

My Chef Catering nets chamber's top honor as small business of the year

By **Larry Avila**
STAFF WRITER

Bill and Karen Garlough remember a time when all they could think about was building their business.

But now, with a seasoned staff in place, the catering couple have focused their efforts on building the brand of My Chef Catering through an assortment of community service projects and fundraisers.

"For our business, our reputation has been built on our success, and we take that very seriously," Bill Garlough said Friday after the Garloughs were presented the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year Award for 2006.

"Our staff has a passion for quality and presentation, which has made our company into what it is today," said Karen Garlough. The company also was in the "service, business-to-business" category.

Betsy Brosnan, co-owner of the Naperville accounting firm of Brennan and Brosnan LLC and last year's Naperville chamber Small Business of the Year Award winner, said My Chef's community involvement and business model helped the company stand out from the pack.

"From a business plan standpoint, their succession planning really stood out," Brosnan said. "Not a lot of businesses think about how they will transition their business to a new owner or next generation. It showed us how complete a business they really were."

Karen Garlough is involved with the Cuisine for a Cause program, which brings together several Naperville-area restaurants to designate an evening when part of the proceeds benefit a local charity. The Garloughs also donate an assortment of catering packages that area charities can auction off to raise funds.

Bill Garlough said he and his wife assist more than 30 charities annually.

Ed Channell of Sound Incorporated was presented with the chamber's lifetime achievement award for his various contributions to community service.

NCO Youth and Family Services won the not-for-profit category. The Naperville Area Humane Society and Community Career Center were finalists.

Finalists in the "service, business-to-business" category were Moser Enterprises and Showalter Roofing Service.



JAMES C. SVEHLA/SUN STAFF
My Chef catering Vice President Karen Garlough, left, President Bill Garlough, right, and Dominick Scafidi Director of Catering, all owners of the business, were awarded The Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year award for 2006.

The accounting firm of Klein, Hall and Associates won in the professional category, with Advanced Physicians and Fox Valley Institute for Growth and Wellness picked as finalists.

Cafe Buonaro's was the retail category winner, with Jimmy's Grill and Naperville Running Company named finalists.

The "service, business-to-consumer" winner was Inside-Out Painting Co., and the finalists in that category were Fry Group of Companies and Ryan Hill Realty.

05/21/06