

## SBA Honors Four for their Contributions to Small Business

**Jerry and Victoria Stallard**, President and Vice President, respectively, of GTS Communications of North Olmsted, Ohio, have been named **2006 Small Business Persons of the Year** by the Cleveland District Office of the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

**In announcing the award, the SBA District Director, Mr. Gilbert Goldberg stated, "Mr. & Mrs. Stallard are your classic entrepreneurial success story, teaming up in both marriage and business to establish a very successful and growing data, voice and fiber cabling company. It is with great pride that we offer our congratulations to the Stallards on this well-deserved honor."**

Mr. Goldberg noted that nominees for this award are judged on seven criteria: staying power; growth in number of employees; increase in sales and/or unit volume; strong current and past financial reports; innovativeness of product or service offered; response to adversity; and contributions by nominee to aid community-oriented projects.

SBA honored several small business advocates with SBA Champion Awards. Awardees are individuals that have used their professional expertise or personal talents to further the understanding and awareness of small business. These individuals have taken an active role in creating opportunities for small business. This year's Champion awardees are:

- SBA Cleveland District **Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year: Evelyn C. France**, Director of Community Reinvestment for Lorain National Bank
- SBA Cleveland District **Small Business Financial Services Champion of the Year: Michael L. Cheravitch**, Senior Vice President and State Director of Business Banking for Charter One Bank
- SBA Cleveland District **Women in Business Champion of the Year: Brighid J. Consilio**, Vice President of Small Business Banking and Women's Business Advocate for National City Bank

"This year we are delighted to recognize these awardees significant contributions to the small business community of Northern Ohio", Mr. Goldberg added. "They exemplify small business at its best."

The President of the United States designates one week each year as National Small Business Week in recognition of the small business community's contribution to the American economy. This celebration honors the estimated 25 million small businesses in America that employ more than half the country's private work force, create 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually, and generate a majority of American innovations.

The local celebration of Small Business Week culminated on Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, with a recognition luncheon graciously hosted by SCORE's Cleveland Chapter, with the support of COSE. The luncheon was held at Acacia Country Club in Lyndhurst. ♦



*Small Business Persons of the Year Jerry and Victoria Stallard of GTS Communications are congratulated by SBA Cleveland District Office District Director Gil Goldberg and SBA Region V Administrator Patrick Rea.*



*Women in Business Champion of the Year Brighid J. Consilio, Vice President of Small Business Banking and Women's Business Advocate for National City Bank, receives her award from District Director Goldberg.*



*Small Business Financial Services Champion of the Year Michael L. Cheravitch, Senior Vice President and State Director of Business Banking for Charter One Bank with District Director Goldberg.*



*Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year Evelyn C. France, Director of Community Reinvestment for Lorain National Bank*