

Face Value: Who makes the BBJ successful



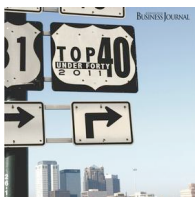
Welcome to Awards 101

The *Birmingham Business Journal's* awards programs are a vital part of our company's mission – to help promote the Birmingham area's business community. Our programs offer effective interactive opportunities to recognize a company or organization's key personnel, build goodwill, network and give us the privilege of getting to know your company or organization better.

Let's introduce our 2012 programs and then we'll offer a few tips on submitting a strong nomination.

What are our awards programs?

Some of them vary or alternate year to year, while those listed below represent our core programs.



Birmingham Top 40 under 40: Top 40 is our strongest program each year, resulting in the most inquiries and nominations. We recognize dynamic businessmen and women who have distinguished themselves before reaching their 40th birthday.



The BBJ partners with Healthiest Employers Inc. to present its Birmingham's Healthiest Employers awards. It honors companies with policies and initiatives promoting employee health and wellbeing.



CEO Awards recognize excellence among top executives in the Birmingham-area business community. Criteria include strong financial performance, tangible results and goals achieved, a key role in the success of the business and community involvement.



Top HR Executive awards recognize the efforts and accomplishments of talented individuals in the field of human resources.



Birmingham Best Places to Work honors companies that have created a great workplace environment. Winners are chosen based on the results of a confidential survey conducted by Quantum Market Research.

Here's the newest arrival to our 2012 awards lineup:



Birmingham's Most Admired Companies will be chosen based on surveys of local business leaders. Winners will be companies in the Birmingham metro area distinguished by their peers.

What are the rules to participate in our award programs?

- Nominees must live and work in the Birmingham metro area.
- An area resident can be nominated for our awards until he or she wins. For example, anyone chosen for Top 40 is a winner, but if you don't win you can be nominated until you do or no longer qualify. To determine if your nominee has won before, check out our Top 40 Alumni database online at BBJ.com.
- For awards based on surveys, such as Birmingham's Healthiest Employers, Best Places to Work and our soon-to-be-announced Most Admired Companies programs, a company can participate every year and win as long it ranks in the surveys.
- CEOs and CFOs can be nominated multiple times, particularly if a business leader is nominated as a CEO Rising Star and later is nominated in their company size as an established CEO.

How do I know when I can make a nomination?

We're in the process of setting up our website to accept nominations on all our awards programs immediately and until each deadline. You can also sign up for Publisher Announcements on BBJ.com, which will send you an email notification when we are accepting nominations for an awards event.

How can I make a nomination?

Go to our website, BBJ.com, and click on “Nominations.” A list of awards programs appears. Click on the desired program and fill out the easy online form. Please answer *all* questions because this information ensures we can reach all parties to complete a nomination. When you hit submit, we are notified immediately. Unfortunately, our system does not provide a confirmation email yet, but we’re working on it. Also, please note that we may extend award deadlines so please revisit our nominations page if you’re uncertain about whether the deadline is past. To be advised of these deadlines and potential deadline extensions, we also recommend signing up for our digital newsletters, which can be done on BBJ.com. We also have targeted email lists, which you can request to be placed on.

What’s the best way to make a nomination?

Without question, the path to becoming a BBJ award winner begins with a strong nomination demonstrating the winning qualities of a company or individual. When the BBJ editorial committee chooses finalists and winners, we rely on the nomination. We get outstanding nominees to consider, but they may go unnoticed with a nomination that lacks concrete examples of career success and instead say, “She is a nice person” or “Everyone likes him.” Too often this leaves us choosing the strongest nomination rather than strongest nominee.

Our “dream nomination” has:

- A cover sheet with a two- or three-paragraph summary about the nominee and why this person would make a fantastic Top 40 winner. This content also should include bullet points highlighting concrete examples of career achievement.
- Supporting materials to back up and detail these examples.

Here’s a summary example:

Bob the Extraordinary Builder is a great Top 40 nominee because:

- At age 35, he has already demonstrated the abilities of a veteran in his work and built seven projects worth more than \$2 billion. His focus on efficiency shaved about \$5 million on average per project, about 2 percent above projected savings.
- When the Great Recession hit, Bob mobilized his staff and successfully expanded territory that netted three new projects valued at \$1 billion.
- His emphasis on job safety has resulted in zero injuries and down time. This initiative was recently recognized by his trade organization and serves as a model.
- His use of “green” materials promotes sustainable development, as well as provides a projected 15 percent ROI within 10 years for his customers.
- In his two-year service as president of the Alabama Construction, he established the association’s first LEED committee.

Can I submit supportive materials?

Absolutely. They can be uploaded with a website nomination, emailed or mailed via USPS or express mail. We've received everything from a single letter of support to comprehensive packets featuring a nominee's credentials, resume, achievements, multiple letters of support and CDs or DVDs with work samples, etc. Creativity is appreciated as long as the core requirement is met – we get a nominee's achievements with details. A one-paragraph nomination can be a winner if it has the right details.

Here's a good example of a letter of support:

“Barbara is a consummate HR professional. Her vast experience has led her to become vice president of human resources at Alden Systems Inc. During her tenure, she has taken a once very-small business and built a stellar department that reflects the growth of Alden today. Beginning with a handful of employees to now 20 headquarters employees located in Birmingham, AL and also field employees located all over the country, Barbara has grown her staff, implemented policy that benefits all employees, worked diligently to find one of the best health care plans available and is integral in encouraging 401k participation among employees.”

How do I submit these materials?

They can now be uploaded as a Word doc, pdf, jpg or similar file type with our online nominations, but they can also be emailed or mailed via USPS or express mailed.

What are my contacts?

Website: BBJ.com

Email: Sections Coordinator Anna Thibodeaux at athibodeaux@bizjournals.com

USPS or Express mail:

Attn. Sections Coordinator Anna Thibodeaux

Birmingham Business Journal

2140 11th Ave. South Suite 205

Birmingham, AL 35205

What happens after I've made a nomination?

We download all nominations submitted from our website and round up all submitted support materials online or by email and mail. We then choose finalists/winners and notify them by email. This begins the process of requesting or shooting a photo if requested. Please provide a high-resolution or print ready color headshot of at least 300 dpi for best presentation. This photo is used in the special section, PowerPoint presentation at the event and website – BBJ.com. Depending on the awards program, we may request content such as a profile or Q&A, quotes and background.

Can I view award winners' profiles on BBJ.com?

Yes, if you're a subscriber. If not, you can't view it immediately.

If you would like to subscribe, please contact: Anne Senft, Circulation Account Executive, (205) 443-5613, Fax: 205-322-0040 or asenft@bizjournals.com.

What if I want to participate in BBJ special sections?

Then do it! We welcome participation in our focus sections and welcome seeing new names. To be an industry voice, we need to hear from you. We welcome ideas for stories, Bottom Line, Q&As, etc.

We call them focus sections because each editorial section concentrates on an area like construction, or law and accounting, etc. We strive to circulate sources to be fair and to fairly represent each industry or trend. Anyone with expertise in these areas can be a source in the cover story or inside features such as:

Bottom Line: A 75-word-or-less response to one question that includes your name, title and firm or company, and a color headshot.

Q&As: Features one source with expertise in the section's focus subject.

How can I be a source for BBJ special sections?

- Contact Sections Coordinator Anna Thibodeaux at (205) 443-5633 or athibodeaux@bizjournals.com
- Ask to be placed on our sections mail list
- Sign up for our digital newsletters at BBJ.com

Thanks for participating in the BBJ's Awards 101 class. We see everyone as a winner, so let's start nominating.

