



For Immediate Release

## Press Release

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## Sustainable Business Awards

**Madison, WI (June 4, 2018)** – The WI Sustainable Business Council presented the Sustainable Business awards at the spring WI Sustainable Business Forum and Awards ceremony, held at Lands’ End in Dodgeville.

Many businesses play crucial roles in responding to social and environmental challenges, and WI businesses are no exception. Tom Eggert, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council says of the large number of high quality applications received, “We received many worthy applications this year, and had a hard time choosing winners. There is a growing interest in pioneering new sustainability approaches and being recognized for innovative products and processes.” The Sustainable Business Awards are designed to recognize businesses for their efforts in developing sustainable products and processes, and to recognize some of the amazing business leaders in the state.

Matt Earley, founder of Just Coffee Coop and Mike Nikolai, President and CEO of Waupaca Foundry highlighted this year’s award winners:

### Sustainable Leadership

**Small organization: Matt Earley, Just Coffee Coop, (Madison)**

**Matt Earley founded Just Coffee Cooperative as a mission-based business in 2001. They are a worker-owned coffee roaster dedicated to creating and expanding a model of trade based on transparency, human dignity and environmental sustainability. They build long-term relationships with small-scale coffee growers. Matt started the business to challenge the way the coffee industry worked-- in terms of how farmers and the environment were treated.**

**In 2017 Matt steered the company to B Corp Certification becoming the first and only B Corp coffee roaster in Wisconsin. B Corps are a new type of**

company that uses the power of business to solve social and environmental problems. They were recently named one of the "Best For The World" companies for 2018.

In 2017 Matt began working with their importing cooperative, Cooperative Coffees, and the NGO Take Root to measure and understand the carbon footprint of coffee growers. With this information they have set up a fund to pay three cents per pound of green coffee purchased to support efforts by farmer partners to mitigate climate change in an effort to offset their carbon footprint.

Matt has also focused on the local community, donating over 200 pounds of coffee in 2017 for community events and to support initiatives to raise money for many local farmers markets and local sustainability-focused organizations such as REAP, FairShare CSA Coalition, WI Bike Federation, Aids Network, The WI Literacy Network, and others.

**Large organization: Mike Nikolai, Waupaca Foundry**

o Mike Nikolai, President, COO and CEO of Waupaca Foundry has promoted and supported primary business goals to achieve sustainable growth. As a result of Mike's leadership, Waupaca Foundry will:

- reduce energy use in Waupaca Foundry Operations by 25% over the next 10 years.
- Reduce spent foundry sand generation while promoting offsite reuse/recycling so as to achieve zero landfill disposal.
- reduce water use in Waupaca Foundry operations by 80% by 2020.

Mike has also been a leading advocate within the metalcasting industry, providing sustainability resources for the American Foundry Society for the betterment of the industry, as well as being a spokesman for sustainability action and stakeholder engagement in our communities. Because of Mike's leadership, Waupaca Foundry is the first U.S. metalcaster and only the second Wisconsin company to achieve ISO 50001 certification for an energy management system to reduce energy use.

### **Sustainable Product**

• **Small organization: Nelson & Pade (Montello) – presented to founders Rebecca Nelson & John Pade**

o Over the past 20 years Nelson and Pade, Inc.® has been designing, manufacturing and selling aquaponic systems which are used for commercial



ventures, home food production, education models and social and mission projects. Nelson and Pade, Inc.®'s innovative Clear Flow Aquaponic System helps to solve global and local problems such as water shortages, over-use of chemicals in agriculture, lack of food safety and poor nutrition.

Aquaponic systems produce both fish (protein) and vegetables in a sustainable manner, without using pesticides, herbicides or chemical fertilizers. New product offerings include:

- Non-GMO fish food, providing a better diet for the fish and offering a more sustainable product
- Food grade plant rafts which save customers money while exceeding new food safety requirements

- Large organization: Mercury Marine (Fond du lac) – presented to Sustainability Lead Scott Louks

Mercury Marine has made a commitment to sustainability and one of their newest products, Active Trim, has been praised for its fuel efficiency and safety. Active trim, improves fuel efficiency by letting the computer control the motor elevation based on boat speed and engine revolutions per minute. Fuel efficiency improves by 15% - 54% and will pay for itself in a very short period of time. Mercury has just launched the largest outboard portfolio in its almost 80 year history and Active Trim, coupled with the new lean burn technology in these engines, can produce substantial improvements in air emissions, carbon emissions and performance.

### **Sustainable Process**

7 Rivers Recycling (LaCrosse) – presented to President Brian Tippets,

- o 7 Rivers Recycling is a mattress and box spring recycler. Old mattresses in Wisconsin and the United States, with few exceptions, are landfilled. However, 7RR recycles 86% of mattress materials that otherwise would have been buried in a landfill.

7 Rivers has shown that mattress recycling can work in Wisconsin and is a sustainable business model that is replicable in other Wisconsin economic centers.

7 Rivers recently implemented in-house efficiency improvements which include: moving operation to a larger unconfined enclosed space; streamlining work flow to reduce double handling; purchase of automated box spring dismantler to eliminate more manual intensive dismantling; and purchase of an in-house scale to eliminate going off the premises to weigh materials.

**7RR is providing price incentives to mattress stores for mattress recycling. In this way when a mattress store delivers a new mattress to a customer they can take back the old one with zero extra transportation. 7RR is providing price incentives for waste/recycling drop-off centers to provide mattress recycling closer to customers to aggregate old mattresses.**

The WI Sustainable Business Council is a network of Wisconsin businesses that are committed to operating in a sustainable/responsible way. The council works to educate businesses about sustainability, recognize businesses for their accomplishments, and bring companies together to learn from each other. For more information on the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council, visit <http://www.wisconsinsustainability.com/>

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