

## News

# The rewards of small business ownership

### 2007 Small Business Award Honorees

Brent Brown, owner of Chelsey Brown Companies, Inc. in Atlanta

Tricia Dempsey of Agile based in Alpharetta

Glen Hendersen of AFC Express in Kennesaw

Priscilla Jessup, owner of the Denmark agency in Atlanta

John Lu of the Lucky Corporation based in Alpharetta

### 2007 Micro Business Awards honorees

Madinah Ali, of MSA Global Advisory Group in Decatur

Eric Highsmith of 1stcapitalsources.com based in Marietta

Darrell Anthony Reynolds of Coach 4 Me in Dallas

Leslie Sperry, owner of LL Beads, Inc., in Dallas

### The Micro Entrepreneur of the Year

Vickley Raeford, owner of Raeford Land Clearing in Marietta.

By **Jessika Toothman**  
DeKalb Neighbor Staff Writer

Opening and operating a small business can be a struggle, but the local nonprofit group the Edge Connection stands behind people making that effort.

For those of their clients who not only run a successful business, but find the time to support the community as well, the Edge Connection is hosting a special gala to honor their achievements on Saturday.

"The honorees are chosen based on the fact that they have sound business practices and

they also have demonstrated philanthropy, in they are giving back to the community with their time, as well as with resources and their financial support," said Executive Director and CEO of the Edge Connection Patricia Harris. "They do these things traditionally within their corporation so therefore their employees are engaged. There is corporate social responsibility initiative."

The gala will feature an award dinner and silent auction. Awards will be handed out for small and micro business owners as well as the Micro Entrepreneur of the Year award.

The silent auction portion of the gala will feature items ranging from products produced by clients of the Edge Connection to meals by top Atlanta chefs prepared right in the highest bidder's home.

"This helps support our mission for our clients," Ms. Harris said. "Most of our clients do not pay for any of the services they receive, so this gives us the opportunity to raise dollars to match it with some of the foundations that support our work around the country."

One of the 2007 honorees, Madinah Ali, has been receiving business coaching from the Edge Connection in areas like marketing, raising capital, team-building and growing her business.

"I think the Edge kept me motivated to continue on and to take my company to the next level," Ms. Ali said.

Part of a national network of organizations that support small business entrepreneurs, the Edge Connection has several different resources to help the need of clients, such as putting their business online and financial literacy.

The gala will be held at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in the Cobb Galleria Centre Saturday at 7 p.m. Tickets to the event start at \$100.

**Information:** (770) 499-3228