

Small Business Council of America
Person of the Year Committee
C/o Leanne Redstone
1523 Concord Pike, Suite 300
Wilmington, DE 19803

Person of the Year Committee,

I would like to nominate my husband for the Gardener News "Person of the Year Award". I have asked people to endorse his nomination and write a little something on his behalf. By reviewing these letters I feel you will be able to understand why I have chosen to nominate him for Small Business Council of America person of the year. It will show you how he conducts himself both professionally and personally and most importantly how he has influenced politicians, clients, friends and employees.

To give you a little of our background - Anthony and I met in college. When I asked his major he replied, "landscape architecture". I had no clue what a landscape architect did, only that a landscaper cut our grass. I asked why and he said "God isn't making any more dirt. We need to take care of what is around us." Now looking back on that answer, I believe he has stuck with this principle every step of the way. When he first started Back to Nature in 1995; he walked away from a job because it wasn't the "Back to Nature" style. He needed the money yet wouldn't compromise his values. I have watched him grow the business and make it the hallmark stamp of "Green Landscape Architecture". When our clients comment about their landscape they give Back to Nature its best compliment, "it looks like it has been here for years."

We currently have three children. Anthony loves taking our son to many of his job sites. When my son was asked in school, "What does your parents do for a living", he said, "My Dad is an environmentor". My husband loved it. Several years ago Anthony expanded his 'green' vision to developing. He was tired of getting to the houses after they were built. He felt by correctly developing houses, via positioning and materials, the homeowners and environment would benefit.

He has met a few people in his life that have helped him spread his mission to "take care of the dirt around us" or what people commonly call being green.

One – Joseph Grano – A Back to Nature client and investor. He saw Anthony's passion to save a 120 acre piece of property from becoming another 'McMansion' development. Mr. Grano was so impressed that he helped Anthony co-found a green development firm along with Governor Pataki.

Two – Mark and Pearl Johnson Biedron – Founders of The Willow School. With Anthony's guidance The Willow School became the first LEED rated private school in the country and only the second LEED building in the state of New Jersey. Anthony was so excited to have the opportunity to be part of a place that would influence and educate our future – the children.

Recently, Anthony enjoyed teaching the first regenerative planning studio at Rutgers and NJIT. He remains close with his students and tries showing them how their schooling is being implemented on his projects.

This year Anthony has expanded his green landscape business with a new garden center. This garden center is a place to buy all organic and locally grown plant material.

I feel like Anthony has inspired so many people around him. Most of my friends tell me how he lights up when he is talking about work. He will be so honored if chosen for this award. By the way, he has no idea that I am nominating him. Please find enclosed the letters of endorsement, awards, publications, and teaching history for my husband in consideration for the Small Business Council of America Person of the Year Award.

Warm regards,

Maria Sblendorio
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