

## **WAF Team Selected as Wisconsin Small Business Persons of the Year**

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The management team of Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry Co. Inc. (WAF), Manitowoc, Wis., has been named Wisconsin's Small Business Person of the Year for 2006 by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The management team includes Jim Hatt, president; Kory Brockman, vice president-finance; Scott Ziarnik, vice president-operations; and Bob Braun, vice president-engineering.

Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry is an ISO 9002 and QS9000 certified manufacturer of non-ferrous metal castings. Their castings are produced for a variety of industries including manufacturers of gasoline commercial engines, generators, diesel engines, marine engines, farm, construction and paper making machinery, to name a few. They also have a consumer product line of pressure cookers, cast aluminum utensils and medical sterilizers. Despite the challenges faced by American manufacturing companies (rising costs, aging workforce, exodus of manufacturing to off-shore companies, Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry is planning for and optimistic about its future. Sales have grown, as have net profits as a percentage of sales. This has been accomplished through increased exposure in the marketplace via sales and marketing efforts as well as internal improvements in cost, productivity and efficiency.

WAF continues to explore and acquire equipment that supports these goals and provide benefits to their employees, such as education, insurance coverage and ergonomically friendly processes, that result in a productive and secure workforce as well as a good reputation as an employer in the Manitowoc area community.

WAF's management team is among 53 top small business persons-one from each state, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands, and Guam-who will be honored by SBA at national ceremonies in Washington, D.C. April 12-13, 2006. As the winners of the Wisconsin Small Business Person of the Year Award, they could be named National Small Business Persons of the Year during the national event.

As Wisconsin's Small Business Persons of the Year, WAF's management team was judged on their staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales and/or unit volume, current and past financial reports, innovativeness of product or service offered, response to adversity and contributions to aid community-oriented projects.