipal electric utilities. The 2011 Iowa Venture Awards luncheon ceremony was held at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives’ annual meeting in West Des Moines on December 1, 2011.

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