

## Topeka Business Consortium Recognizes Agency's Work

Three Topeka area business concerns recently honored the work of small businesses with awards. Community Action, Inc. was a finalist for one of the awards.

The Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, GO Topeka and Entrepreneurial and Minority Business Development presented the 31st Annual Small Business Awards held on May 18 at Washburn University.



Some of the Community Action board members and staff at the Small Business Awards: (L to R) Board Vice-President Brian Thompson, Board Member Doug Wallace, Kelly Meerpohl, Board Secretary Jo Salehar, Susan Wheatley, Thea Warren, Herminia Chavez, Phyllis Marmon and Michael Bell.

Awards were given in four areas of excellence: Emerging Entrepreneur of Distinction, Non-Profit Award of Distinction, Minority and Women Business of Distinction, and Capital City Business of Distinction. Community Action, Inc. was nominated for the Non-Profit Award of Distinction.

The Emerging Entrepreneur of Distinction went to T.R.E.A.L. Fashions, Terry W. Dudley II, chief executive officer. The

Non-Profit Award of Distinction went to ERC Resource and Referral, Reva Wywadis, chief executive officer (the other finalist was Sheltered Living, Inc.). The Minority and Women Business of Distinction Award went to JQ Historic Properties, Barbara Quaney, president (the other finalists were Ramirez Enterprises, Inc. dba Express Employment Professionals and seveneightfive designs). The Capital City Business of Distinction Award went to L & J Building Maintenance, Lonnie J. Williams, owner (the other finalists were Faith Roofing Company and Garrison Insurance and Financial Services, Inc.).

Community Action, Inc. Executive Director Sue Wheatley said this about being recognized: "It is inspiring that non-profits are being recognized as enterprising small businesses that provide jobs as well as needed services in our community. Community Action is very proud to have been one of the finalists for this first round of award recognitions and congratulates ERC."

Kansas State Senator Vicki Schmidt emceed the event. Opening remarks were provided by Steve Jenkins, Senior Vice-President of GO Topeka Economic Partnership; Steve Kelly, Deputy Secretary for Business Development, Kansas Department of Commerce; and Greg Panichello, State Director for the Kansas Small Business Development Centers. Presenters included Schmidt, Shawnee County Commissioners Ted Ensley and Vic Miller, and Topeka Mayor Bill Bunten.

Over the 31 years of the awards an estimated 110 awards have been given. The Emerging Entrepreneur of Distinction, Non-Profit Award of Distinction and Minority and Women Business of Distinction were newly recognized this year.